The Sinama Sea: Navigating Sama Dilaut Sea Space through Orature

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ABSTRACT

Archipelagic geography blurs the land / sea binary and thus calls for a turn to the sea that reconsiders the concept of dwelling. Inhabiting the islands and seas of Tawi-Tawi, the Sama Dilaut challenge the dominance of the *terratorial*—terrestrial and territorial—by revealing the possibility of inhabitancy without territoriality through their lifeways in the littorals. This essay seeks to redefine dwelling and seaspace through a method of Navigation, which examines how the Sama Dilaut traverse their seascape, and through a tropographical and philological interrogation of their orature.

Keywords: *Sama Dilaut*, Tropography, Philology, Dwelling, Seaspace, Navigation

"You will remember us because we have sung for you."
(a message to Arlo Nimmo as he was about to depart from Tawi-Tawi)[1]

Introduction

Relationship to space and place is considered one of the primary categories in determining the indigeneity of a people. "First-nation" and "fourth-world" designations place great importance upon the rootedness of a people within a land that they have occupied before the onslaught of colonialism. The idea of the indigene thus partly depends upon an articulation of belonging to an area and an emphasis on stewardship over that domain. While most governments have begun to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral domains, much tension and contestation over such territories remain, especially given varying political interests and ideologies.

This right to land becomes even more tenuous when indigenous communities do not root their identities in landedness. For instance, while the Philippine government has several laws regarding the rights

of indigenous tribes, one of which is the retention of their lands, groups such as the Sama Dilaut, who are often perceived as sea-nomads or boat-people, can claim none and are unable to take advantage of this law.[2] In the Philippines' area of responsibility, they have dwelled in the Sulu and Celebes seas, but their constant movement and dispersal make it difficult to determine a particular area of the sea as theirs.

The wandering further adds to the disparagement of the modern Sama Dilaut because their constant movement across borders becomes a governing nightmare for the state. Determining to which community they belong is futile for they can be in Tawi-Tawi in one moment and then in Sempornah in the next. Even establishing a "nationality" becomes an arduous task. The dispersal of the Sama Dilaut encompasses most of Island Southeast Asia, and national boundaries mean little to them if their filial relations reside in another nation, which is an insignificant distance by sea. Their constant transgression of borders creates a national security problem for the states concerned. With the modern territorialization of the sea and the erection of national boundaries, a community of traversal such as theirs loses their inhabited spaces and becomes displaced. Since the Sama Dilaut find difficulty in sustaining their traditional lifeways, they must find other means to survive. However, historically disenfranchised and cut off from the sea in which their skills in fishing and boat-building were of use, they have begun to resort to begging in more affluent urban areas. In these cases, some are compelled to practice mendicancy, transgressing an existing law.[3]

It matters then, what or which space(s) the Sama Dilaut traverse or inhabit. In discussing these spaces, it is perhaps apt to begin with that which has been associated with them: the sea. Both romantic and pejorative perceptions of sea people commonly stem from their perceived habitation of a space so fluid that it cannot be settled and, thus, cannot be settled upon. Yet the existence of these communities seems to demonstrate that the sea can be dwelled upon just as much as land can be inhabited.

This turn to the sea comes in conversation with scholarship that considers the possibilities of connections and freedom that the sea can offer. These possibilities are imagined as the sea links disparate landforms and provides an exemplary metaphor for popular notions of the global community. However, a Western legacy of absolute alterity has overdetermined and relegated the sea as a non-place. It cannot hold all such fantasies of freedom for it cannot be conceived as a place at all. The terrestriality and territoriality of such a Western mode of knowing renders futile—or at least, premature—the turn to the sea in search of a new way of thinking and being (Connery 2006, 494-511). Yet non-Western modes may not consider this question in the same manner. In Southeast Asia, the sea is a physical entity that

refuses to be relegated to the abstract given its role in informing the flows and currents of histories and cultures (Klein and Mackenthum 2004, 2). Within an aqueous mode of knowing, the sea moves from mere metaphor or framework used to analyze history and culture to an actual environment in which the character of the sea—its very materiality and fluidity—becomes an important factor in informing the imaginary of a people. From non-places as perceived in Western thought, the sea becomes a place that "[has] been a symbolic and material resource significant to imperial, national, local, and ethnic contexts" (Gaynor 2007, 54).

An aqueous mode of knowing, in this sense, emphasizes a way of thinking about the ecology of a space that is not rooted in terrestriality and territoriality—both words etymologically rooted in the Latin *terra* or "dry land, earth," where land becomes the fundamental category that allows one to possess space—what we may consider *terratoriality*. The adherence to the terrestrial finds its articulation by way of the sedentary, of borders and boundaries, and of the striation of the earth—lines that cut and parcel out portions of space to be entitled with static proprietorship. In Edward Soja's definition of territoriality as a behavioral phenomenon, exclusiveness is determined to be a key factor together with a sense of spatial identity and the channeling of human interaction in space (Soja 1971). A sense of territory becomes subject to its utmost insularity, a space where possible invaders must be driven away to instill a sense of terror in them, to maintain the territory's integrity. Political theorist William Connelly points out that the uncertainty in determining "territory's" etymological roots, derived from the Latin *territorium*, also links it to *terrere*, which is "to frighten off." He states, "To occupy territory, then, is both to receive sustenance and to exercise violence."[4]

In response, I seek to find a way to think about dwelling that does not necessarily rely upon terror as a state of preservation, and to challenge the claim to dominance of the *terra* by revealing the possibility of inhabitancy without territoriality as manifested by the seabound lifeways of the Sama Dilaut. In this essay, I proceed by searching for *panduga*[5] or reference points that would enable me to relay a mode of navigation[6] that moves between sea and island, that finds stability in impermanence, that attempts to relate to all but is constantly refused, and that seeks a place to moor. These *panduga* are the tropes that carry and reveal the tropography of the Sama Dilaut.[7] As such, this sort of navigation necessitates a mapping of a multiplicity of points not to find an origin but to seek new forms of settlement—a constant resettlement—amidst always already unsettled lifeways in the littoral zones. Notably, there is some sense of stability despite the fluidity of these references. Just as the momentary appearance of the constellation *Pu'pu'* constantly alerts the Sama Dilaut at sea that

the winds are at hand, there is a necessity to find such momentary constants in this tropographic writing.

In the accumulation and constellation of these *panduga*, I hope to find *samboangan*, moorages that serve as inhabited transient spaces upon which I could anchor my writings.[8] This anchor is vital because in my position as a scholar from the outside, everything I write reveals that I can only gesture toward an understanding of their poetics for I cannot fully comprehend—from *comprehendere,* that is, to take together, to seize—not only the cultural imaginary but also the historical predicament and contemporary situation of the Sama Dilaut. In this sense, tropography oscillates between and among writing, trope, and space, where the sea and its islands constitute the new orientation. Such momentary inhabitation of the archipelago's tropography is made possible from its moorage in a particular topography, a writing of a place in its specificity—the material topoi of the seas and islands of the Tawi-Tawi archipelago. A method of navigation thus necessitates traversing the spaces between writing and orality, vehicular and vernacular languages, and axes of tropography. It is the movement of movement—the manner through which the Sama Dilaut traverse their seascape as revealed by their orature, where the movement of the trope is prolonged by way of philology so that its subtleties may emerge.[9] It is a way of looking at tropography not as it is imagined through the language of scholars but hopefully, in and on the terms of the Sama Dilaut.[10]

The following moorages of thought hinged upon Sinama terminology are deliberately rendered disparate and disjointed so that the reader may participate in the process of navigating, and finding their own way, through the orature.

WALI-DJINN

1.
Dain aku lawm tubig—
Nilantup nilunud
Manis ba maganud-anud
Paqilu ni bansud—
[from "Lumujum Sahaya"
sung by Yusop Maksud Ambarat] [11]

1.
From the water I came out—
Floating, submerging,
Flowing beautifully like current,
Coming on earth—
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot][12]

"Lumujum Sahaya" or "Foretelling the Truth," a *kata-kata* sung by the *wali-djinn* Yusop Maksud Ambarat of Sitangkai, begins with an aquatic vision of emerging from the sea as he makes his way toward an island. In this *sambahakan* or preliminary exhortation, he seems to relate the process through which he acquires the narrative from the depths of the waters, and it is only when he comes ashore that he is able to begin his song. In this moment, Ambarat delineates the geography of the seas and the islands, creating an archipelago. While the popular understanding of the archipelago maintains a focus on the land, specifically on the islands that constitute it, the very word "archipelago" refers less to the islands and more to the sea that surround and separate them: *pelagos*—the "arch-sea" (Murray 2006, 222). But beyond geography and through a linguistic maneuver, the "arch" of the archipelago can also be derived from the *arkhē* of the archive. In Amabarat's poetic portrayal of memory retrieval, the sea becomes an archive of the ephemeral.[13]

The paradox of the oral archive, however, arises from sound's lack of material or lasting form. Unlike the fixed written word, sound dissolves at the moment of utterance, refusing precise reproduction over time. With every repetition, something changes and no stable archive can be produced.[14] Yet could the concept of the archive be reimagined, where relation is not inscribed but flows? An archive of ephemerality is one that contains and coextends with the environment.[15] It performs the work of memory beyond the desire to affix and preserve since the very nature of orature refuses such fixity (Nora 1989, 7). As Kwa Chong Guan claims, "The spoken word is evanescent. It is fluid, dynamic, like a flowing river" (Guan 1998, 25). To reconceive the archive in the oral and be able to consider the sea as a vault of memory requires a different perspective on how memory is stored, retrieved, and related. Such a perspective can be gleaned from Sama Dilaut culture forms.

In Ambarat's movement from sea to island, a rupture of the present time by way of accessing the past is depicted—a seeming retour to *awal-jaman* or "a time long past."[16] This return through ritual, like the chanting of the kata-kata, may make sense in terms of Eliade's discussion on sacred time: "*by its very nature* sacred time is reversible in the sense that, properly speaking, it is a *primordial time made present"* (1957, 68). In this case, to be present is a matter not only of time but also of place, and this is what the sea holds: it contains the past, the sea as memory.

Among the orature of the Sama Dilaut, the kata-kata may be considered one of the most sacred.[17] It is a song form endowed with the power to drive away the ills of the human body and is exclusively the domain of the wali-djinn, roughly translated as spirit-bearers or shamans of the Sama Dilaut.[18] It is only sung to heal the sick if no other

method seems to work. According to Salbaiyani, a wali-djinn and one of Nimmo's informants, a spirit—*djinn* or *saitan*—that indwells the wali-djinn's body teaches the kata-kata by way of a dream. While there are variations in the specific practices among the wali-djinn, much of the beliefs remain the same, particularly the manner through which the wali-djinn acquire their power. In my conversation with Jaafar Injahali, a wali-djinn from Sitangkai, two important factors emerge as necessary for one to become a wali-djinn: a blood-tie to a previous wali-djinn and an event wherein the chosen person recovers from critical illness caused by the transformation.[19] Nimmo relates a similar process recounted by his informants, who claim that one must be chosen by either the djinn or Tuhan, the supreme lord, to become a wali-djinn.[20] Often, the saitan dwells in the bodies of the wali-djinn, and equips them with the ability to communicate with the spirits.[21] As those specifically chosen by the spirits, they are the only ones capable of accessing the songs to be ritualistically chanted as a form of healing. These chosen people are then tasked with ensuring the health of the community by healing their spirits and bodies (Nimmo 2001, 149).

To gain the ability to heal, the wali-djinn must undergo a process of metaphorical death and resurrection. It is an event that echoes Michael Taussig's assertion on how the Putomayo healers acquire their shamanic ability. They must enter and journey through the "space of death" themselves: "To cure is to become a curer. In being healed he is also becoming a healer" (1987, 447). Every ritual of healing that the shaman performs becomes a repetition of this traversal and transformation. For Taussig however, the space of death is also that of colonization, created by the colonizer in his own version of sorcery: history. Similar to the performative magic of the social scientist in the act of naming, the writing of history bewitches in its deployment and alteration of memory to create Truth. Yet this colonial space of death is a contradictory space that has the inherent ability to cure as well as destroy:

> The colonized space of death has a colonizing function, maintaining the hegemony or cultural stability of norm and desires that facilitate the way rulers rule the ruled in the land of the living. Yet the space of death is notoriously conflict-ridden and contradictory; a privileged domain of metamorphosis, the space par excellence for uncertainty and terror to stun permanently, yet also revive and empower new life.[22]

The colonial death space and the thanatic site of transformation that the shaman traverses to become a healer attain an equivalency, where the shaman is empowered to heal his community not only from ailments but also from the sorcery of history. As Derrida states,

"There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory" (1995, 11). By reframing the event through song, the shaman becomes a contrapuntal force against the historical sorcerer through an insistence in regaining control of memory through the ritual singing (Taussig 1987, 392).

Upon the Sama Dilaut sea of memory, the wali-djinn plays the role of the archon—keeper, collector, and curator.[23] In each performance of the kata-kata, the wali-djinn invokes memory and resists against the violence wrought by a history of subjugation.[24] Unlike the sorcerer's written history, the very nature of the kata-kata as orature refuses fixity. Although Nimmo claims that mistakes are forbidden in the performance to ensure that the spirits are not offended, the chanters of kata-kata reveal that the kata-kata as well as its truth is variable (2001, 197).

47.
Pagga gamma dasdas ta
inday banal insaq ka
putting kijib benoa
pagga tahun na masa
[from "Lumujum Sahaya"
sung by Yusop Maksud Ambarat]

47.
It's better to make this kata-kata fast,
I am not so sure, whether it is true or not
Lies, corrupt sentences were carried
Since it was in the past
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot][25]

40.
Bunnal naka unu ka
Talbiqat tuan kata-kata
Kijib na putting na
Taggahaq binissara
[from "Si Baga-Baga"
sung by Haji Ismael Ibrahim] [26]

40.
Whether it is true or not
It is the characteristic of a sung narrative
It has either deception or lies
Since its narration is unexpected
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot][27]

The memory accessed from the depths of the sea cannot be retained completely in the chanter's corpus. Something is always left behind

and altered in every recall or repetition. The self-reflexivity exhibited by the wali-djinn in these kata-kata reveals an awareness of the fluidity of the form by referring to its characteristic "lies and deception." In response, the wali-djinn claim that they can do little about it due to the nature of orality as it comes from the past, the mythic time of their ancestors. In this sense, the wali-djinn understand that the kata-kata only gains potency at the moment of its utterance. They access a performative sea, one that varies with every move of the current. It is this vision of the sea as memory that resonates with the orality of the kata-kata, sung by the shamans of the Sama Dilaut, the wali-djinn. This sea is an environment of memory, not merely a place—a *lieu*—but an inhabited place—a *milieu*—that activates all the processes of memory in the present. This archipelagic archive is at once, created, accessed, and conveyed at the moment of the kata-kata's performance. The aptness of the sea as the memorial site of these narratives may be in part due to the very nature of orality. As the Sama Dilaut wali-djinn dwell upon the sea, the sea becomes the vault of memory that they access so that they may transport memory to shore through their voice and become agents of healing not just for the sick but also for the community.

LAUT

In exploring the Sinama word for the sea, we are immediately struck by copious terms available in the vocabulary. We begin with their apparent endonym—Sama Dilaut: Sama of the high seas.[28] The translation of this appellation generates the figure of the nomad due to the Western conception of the high seas as a space that refuses inhabitancy. However, the entry on *dilaut* in the online *Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. Philippines's Central Sinama-English Dictionary* (SILP-CSED) complicates this notion of the high seas by mapping out two nominations of sea space: "*Dilaut mbal sakit atā to'ongan min bihing. Na timbang alawak. Atā kaut timbang.*" or "The sea is not very far from the coast. Timbang, it is distant. Timbang is far out to sea."[29] In this statement provided in reference to the word, *dilaut* specifically denotes the area of the sea near the shore whereas *kaut/laut* refers to the sea in general. The addition of the prefix *di-* plays a locative function, signifying the position of the sea in relation to the person. In this exemplum, the position of the Sama Dilaut at sea near the shore designates *dilaut* as the term for that specific region. *Karilautan* refers to the entirety of the sea waters juxtaposed to the entirety of land areas.[30] By adding the prefix *ka-* and the suffix *–an,* the seas become a collective, a common noun: all waters are therefore all seas. *Parilaut/kalaut* can be both verb and adverb with the prefixes *pa-* and *ka-* that express motion and *ri-* that signifies direction; thus, it is the action of going toward the sea.[31]

The sea for the Sama Dilaut becomes two-fold: simultaneously the sea close to the shore in particular, the area that they inhabit, and all of the seas in general. While they may dwell upon a specific sea, the dilaut in Tawi-Tawi for example may look at every sea as potential samboangan. This accords them with the capacity to wander to other areas—other seas.

Laut, however, is not the only term the Sama Dilaut have for the seascape. Returning to the sample sentence for dilaut, the term *timbang* is used to refer to the open sea as well as to ideas of weight, weighing, or balance. In fact, there is a healing ritual called *timbang* or *pagtimbang* (the prefix *pag-* indicating action) where once healed, the sick vow to perform a ceremony where they are placed within a sling to be balanced with their weight in offerings to the djinn.[32] Another word used for the open sea is *kablangan,* which the SILP-CSED describes as a sea with no islands: "*Kablangan itū halam aniya' kapū'-pū'anna, timbang na*." or "Kablangan has no islands, it is open sea."[33] While the SED does not have a definition for *blang*, the term signifies "moon" in other Austronesian languages. By way of elision, it is also phonetically close to the word for "moon" in Sinama, *bulan*. The prefix-suffix combination of *ka-* and *-an* may delineate a region, which nominates *kablangan* as the area of the sea where the moon resides or arises. A more antiquated term that is usually mentioned only in kata-kata is *kaladjun*, which indicates the farthest sea: "*Ma dilaut kaladjun, atala dilaut, mbal na ta'nda' lahat.*" or "The wide open sea, far out at sea, where no land is seen."[34] The term *ladju* signifies a remote distance that the prefix *ka-* either nominalizes or gestures toward (see Miller 2007).

These numerous horizontal terms for the sea indicate a distinction of the seascape based upon distance and direction.[35] *Dilaut* is a term for near the shore but also a term for where they are in *karilautan; kablangan* is the open sea but also toward the direction of the moon, the area of the sea from where the moon rises; and *kaladjun* is at the farthest sea, where no islands can be found, perhaps a place beyond imagination for to see no islands is to be disoriented. Among these terms, *kablangan* and *kaladjun* can be the most striking due to the application of the conventional *panduga*—the moon and the islands—to denote place. The seascape here is imagined through trajectory rather than area, direction rather than dimension.

The plethora of terms for the seascape also reveals an intimacy with the space that they inhabit. For Mircea Eliade, "settling in a territory is equivalent to founding a world" (1957, 47), something probably and equally true for nomadic inhabitation, despite the paradoxical sense of the latter. In reasserting Eliade's statement, Edward Casey explains, "the settling is a settling *of place in terms of*

place. It is modeling and sanctifying of *this* place in view of, and as a repetition of, *that* place—the primordial Place of creation (1998, 5)." By nominalizing the various areas of the sea if only through distance, the Sama Dilaut undertake a type of performative magic similar to that which Bourdieu describes: the ritual magic of naming that creates a world.[36]

This world-making is a place-making out of the space of the sea, a localization of the space they dwell upon. On this account, cosmogonic narratives become increasingly important in the imaginary of place. Through the utterance of the creation of a place or how man came to be in place, what is considered mere space—the void—becomes place.[37]

> In the beginning, only one man and one woman lived on earth. Eventually, they had two children. One child was thrown into the sea and his offspring became the Sama Dilaut. The second child was thrown onto land and his offspring became the land people. Other children born to the couple were thrown in the four cardinal directions and their descendants populated the rest of the earth. [38]

In a myth recorded by H. Arlo Nimmo, an ethnographer heralded for his work on the Sama Dilaut in Tawi-Tawi, the emplacement of the *dilaut* is emphasized by differentiating the children of the sea from those of land in the act of being thrown over to their watery domain.[39] As the Sama Dilaut ancestral child is thrown into the sea, the lot of its descendants in life is set: they are to be sea dwellers. The second child, the ancestor of the land dwellers, experiences the same fate, to be settled in their terrestrial space. Unfortunately, Nimmo does not provide the Sinama transcription to enable us to determine what terms were used for such a tropology. Still, the myth conveys a sense of possession not in terms of ownership but of identification.[40] A certainty: they are *dilaut*, and that identity confers an intimacy with the *pelagos*.[41]

Beyond the sea, two other topoi may be noted: earth and "the rest of the earth." The Sinama term *deya-dilaut* can be transliterated to land-sea, indicating everywhere that the entirety of the world of the Sama Dilaut consists in these two spaces.[42] But the last sentence of the myth implies something beyond the binary of land and sea. It indicates an elsewhere, a beyond that their region does not cover—perhaps past *kablangan* and *kaladjun*. *Deya-dilaut* therefore, may not be a general term for the totality of the world but only for the world that they recognize: the one that they inhabit. After all, the term used is *dilaut* and not *laut or kaut*, the more general expressions for the sea. Moreover, the importance ascribed to place is revealed by the absence of an agent responsible for the act of throwing the ancestral offsprings onto land and sea. Creative power is given not to a creator but to the

place-world upon which they are thrown.[43] The myth emphasizes the localization of the Sama Dilaut perception of the space of the world.

> Long ago the ancestors of the Sama Dilaut lived at Johore, a place to the west near Mecca, in houseboats much like those they live in today in Tawi-Tawi. One day a strong wind began to blow. To secure his boat, the village headman stuck a pole into what he thought was the sea floor and tied his boat to it. The other villagers, also fearing the wind, tied their boats to that of the headman. It turned out, however, that instead of going into the sea floor, the pole of the headman was stuck in the nose of a giant stingray that lay sleeping beneath the flotilla. That night as the Sama Dilaut slept, the ray awakened and began to swim, pulling the boats behind it. When the Sama Dilaut awakened the next morning, they were adrift in the open sea and did not know the way back to Johore. For one week they drifted helplessly until finally the leader pleaded to Tuhan [God] for help. Within minutes, Tuhan send down a saitan [spirit] which entered the leader, who thus became the first djin [shaman] among the Sama Dilaut. The saitan instructed the leader to sail for two days toward the east. The flotilla did as instructed and on the second day, land was spotted. Upon reaching shore, the headman stuck a pole into the sea floor and all the boats were tied to it. This was the first mooring place in the Philippines for the Sama Dilaut and was consequently called "Samboangan." Today it is still called this by the Sama Dilaut while the rest of the world knows it as "Zamboanga." Shortly after their arrival in Zamboanga, the Sama Dilaut became subjects of the powerful Sultan of Sulu. [44]

A second cosmogonic myth related by Nimmo offers another perspective of the relationship between the Sama Dilaut, the sea, and their emplacement. This myth considers the sea near Johore as a launching point instead of positing the Sama Dilaut as being thrown onto the sea. The narrative of travel relates the constant motion of the Sama Dilaut upon the sea, beginning from their houseboats moored at Johore until their dispersal in the Sulu archipelago. Here, land becomes a marker of position rather than habitus as the Sama Dilaut do not actually leave their boats in the course of the myth. Instead, they establish a mooring place near the shore.

What becomes evident in the myth is the lack of desire to establish a territory upon Zamboanga; there is no attempt to legitimize any sense of ownership or possession over the land. Instead of territorializing, the Sama Dilaut establish a *samboangan*, an impermanent space for their houseboats beside the landmass through the act of driving one pole into the corals and tying the rest of the houseboats to it. The place is inaugurated tenuously, signifying the inevitability of leaving due to the ease through which the *samboang* can be removed and the ropes can be unfurled. Designating the place as *samboangan* or mooring

instead of territory implies a transient notion of inhabitation that is contingent upon the temporal and temporary anchorage of the boat rather than the rootedness of person upon the earth. In this narrative, the first *samboangan* is no territory, but is an inhabited space if only for the moment.

This cosmogony reveals an origin that is always already in flux, always already unsettled. Though the Sama Dilaut attempt to situate themselves within the purview of political rulers and royalty (the Johor and Sulu Sultanates), these relations serve as mere markers in a myth of traversal and dispersal; that is, the origin of how they came to be scattered in and beyond the archipelago. The emplacement of the dilaut of Zamboanga is made possible by the symbolic act of driving a samboang into the corals—*samboangan*—and the concept of all seas as potential places—*karilautan*.

The utterance of these cosmogonic myths articulates a founding of the place as place, portraying an understanding of a relationship with the sea that deviates from the civilized, the settled, and the landed. *Dilaut* is not freedom but place; it is not an elsewhere but home. In such inhabitation, the sea goes beyond mere space into a kind of place that unsettles and challenges our notion of territoriality and inhabited space. It is a kind of place that, though always in flux, remains a place.

TUBIG

A retour to "Lumujum Sahaya," the kata-kata sung by the wali-djinn Yusop Maksud Ambarat of Sitangkai makes topography immediately evident in the process of establishing a trajectory from sea to land: "*Dain aku lawm tubig/ . . . Paqilu ni bansud*"[45] or "From the water I came out/ . . . Coming on earth."[46] But what particularly demands attention is the deployment of the word "tubig," which Sangogot translates as "water."[47] The image of the topoi from sea to land creates the presupposition that the water here is "seawater," but the SILP-CSED reveals that Sinama term for seawater is *tahik*, which can also be used to refer to the sea as a body of water or the sea-seasons (monsoons).[48] While the general word for water and liquid is *bohé* (also the term used for semen or, figuratively, father),[49] the word *tubig* specifically denotes amniotic fluid, the waters that surround the amnion and released by the mother right before giving birth to a child.[50] Nimmo's ethnographic data reveals the importance of *tubig* in Sama Dilaut practices. When a woman gives birth, the amniotic sac is taken by the father to be buried onshore or beneath the stilt house depending on which superstition they wish to follow (Nimmo 1970, 260). In fact, another word for *tubig* is *k'mbal-bohe,'* literally "liquid-twin."[51] Relatedly, incest or *sumbang* is considered a major taboo in the community because those who engage in it are children of the same water, a prohibition that extends

to cousins who were very closely brought up. Incest is believed to inflict adverse effects on the community such as terrible weather and fishing conditions, and sometimes even death (Nimmo 1970, 166-189).

> Thus, a metaphor: seawater is amniotic fluid is twin.
> And another: sea: womb: origin.[52]

To consider the sea as the womb from which the wali-djinn emerges becomes a reversal of the throwing described in the first cosmogonic myth related by Nimmo. Here, the sea is not a mere place but a place of origin—the primordial chronotopic fluid that begat them and that the wali-djinn must submerge into and emerge from to be able to perform the healing ritual. By accessing this primordial origin and bringing it to shore, the chanter, Ambarat, enters an alternate spacetime, where he can attain the originary power of creation that would equip him with the ability to heal: to give life through the restoration of the body and to destroy through the removal of sickness. In this sense, beyond emplacement, the *sambahakan* reveals another function: magical potency—a performative magic.[53] Through Ambarat's invocation of *tubig*, the embrace of the sea-mother, becomes an evocation that allows him to access an imaginary to be sung.

LALOM

In considering this portrayal of the sea as a space that one can submerge into and emerge from, the sea is no longer purely horizontal—the seascape as horizon—and superficial. It has depth as well—depth that only the wali-djinn can access.

> 33.
> Mbal itu bai tahinang ku
> angaraq-ngaraq suala ku
> daipara alalom baggot baran ku
> bang asal bai tagnaq ku
> kata-kata insaq bai kalabayan ku
> daipara na sir nilubak na ma baran ku
> [from "Usaha Dilaut"
> sung by Panglima Isnang Jorolan][54]
> 33.
> I have not done this before,
> my voice trembled,
> it's good that I have a certain power in me;
> at the beginning, I was like that
> telling story, I have not tried before;
> but Sir, I was already challenged
> [trans. Talib Lim Sangogot][55]

In the kata-kata "Usaha Dilaut," Panglima Isnang Jorolan chants, "*daipara alalom baggot baran ku*," translated by Sangogot as "it's good that I have a certain power in me." Sangogot's translation seems to lack the poetic turns of Jorolan in this line. *Daipara*, for example, does not mean a state of goodness but a positive outcome despite the contrary, that is, the inability to chant a kata-kata that may not be familiar to him.

It is, however, with "alalom baggot baran ku" that the line becomes most compelling. First, *alalom* is translated here as "power," yet the SILP-CSED reveals that the term *lalom* means "depth" both literally, as in "the depth of a container or its contents" or "distance from the surface," and figuratively, as in depth of thinking or "profound of mental capacity."[56] In reference to the sea, *lalom* becomes the high tide, when waters rise so that the distance from the sea floor is farther, and *kalaloman* is "the ocean depths" or "the deep region of the sea."[57]

Second, *baggot* is translated as "have," that is, *to have in*, which assumes the chanter's intrinsic quality. But the term *baggot* is a verb that means "to lash something to a main part," implying that a rope or a cord of some kind is involved in the action; thus, it is not necessarily an intrinsic quality but something that is connected to the chanter.[58]

Finally, *baran* is a reference to the self as well as "the main part of a structure" or "the body of an animate creature."[59] Combined with *ku*, which is a first-person singular pronoun that can also be a possessive pronoun, *baran ku* can be translated as "my body." Thus, a translation for the line could be "fortunately, my body is lashed to the depths," which reveals that the power comes not from the self but from a source connected to the chanter. This source is both external to him and has the quality of depth: the sea. An image materializes from the presence of the waters: a child still attached to his mother by an umbilical cord. From this attachment, the sea bestows power to the chanter—the power to sing the kata-kata.

Aside from surface, depth, the "dimension of dimensions," augments the sea with another facet.[60] Albert Alejo SJ reckons with this notion of depth in his discussion of Filipino structures of dimensions and thought:

> Ang lalim ay yaong pagkahulog ng pagdanas mula sa ibabaw pababa, patungo sa nakatago, liblib, hindi makita or matanaw sa pagyuko. Ang pinakamahirap maabot na bahagi ng dagat ay ang "kailaliman" or "pusod" ng dagat. Doon ay may isang uri ng kadiliman, loob na loob kaya nga nakapangangamba. Sa lawak, maaari tayong maligaw; sa lalim, maaari tayong malunod.[61]

Casey reminds us that "[depth] is at once the mediatrix between sensible quality and body *and* that which enables the application of geometry to material body itself (Casey 1998, 40)." As such, it is only through the added dimensionality of depth that a space becomes a place for the human body—its inhabitant. The sea's capacity to surround and enclose is recognized through the application of the vertical —it imparts a density upon the sea that merely traveling upon its surface does not. Within this womb, the chanter is refigured as a fetus waiting to be reborn into a new being. It repeats an act of creation, a cosmogony of its own, a "double genesis" that reforms the chanter into a thaumaturge with vocative and curative powers (ibid., 5).

Returning to the invocation of Ambarat in Lumujum Sahaya, another trope emerges: the shaman as a boat. Though he emerges from the sea, the series of movements that he undertakes mimics that of the boat upon the waters: he floats, submerges, and rocks with the waves. In this manner, we can imagine the idea of coming from the water in a different way. Rather than emerging from beneath or within the water, the wali-djinn troped into a boat could be a visual emergence from the horizon as seen from the shore. Thus, the movement of the wali-djinn becomes both vertical and horizontal, a diachronic movement to access primordial time and a synchronic movement to convey the time through the poetic utterance. Here, spacetime works in unison with the sacred performance of the kata-kata, and the wali-djinn becomes the vehicle through which it moves.

3.
O . . . y, mbal taqangan-angan
kata-kata bai awal jaman
saliq akuy tamamang
kubak magbayan-bayan
ma pelang dapang-dapang

10.
Otoq,
taqnaq nilangan-langan
kata-kata bai awal jaman
pakale ka sangbayan
mbal akuy palaran
bang waktu bai si mmaq iq
dayang ku maglangan-langan
[from "Usaha Dilaut"
sung by Panglima Isnang Jorolan][62]

3.
O . . .y, it could not be imagined
story of the past
as if I was nervous
to travel by boat
in a dapang-dapang

going against the slow flow of a current

10.
Otoq,
the first time it was chanted,
story of the beginning of time;
listen to the song of contemplation
I should have not been drifted
if it was during the time of my then late father
when chanting my dear
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot] [63]

Similar to Amabarat's description of his conveyance of the kata-kata, Jorolan too imagines himself as a boat adrift as he attempts to sing the kata-kata against the currents of time: "*mbal akuy palaran/ bay waktu si mmaq iq*," that is, he would not have drifted if it had been sung during his father's time. As boat, the wali-djinn is heterotopic as well; he is a man of two beings—the man that he was born as and the djinn that indwells within him. Thus, the wali-djinn, here, considers thought vectorally. The sea may be seen as a primordial origin, that which enables the wali-djinn to access memory, but the kata-kata is the vehicle that creates and transmits upon that sea.

BANGKA

The constant traversal of land and sea reveals that while the Sama Dilaut have a clear affinity with the sea, their relationship with the land is just as strong. As such, the boat, the technology that facilitates this perpetual traversal becomes essential.[64] Among the boats of the Sama Dilaut, the houseboat is traditionally seen as the most central to their lifeways, and it is that which is commonly used in reference to them.[65] What differentiates the houseboat from an ordinary boat is the *pala'u*[66] that serves as the living quarters. The houseboat serves three purposes in the lives of the Sama Dilaut: mode of transportation, dwelling, and industrial tool for fishing.[67]

In this way, the houseboat can be considered a heterotopia that questions the very concept of place and dwelling, that is, the necessarily terrestrial or even geographic conception of home. As that which enables the Sama Dilaut to live upon the sea, the houseboat is simultaneously vehicle and home, a means of movement and a means of settlement. It becomes, in Foucault's terms, "a placeless place."[68] In developing Foucault's pithy ideas on the boat, Deleuze attempts to place this "placeless place" amidst the space of the ocean. For Deleuze, the boat goes beyond being a vessel set *upon* the sea and becomes a chamber that ruptures the sea, creating an enclosure for human subjectivity to emerge (Deleuze 2006, 123). This enclosure, the

sea enveloping the boat, turns the boat into a place within the vastness of the sea. It becomes inhabitable—a space now to be thought of as place. It is the place birthed by the sea in the same way that the Sama Dilaut consider the sea a womb. Yet, living upon the sea endows its dwellers with the capacity for ceaseless movement. Casey calls this an "unhoused inhabitation" upon the smooth space of the sea, where "the *on* of smooth space replaces the *in* of container space, the *at* of the point, and even the *with* of sedentary dwelling." Dwelling here is accomplished in traveling. One does not move *to* a dwelling but *dwells by moving*—by transits and transition from place to place within (or, again, *as*) regions of un-settlements.[69]

The doubled function of the houseboat upon the smooth space of the sea imbues it with the paradoxical characteristic that Casey assigns nomadic dwelling. Because of the boat, the Sama Dilaut's movement upon the sea may be considered a non-movement. They do not leave their inhabitation, but move within it, causing attempts to move them inland to be a form of displacement.

24.
Lapal kasiqan pagmundaq
teggol ku pinanyataq
ni si inaq si mmaq
iampa aku makaqandaq
na ginilu jalampaq
taga bulan ma tangngaq
taga llaw ma mundaq

25.
Bai yuk kasiqan pagmudaq
bang aniaq jalampaq
taga llaw ma tengngaq
taga bulan ma mundaq
ia koq ilu jalampaq
si Sultan Bintang Sali
anak siali lalla gimpu si Angkun Gumi
bai sinulat ma panji
ma parak dua kali
minsan Amapanjari
agon-agon palabi
[from "Lumujum Sahaya"
sung by Yusop Maksud Ambarat] [70]

24.
Other boat owners said:
"Since I was born,
by my mother and father
only now, do I see
a kind of junk

with a moon riding in the middle
and a sun in front"

25.
Other boat owners were saying:
"Should there be a junk
with a sun in the middle
and a moon in front
that is the junk
of Sultan Bindang Sali
the youngest son, adopted by mother Earth;
it was written on the page
of the Qu'ran,
even the Creator,
was almost surpassed"
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot] [71]

One notable event in the kata-kata "Lumujum Sahaya" is the boat race between Sultan Bindang Sali, the older brother of Lumujum Sahaya, and Sultan Amilbangsa. As he sails toward the other boats, Sultan Bindang Sali is met with awe because his *jalampaq*—a type of boat that no longer exists and is only referred to in myth—(translated by Sangogot as a junk), contains the moon and the sun.[72] Through the repetition of the lines, it is however, the movement of the sun and moon over the boat that strengthens the image. In verse 24, the sun is in front while the moon is at the middle, whereas this is reversed in line 25. The motion of the sun and moon upon the boat mimics their movement around the earth and over the horizon. As that which carries the moon and sun and upon which they move, the boat—vehicle and dwelling—becomes the sea, and the horizon is the space above it, the cosmos.

The boat is a home is a sea is a cosmos. In this metaphoric movement, which is also metonymic, dwelling is repeated from the inhabitation of the boat, the heterotopic space; to the sea, the *dilaut* as a home; and finally to the heavens. Notably, this boat-world is also owned by Sultan Bindang Sali, who has been adopted by Angkun Gumi, translated by Sangogot as Mother Earth.[73] According to the SILP-CSED, *gumi* is the Sinama term for the earth that one returns to upon death;[74] in Tawi-Tawi, these are equivalent to the cemetery islands within their purview.[75] The space of the boat thus becomes space for the entire cosmic order: sea and land, life and death, dwelling and vehicle. From the movements within this trope, the world of the Sama Dilaut is a complete world—a cosmic world where the boundaries between their spaces are blurred and attain fullness. It understands their spaces as inhabited places despite and, perhaps, because of the constant flux through which they live.

PANDUGA

The traversal of a world as mutable as the archipelago requires an intimacy with its space. For the Sama Dilaut, this does not only mean the sea and its islands but the entire ecology of their dwelling spaces. To find one's bearings upon the sea, a constant detour to panduga, the reference points or markers within the environment of the seascape, must be performed.

Among the panduga of the Sama Dilaut, islands are especially significant so much so that to lose sight of the islands would mean to be lost at sea, to no longer be in the domain of the *dilaut*.[76] Moreover, islands too become the point of the emergence and convergence of other panduga. For instance, one of the primary constellations used by the Sama Dilaut is the constellation *Pu'pu'*, the Sinama term for islands.[77] The oscillating tropic movement from island to constellation exhibits how *Pu'pu'* does not simply serve as guide but also as a cosmic reflection of the archipelago upon which it shines. Similarly, some winds or *baliyu* are island-based: *dalat*, the wind from the island, and *balat-daya*, the wind toward the island. The Sama Dilaut often consider these island winds even more important than the sea winds in their navigation of their *dilaut* due to the islandic topography that influences the flow of the wind currents. [78]

However, panduga are not merely markers of position in space but also the occurrence of an event within the environment. The appearance of *Pu'pu* in the night sky heralds the coming of the north wind, *Uttara*; the glow *Lakag* or *Maga*, the planet Venus, indicates the advent of dawn; and the phases of the moon reveal which types of fish can be caught.[79] In the kata-kata "Lumujum Sahaya," the panduga *Maga* or the planet Venus, guides the titular hero back home after his brother, Kurindang Pananga, is brought back to life. In invoking *Maga*, Lumujum Sahaya's position and trajectory is disclosed: he is traveling at the break of dawn and toward the east. It is the guiding light that not only facilitates passage but also manifests an environment.

134.
Nilinganan inaq na
inaq maka si immaq
pagga temos na palkalaq
moleq na aku
ni sindung deoq ku
Maga
[from "Lumujum Sahaya"
sung by Yusop Maksud Ambarat]

134.
He called his mother:
"Mother and father

since the incident was already over
I am returning home
under the shadow
of Venus
[trans. Talib Lim Sangogot] [80]

Panduga cannot be seen in isolation. In this study of Sama Dilaut ethnoastronomy, Dante Ambrosio depicts the interrelation of the *panduga* to each other as markers of navigation.[81]

> [Ang hangin], kasama ang iba nilang kaalaman sa kumpigurasyon ng mga isla, sa pormasyon ng mga ulap at kaugnayan nito sa lupa, sa daloy ng dagat, sa mga isda at iba pang yamang-dagat, and tumutulong sa kanila sa paglalakbay [. . .] gumagamit ang mga Pilipino ng bituin bilang patnubay sa pagtawid-dagat. Isang halimbawa ang mga Sama ng Tawi-Tawi na mahusay na manlalayag at panday ng sasakyang dagat.

In sailing, the stars, specifically Polaris and the Southern Cross, become primary positioning guides; however, when the stars are hidden, the sea currents that move from north to south and south to north may be consulted instead. Moreover, the panduga also indicate if the weather conditions are favorable for travel. Though the sky may seem clear and the sea may seem calm from the shore, the appearance of algae in the waters near the shore portends the coming of a typhoon.[82] To find one's bearings and to set a trajectory in the archipelago, one must consult the totality of the environment and how the relations of the *panduga* narrate and track the currents.

In this essay, the conception of the sea expands from a space of freedom and chaos to an archive of memory that the wali-djinn accesses, where a self-reflexive understanding of the variability in the conveyance of memory is emphasized. Any utterance of truth is exhibited as fluid with every repetition, questioning the fixity of the historical text and its claims of factuality. As the vector of memory, orature moves the perspectival axis to the position of the Sama Dilaut, where the tropes that have been identified with the Sama Dilaut are reconsidered. The trope of the sea and its facets (water and depth), for instance, is given specificity. By turning the free and abyssal seas into a habitus and a womb, the tropographic stereotyping of the Sama Dilaut as nomadic uncivilized sea dwellers is overturned. I turn from the sea to the boat, the vessel that allows the Sama Dilaut to simultaneously move and dwell upon the aquatic. The supposed unsettled perception of boat-dwelling is questioned, and the boat as home becomes the world that carries the heavens. The sea and the boat, instead of being mere spaces, become inhabited places for the Sama Dilaut, allowing them to redefine, and us to rethink, terratoriality. It shows that one

can be settled in the midst of fluidity and the one can inhabit without terror.

While I have focused on Sama Dilaut orature from Tawi-Tawi, the dispersal of the Sama Dilaut throughout the archipelago and beyond ensures that each group in each place differs significantly from others as can be gleaned from the variety of Sinama dialects. Moreover, the displacement of the Sama Dilaut from sea to land is also an important field of inquiry. Inland, the Sama Dilaut still ride the waves of life that they encounter. They strategically navigate the forces of religion, politics, society, researchers, artists, and philanthropists. In the same way that they haptically find their way through the ocean, they maneuver through these forces so as to be able to find their way back home to their seas. A comparison between the Sama Dilaut in the Sulu archipelago and those who have found their way inland may provide another facet to Sama Dilaut navigation. Furthermore, the Sama Dilaut are not the only sea dwellers in Southeast Asia. The orature of the Moken and the Orang Laut may reveal other ways of moving and dwelling upon the seas and across the region's archipelagos that would open up other vistas and streams in modes of habitation beyond terratoriality.

NOTES

1. H. Arlo Nimmo, "You will remember us because we have sung for you" (1972, 299).
2. Republic Act No. 8371, Chapter 3, discusses indigenous rights to ancestral domain, which is primarily land-based.
3. Presidential Decree No. 1563 criminalizes mendicancy, imposing a fine on offenders if caught.
4. See Connelly (2008, 46). For further discussion on the spatiality of terror, Stuart Elden's discussion is particularly enlightening in *Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty* (2009).
5. Aminkadra Malabong (Mega), a Sama Dilaut friend, discloses the manner through which they travel upon the sea: "*sa sinama yung nabigasyon tawag sa amin PANDUGA titingin lang sa star o current halimbawa punta tayo sa sabah mayroon tingnan ang PANDUGA*" (SMS communication). As a noun, *panduga* is a reference point or landmark. Using such reference points, *panduga* as verb is the action of not only determining position but also of ascertaining the currents of the environment.

6. From the Greek *navigare—navis/naus* (ship) and *agere* (to drive)—the act of travelling on water, navigation necessitates both technology and agency for its successful execution. Expanding the word from its nautical roots, technology—from *tekhnē*, an art—can be considered any type of craft that a particular cultural community utilizes to steer its way through its environment. Navigation, in this case, does not only arise from a culture's history of seafaring but also from the manner through which the individuals of a specific community deploy its technologies—art as transport—to navigate their way through their specific realities as manifested in their spaces, modes of expression, and forms of movement. In doing so, they estimate their positioning to orient themselves and determine the route that they should take to reach their destination. If navigation is a type of movement that is essential to movement, these movements must be revealed in the forms of relation employed by the navigators. Here, I consider the term *relation* in the intuition of Michel Serres and Edouard Glissant: as a way of moving and as storytelling. For Glissant, "Relation" is an "aesthetics of rupture and connection," which describes the turbulent flows of global cultural and historical networks. It is simultaneously solidary and solitary, recognizing that the formation of cultures is not purely insular while understanding that it cannot be fully grasped as well. The linguistic idiosyncrasies of French creole complicate this poetics because "the French word *Relation*, which functions somewhat like an intransitive verb, could not correspond, for example, to the English term *relationship*." The semantics of the word reveals the two-fold character of Glissant's method of Relation. In the first instance, relation as noun refers to the entanglements among entities—their ruptures and connections. In the second, relation as verb refers to the act of telling and narrating. In contrast, Serres' formulation of relation is hinged upon the manner of movement: "Relations are, in fact, ways of moving from place to place, or of wandering." Through this, relation becomes a "way" from the German *weg*, to move or to carry, that is, a vehicular movement—a way of movement that carries. See Michel Serres and Bruno Latour, *Conversations on Science, Culture, and Time* (1995, 103) and Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (1997, 151).

7. In following the movement of the trope amidst the interplay between geography and textuality, I employ the concept of t(r)opography, a term coined by Norma Alarcón and expounded upon by Mary Pat Brady in her discussion of Cherríe Moraga's work: "T(r)opography underscores the movement between the spatial and the figurative, emphasizing the spatial work of the imaginary

and capturing the peculiar nexus between memory, space, the body and desire that Moraga's work winds in and around."

8. Sama Dilaut scholar Mucha Shim Lahaman Quiling deploys the concept of the moorage as well as the concept of the "moorish" in reference to the region's Islamic entanglements in her creative, critical, and political writings in the news website *MindaNews*, the news service arm of the Mindanao Institute of Journalism. See Mucha Shim Quiling, "Moorish and Mooring in Tawi-Tawi Reefs" (2018).

9. This orature will be dealt with via philology, which is "the art of reading slowly," a quote attributed to Roman Jakobson by Calvert Watkins. This emphasizes a dwelling in and on language as a way of analysis. Thus, I too turn to philology in an attempt to follow the movement of the trope that has been frozen in ethnographic apprehensions of it.

10. Quiling expresses this sentiment in her research on Sama Dilaut oral narratives. She states, "Regrettably, in the din of all these debates and contending views, the voice of the Sama people remain garbled, if not mummed and silenced" (2014, 141-148). To speak of the Sama Dilaut worldview in their terms also emphasizes the limitations of the philological, especially when looking at a transcribed and translated orature, because their "terms" are not merely linguistic moments. It is for this reason that I sought to speak to individuals from two Sama Dilaut communities: those struggling to ensure their place in Tawi-Tawi and those who are constantly displaced in Mabalacat, Pampanga (this moorage has since been destroyed by the local government). My stay in these communities was brief, not enough to immerse in fieldwork, but enough to establish connections.

11. Ambarat, Yusop Maksud, "Lumuhum Sahaya," in *Philippine Epics and Ballads Archive* (2007 [1997]).

12. Ambarat, "Foretelling the Truth," (ibid.).

13. Dr. Joyce Martin related this kernel of an insight in a commentary on my work: "I wonder if the 'arch' in the 'arch-sea' can also be seen as "archive"—*arkhe* in the beginning, how it is actually a vessel of memory….the sea also deromanticizes the fixed monuments as guardians of memory, but [repositions memory] in oral exchange, [in] the rituals, [and in] the role of the chanter as prophet and historian."

14. For Aleida Assman, the embodied practices and performances generated by primarily oral cultures cannot, by necessity, be stored in the archive (2010, 105).

15. Pierre Nora's claim, that the written archive often prohibits access to memory for the sake of preservation, proves contentious. These *lieux de memoire*, places of memory, attempt "to stop time, to block the work of forgetting, to establish a state of things, to immortalize death, to materialize the immaterial….all of this in order to capture a maximum of meaning in the fewest of signs." It is the antithesis of living memory environments, and its collection becomes the tombs of memory. Nora states, "There are *lieux de memoire,* sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de memoire*, real environments of memory" (1989, 13).

16. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "awal-jaman," http://www-01.sil.org/asia/philippines/prog/sml/dict/lexicon/index.htm.

17. A conversation with Imam Nassar in the Sama Dilaut village in Mabalacat, Pampanga reveals that the kata-kata is also merely any story that is sung. This contradicts the statement of Hamca, a Sama Dilaut of Sitangkai, that it can only be sung when someone is sick. These two opposing concepts of the kata-kata reveals the plurality of the beliefs of the Sama Dilaut based on location. It may also be instructive to trace the etymological roots of the term "kata-kata." From Bahasa, "kata" means "word," what is considered the atomic linguistic element. Kata, therefore, is the "word," perhaps similar to the way that voicing becomes a creative activity. In Tagalog, there is "katha," again linked to linguistic creativity; it is a creative deployment of storytelling. Given these similarities, we look to what may be a linguistic root: the Sanskrit "katha," which means storytelling. In some areas in India such as West Bengal, *kathā* is a religious tale, usually told during fasts or rituals, and which is perceived to be true. It is often juxtaposed with *kahānī*, which is a story that is believed to be false and is generally secular. The sacrality of the *kathā* as a form of religious narration, functions similarly to that of the kata-kata of the Sama Dilaut. See Korom (2003, 331).

18. Clifford Sather claims that the wali-djinn in Semporna are technically not shamans because they do not undergo trances or spiritual journeys (1997, 303). Nimmo, however, testifies that he had met wali-djinns in Tawi-Tawi who do so or are able to do so (2001, 149).

19. Injahali, Jaafar, interview by the author, Tawi-Tawi, (4 December 2015). Blood-tie alone does not suffice to become a wali-djinn. For example, Injahali's uncle was a wali-djinn, but only Injahali, and not an actual son, became one.

20. "Tuhan" is a Malay term that means "lord" from the Proto-Malayo-Polynesian "qatuan." Tuhan is also considered the supreme god of the Sama Dilaut and is often conflated with Allah by the Sama Dilaut who have converted to Islam.

21. This indwelling is also called "duwata." See *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*.

22. Taussig ponders: "Is it possible that these winds and savages stand as mnemonic images of distinct historical modes of memory production and reproduction, whose most finely wrought expression is to be found in shamanic images where it is precisely the task to rework, and if possible undo, the history of sorcery with its memory?" (1987, 374).

23. In theorizing the role of the archivist, Hugh Taylor, considered the doyen of Canadian archivists, compares the archivist to a shaman. This metaphorical pronouncement places the archivist, long relegated as handmaiden of the historian, into a position that allows her to envision a more significant contribution to the arts of memory. In Taylor's discussion of the need for a less logocentric consideration of the archive, the role of the archivist, who is often submerged in the praxis of his occupation, is handed a divine mandate: "The study of documentary iconography will not only help us extend our range, it may also enable us to develop the faculty of the artist to program effects and recognize new patterns within an information environment, where process and change have eroded old rules and verities. Only then will we assume once more the role of the shaman, which the ancient keepers of records knew so well. To perceive, by projection, the future patterns of our documentary galaxy, and to act in the light of this knowledge, must be our awesome task" (2003, 87).

24. During a panel discussion on "The Archipelago as a Moving Archive," I discussed the resistance enacted by the wali-djinn through the kata-kata by referring to the kata-kata *Usaha Dilaut* and *Tandanan*. In *Usaha Dilaut,* the chant ends with the necessity of singing the kata-kata to keep militarization at bay. ("Navigating the Kata-Kata," panel on "The Archipelago as Moving Archive: Orature and Performance in Southern Mindanao," *Kritika Kultura* Lecture Series, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, 17 April 2017).

25. Ambarat, "Foretelling the Truth," (2007 [1997], 7).

26. Ibrahim, Haji Ismael, "Si Baga-Baga" (2007 [1995]).

27. Ambarat, "Foretelling the Truth," (2007 [1997], 7).

28. An endonym is the name that a community gives itself as opposed to the exonym, a name given to a community by others. Scholars such as Nimmo have identified "Sama Dilaut" as the endonym of the sea people who dwell upon the Sulu and Celebes seas; however, my own encounters with these groups have revealed that such insistence on the use of "Sama Dilaut" over the exonym "Bajao" is of little concern to the community. In Mabalacat, Pampanga, where displaced Sama Dilaut have moored upon the lahar areas, "Bajao" remains their recognized name. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "dilaut."

29. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary, s.v. "dilaut."*

30. Ibid., s.v. "karilautan."

31. Ibid., s.v. "parilaut."

32. Nimmo provides a more detailed discussion of this ritual in *Magosaha* (2001,159-160).

33. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "kablangan."

34. Ibid., s.v. "kaladjun."

35. This seems to contrast to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the sea as smooth space par excellence. Here, those who dwell upon the sea have organized it linguistically to define its specific regions. However, Deleuze and Guattari's discussion on the maritime model of smooth space still holds surprising insights, especially in light of arguments against their lack of material specificity. Particularly noteworthy is the idea that the conception of smooth space by the nomad is directional and navigational rather than dimensional or metrical as is usually the case in striated spaces; see Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 478-481).

36. Pierre Bourdieu examines how the act of *naming* is an act of power, an act of creating the world. In the relations of varying agents within the social space, there is a struggle to be able to determine the world and to set the perspective of the world following the agent's symbolic capital. Power, in this case, becomes the recognition they attain from other agents within this social space. This kind of symbolic power is manifested through the act of naming or nomination, which can be considered a form of performative magic that confers power upon the namer and authority upon the named. This power is conferred upon a figure who has sufficient qualification—a title bestowed by an acknowledged institutional power—and given authority by the ruling state, providing him the ability to author and authorize the perception of the world. Notably, Bourdieu names the social scientist as having been awarded such symbolic authority—a magical power—to represent the world through his word. In this way, the act of naming becomes a ritual that consecrates representation and takes it as truth: *regere fines*, to determine the limits or rules of existence, and *regere sacra,* to affix and establish such limits that that they become real. Thus, the magical force of the name: "*Status est magistratus; 'l'Etat, c'est moi'*. Or, what amounts to the same thing, the world is my representation" (Bourdieu 1991, 106).

37. Casey notes, "A cosmogonic narrative is not only a recounting of events in time….such a narrative also tells of things *in place*, how things occupy or come to acquire places. It tells, too, of *events* in place. Events, those prototypical temporal occurents, call for cosmic emplacement: no event can happen unplaced, suspended in a placeless *aithēr*" (1998, 7).

38. Quoted in Nimmo (2001,140).

39. This reference and subsequent critique of the narratives collected and analyzed by Nimmo is driven not only by the importance of his work in Sama Dilaut history and literature but also his subject position as a Western scholar.

40. Due to the limitations of technology during the period of his fieldwork, Nimmo had to re-use the tapes and erase the original recordings of the myth, hence the loss of the Sinama version.

41. See Sangogot, "The Tawi-Tawi Sama Literary Voice" (2005, 62).

42. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "deya-dilaut."

43. Casey asserts: "The world is, minimally and forever, a place-world. Indeed, insofar as being or existence is not bestowed by creation or creator, place can be said to take over roles otherwise attributed to a creator-god or to the act of creation: roles of preserving and sustaining things in existence. For if things were both uncreated *and* unplaced, they could not be said to *be* in any significant sense" (1998, 4).

44. A shorter version of this myth does not include Sufi elements. Instead of asking *Tuhan* to save them, the Sama Dilaut wander all over the Sulu Sea until they eventually reach Tawi-Tawi. The Sultan of Sulu is also not mentioned in the shorter version (Nimmo 2007, 23). Pallesen's linguistic study on the Sama-Bajaw language within Austronesian languages reveals that the Sama Dilaut have actually resided within the Sulu archipelago prior the coming of the Tausug. As such, the historical veracity of the myth is questioned by Nimmo. However, the sovereignty of the Sultanate of Sulu over the group indicates the seemingly passive character of

the Sama Dilaut in the face of some authority figures. According to Nimmo, "The boat-dwelling groups are notoriously nonaggressive and their history is punctuated with incidents that frightened or drove them away" (27). The displacement experienced by the Sama Dilaut caused by the strong wind and the giant stingray has an almost fatalistic quality. They seem to sense their powerlessness in the face of greater forces and, instead, choose to move with the forces rather than against them. This apparent fatalistic quality is echoed by their turn to *Tuhan*, their supreme being, who eventually leads them to a new mooring area.

45. Ambarat, "Lumujum Sahaya," (2007 [1997], 2).

46. Ambarat, "Foretelling the Truth" (ibid., 2).

47. *Tubig* is also the term used for water in other Philippine languages such as Tagalog and Tausug (notably, Sangogot is Tausug).

48. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "tahik."

49. Ibid., s.v. "bohe."

50. Ibid. s.v. "tubig."

51. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "k'mbal-bohe'."

52. The concept of the sea as primordial is not unique to the Sama Dilaut. As the archetypal void, the sea also becomes an archetypal matrix if the void is considered as the space where place emerges. In Casey's discussion on the void as matrix, he states, "The world starts with an 'embedding or enclosing mass'….that is aqueous in character; it starts with 'the waters' as the generative matrix of things-to-be, things-to-come." In tracing this concept of the waters as matrix, Casey refers to Genesis ("dark Deep"), and the Hebrew *Tehom* ("deep waters") that stems from the Mesopotamian *Tiamat* ("bitter water," "primordial oceanic force") as juxtaposed with Apsu ("sweet water," "prime begetter")—combined, creation occurs—in the cosmogonic tale *Enuma Elish* (1998, 24).

53. Gaston Bachelard in *Water and Dreams* (1994 [1969], 115-121) also considers the waters as maternal. He begins with a quote from Madame Bonaparte: "The sea is for all men one of the greatest and most constant maternal symbols." Although Bachelard continuously gives primacy to fresh water over seawater in the book, it is from this metaphor of the sea as mother that he launches the idea of the nutritive qualities of the aqueous. But instead of amniotic fluid, the liquid of resemblance transferred to the waters is maternal milk, which he considers "the first substantive in the order of liquid realities, that is, the first meaningful material reality from

which all understanding of waters emerge. In his reading of milky waters (he claims that sometimes the sea may attain milky qualities as well), it becomes that which nourishes the imagination so much so that it becomes a material reality. As he theorizes, "The *imaginary* does not find its deep, nutritive roots in *images*; first, it needs a closer, more enveloping and material presence. Imaginary reality is evoked before being described" (ibid.).

54. Isnang Jorolan, "Usaha Dilaut" (2007 [1997]).

55. Jorolan, "Usaha Dilaut: Fishing Ventures in the Sea" (ibid.).

56. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "lalom."

57. ibid., s.v. "kalaloman."

58. ibid., s.v. "baggot."

59. ibid., s.v. "baran."

60. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Primacy of Perception* (1964), as quoted in Casey (1998, 39).

61. From the pioneering work on Filipino social psychology by Albert Alejo SJ (1990, 71).

62. Joroloan, "Usaha Dilaut" (2007 [1997], 1-2).

63. Jorolan, "Usaha Dilaut: Fishing Ventures" (2007 [1997], 1-2).

64. In "Shipshape Societies," Pierre-Yves Manguin considers "the boat as a metaphor for an organized social unit." Through a historical, ethnological, and philological exploration of the boat in Southeast Asia, he reveals the complex structuring of various groups in the region that derive from the structuring of the boat. The importance of the boat in Southeast Asia stems from pre-colonial thallasocracies. As such, the boat motif is prevalent in insular Southeast Asian material culture and lexigraphy (Manguin, 2001, 373). Like Manguin, Ma. Bernadette L. Abrera's discussion on the boat—specifically, the *Bangka*, a term that stems from Austronesian roots—resorts to philology as a method. She claims, "*Ang malalim na kaalaman at karanasan ng katutubo sa dagat at paglalayag ay nasasalamin ng mayamang wika na maraming talinghagang nagbubuhat sa paghahambing sa tubig*" (Abrera 2002, iii). Notably, the Moken boat is called *kabang*, which can be a metathesis of the *bangka*. Ivanoff states, "The Moken *kabang* is more than a means of transport; it is also a floating house, a means of production and a proof of their technical ingenuity." Although Ivanoff provides an etymological accounting of the word *kabang*, the metathetical play of the word with *bangka* is not stated. This, however, emphasizes the theorized Malay roots of the Moken (Ivanoff 1999, 151).

65. For the Sama Dilaut, the boat is that which enables them to inhabit the sea. According to Nimmo, the Sama Dilaut build fifteen types of boats. Beyond their quotidian utility, the Sama Dilaut boats also play more symbolic and sacral functions such as the *pamatulakan*, which is used in a religious ceremony of the same name to banish evil spirits from the samboangan and the *pamatulakan ta'u ta'um*, which are used as male grave markers. Given their ubiquity in Sama Dilaut lifeways, boats are similarly constant in kata-kata. For example, "Usaha Dilaut" features four types of boats in the narrative: *dapang-dapang*, *damas-damas*, *lepa-lepa*, and even *mapungag kahaq-kahaq* or "broken frying pan" as a metaphor for a leaking boat. Thus is how the boat becomes central to their imaginary.

66. Pala'u is also one of the names—often, pejorative—given to the Sama Dilaut.

67. Today, few Sama Dilaut groups use houseboats. Most live in stilt houses along coasts or else in other spaces, such as shantytowns, where they have been displaced. For more insight into this movement from boat to village, see Jumala (2011, 87-131).

68. The boat acquires heterotopic qualities as a measure of form against the sea's "formlessness." As a "placeless place," the very question of emplacement comes to the fore: the ship exhibits a relationship that "at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed" all other places. As it mimics ordered society (often, order and striation of roles and tasks upon the ship are stricter than that upon land: a utopic ordering), it also does what no landform can: it closes the space between ports. In doing so, it acquires a heterochronic quality: time aboard the ship moves differently from that upon land as it is suspended into an ever present. Within this folding of time and space, one activity persists to ride through the perilous storms of journeying: navigation. And it is through such activity that dreams arise at the promise of a destination—the destiny of Western conquest. See Foucault (1998, 184-185).

69. Casey (1998, 307). This resembles Clifford's proposed approach to comparative cultural studies as "traveling-in-dwelling, dwelling-in-traveling" (Clifford 1997, 13).

70. Ambarat, "Lumujum Sahaya" (2007 [1997], 3-4).

71. Ambarat, "Foretelling the Truth," (ibid.).

72. See *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "jalampaq."

73. While I have been unable to find an accurate translation for this name, I would like to conjecture that it stems from the Malay *bintaŋ*, which means "star," and the Sinama *sali*, which means "comparable or equal to something." In this case, Sultan Bintung Sali resembles a star, which matches the cosmic movement of the moon and the sun upon his boat.

74. *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "gumi."

75. Although the Sama Dilaut traditionally live upon their boats or stilt houses moored near the shore, the moment of death becomes a sort of settlement within the islands. From his fieldwork, Nimmo claims that two uninhabited islands, Bilatan Po'on and Bunabuna'an, are the designated burial islands for the Sama Dilaut. He also states that these islands affect the movements of the community due to religious traditions that require them to travel to the islands in the event of a burial or to pay periodic homage to their dead (2001, 49).

76. See Meñez Coben (2009, 356). In contrast, the Moken's own manner of orientation or coordination is heavily based on the stars rather than the islands. This is depicted in the Moken tale "Gaman the Malay" (Ivanoff 1999, 148-214).

77. In Western astronomy, this is the constellation Pleiades.

78. The SILP-CSED entry for "baliyu" states: "Wind directions in Sama meteorology are modified by topography, so that an offshore wind such as balat-daya may blow from different directions on the opposite sides of a high island. The descriptions of winds in terms of compass directions is necessarily imprecise." See *SIL Philippines Central Sinama-English Dictionary*, s.v. "baliyu."

79. Malabong (SMS Communication), 20 March 2016. Malabong explains, "*Mayron star ingroup ang tawag samin Pupu malalaman may hangin o wala mayron isang star ang tawag sa amin Lakag kung la labas na lapit na lalabas araw" and "Mayron pa mam PANDUGA sa moon kung 1st to 5f moon lalabas ang daing pote yung isda malaki puti lahat ang katawan nya kung 7moon to 8moon labas ang isda balawis kung fulmoon lalabas isda maliit piyatay o isda bilis.*"

80. Ambarat (2007 [1997], 19).

81. "Isa pang manlalayag ng Panglima Sugala ang nagwikang ginagamit din niya ang mga bituin sa paglalakbay. Lamang, hindi niya alam ang mga pangalan nito. Aniya, sa pagpunta ng Tawaw, Sabah, itinututok niya ang kanyang sasakyan sa isang bituin na mababa pa sa bihing-langit (horizon). Pagtaas-taas, natatakpan ito ng bubong ng *pamansanan lantsa* kung saan siya nagtitimon. Pero bago ito mawala, may ibang bituin na lumilitaw sa dating kinaroroonan nito na tanaw niya mula sa pamansanan lantsa. Ito

naman ang susunod na gagamitin niyang gabay. Kapag ito naman ang nawala, papalitan niya ito ng iba hanggang sa marating niya ang destinasyon. Kapag natanaw na niya ang liwanag sa ibabaw ng Tawaw na likha ng ilaw, wala nang problema sa paglalayag dahil ito na lang ang susundan niya." See Ambrosio (2010, 210; and 205 for the quoted text).

82. Jubail S. Muyong, interview with author, 2 December 2015. Jubail S. Muyong, a Sama Dilaut who was part of the crew of the balangay voyage in 2010, described these techniques in Sama Dilaut navigation during our brief conversation in Tawi-Tawi at the 1st International Sama Dilaut Conference hosted by the Sama Studies Center, Mindanao State University-Tawi-Tawi.

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