

ghost story

Julia Lunot

do you believe in ghosts?
my lolo was born haunted in
haunted land maundering phantoms met
him prior to his mother land habituated by
prior history of use / do you
believe in ghosts? buried bodies
Battle of Manila Bay become buried
broken bottles / military waste invents
restless phantoms / do you
believe in ghosts? colonialism is justified
as using what is unused
or so signed the Spanish Fleet
and so signed the United States across
the right to retain rent-free
use of land unused / do you
believe in ghosts? violation of the Philippine
Constitution and feigned liberation have
no half-life / persisting in viles of
my lolo's childhood

I believe in ghosts
spirits stow secretly away in a
Japan airlines seat manifests absent
parenting abusing vice / alienation
from one's mother land from
father's home from Subic Bay
from Luzon Island / I believe
in ghosts / neoliberal language is the promised
exorcism resembles the same apparition
nagging my father's guarded



Concrete Jungle by Belle Villar

work ethic wary political
participation / mindful risk-
management

my father fears failure because
his father taught him to
living in oriented proximity to
haunted conceives minor feelings
anger of unrendered possession:
starved anger becomes racial self-
hatred becomes walls of apologetic
space my father cannot
speak Tagalog

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