

## Kohlbergian Analysis of the Moral Reasoning in Lino Brocka's Leading Films

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### ABSTRACT

The year 2014 marks the 75th birth anniversary of the Filipino film maker and National Artist for Film Lino Brocka. By using the moral development theory of the American psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, this paper examines sixteen cases of moral dilemmas and their resolutions, as found in Brocka's iconic films *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang* (You've Been Weighed and Found Wanting), *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* (Manila, In the Claws of Light), *Insiang, Jaguar* (Guard), *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim* (My Country: Gripping the Knife's Edge), and *Orapronobis* (Fight for Us). This paper established that one of the techniques that Brocka used in his moral discourses is to contrast the moral reasoning of his fictive agents with his own moral reasoning. This results in an infusion of his moral narratives with the potentiality for multiple interpretation by the audience: in some cases, this contrapuntal technique was used to propose a third higher moral narrative; while in others, the moral narratives of Brocka had the tendency to challenge the Philippine traditional norms and rules, as well as the hypocrisies of the Philippine society; and finally, that Brocka tended to intertwine his moral and political discourses, particularly his argument for class solidarity as the remedy of the injustices brought about by the power inequality among Philippine social classes. Thus, Brocka's masterpieces should not only be used as materials in the study of Philippine films, or in the study of political and social criticism; but more so as materials for the study of ethics and morality that are relevant to Philippine social conditions.

*Keywords:* Lino Brocka, *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang*, *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*, *Insiang, Jaguar*, *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim*, *Orapronobis*, moral reasoning, moral criticism, Lawrence Kohlberg, and theory of moral development

## INTRODUCTION

Catalino “Lino” Brocka is a national artist of the Republic of the Philippines; a recipient of the Gawad CCP para sa Sining (Cultural Center of the Philippines Award for Art) for film, of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for journalism, literature and creative communication arts, and of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Philippines Award; a key figure in what is known as the second golden age of Philippine cinema; and one who is fondly called an “actor’s director” in the Philippine film industry. He was born in 1939 in Sorsogon, grew up in Nueva Ecija after his father died, and tried to pursue a college degree on scholarship and self-support at the University of the Philippines. Although he did not earn a degree, he stayed long in this university and gained solid knowledge about stagecraft and directing through the student dramatic club.

Brocka began making melodramatic films for LEA Productions in 1970, when he directed its Manila Film Festival entry *Wanted: Perfect Mother*. After whipping out nine films with this outfit, he left in 1972 and spent the next couple of years teaching film and drama, directing television shows, and being connected with the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA). He organized the Movie Actors Workshop in 1973, Cinemanila in 1974, and the Concerned Artists of the Philippines (CAP) in 1983. With Cinemanila, he again began producing films that were informed by his basic presupposition that filmmaking cannot be separated from sociopolitical life and that it is possible to develop a great Filipino audience through well-crafted works. As a filmmaker, Brocka uses his technical innovations and rigorous selection and guidance of his actors to develop his characters. A lot of his inspirations and insights emerged from his personal experiences, such as early lessons on life learned from his father, his difficult childhood and adolescence, his being a Mormon missionary, his life with the lepers of Molokai, his wanderings in the United States of America, his involvement in theatrical productions, and his stint as a production staff member and eventually director for the television show *Balintataw*. At the height of his local and international fame, Brocka died in a car accident in 1991.

On the 75<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of this great Filipino film maker, this paper attempts to give tribute to him by studying in closer detail six of his greatest works, namely *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang* (You’ve Been Weighed and Found Wanting), *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* (Manila, In the Claws of Light), *Insiang, Jaguar* (Guard), *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim* (My Country: Gripping the Knife’s Edge), and *Orapronobis* (Fight for Us). Instead of looking at the more familiar themes of political, social and cultural criticisms that are commonly associated with the works of Brocka, this paper ventures into the less explored moral dimensions of his masterpieces. The

moral criticism envisioned by this paper was done by identifying some sixteen instances of moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions, and by analyzing them from the point of view of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development. This paper recognizes that film as a mode of discourse is a product of the collaborative efforts of the producer, director, scriptwriter, production designer, cinematographer, sound designer, actors, and others. By primarily attributing these masterpieces to the artistic genius of Brocka, this paper assumes the point of view of the *auteur* theory, which argues that in some films, the director functions as a creative author by imprinting upon the film their personal artistic vision.

### KOHLBERG'S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Kohlberg is an American psychologist who built on the cognitive development theory of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, whose research on the intellectual development of children touched on the area of moral reasoning. In his 1932 book *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Piaget claims that children below the ages of seven to eight have a heteronomous morality, in which notions of right and wrong are imposed upon them as rules and following them does not require moral reasoning or judgment (106). But around the ages of eight to eleven, these children begin to internalize their family's or their community's moral standards and form their autonomous morality (84). When Kohlberg tried to use this Piagetian framework for his own research on moral development, he ended up with a more elaborate scale consisting of three levels and six stages covering childhood to adulthood, as visually represented in figure 1:

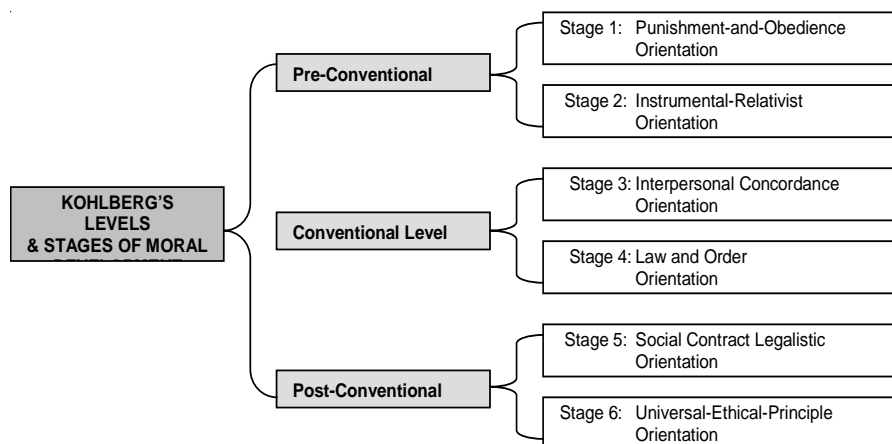


Figure 1: Kohlberg's Levels and Stages of Moral Development

Kohlberg explains that the pre-conventional level is characterized by the agent's adherence to cultural rules and norms due to their positive or negative consequences, and due to the power of individuals and institutions supporting such rules and norms (Kohlberg and Hersh 54). This pre-conventional level contains the first and second stages of moral development. The morally right at Stage 1, with its punishment-and-obedience orientation, is equated with the plain avoidance of violating rules and norms that are backed with punishment (54). The morally right at Stage 2, with its instrumentalist-relativist orientation, is understood as an equal exchange, or a good and fair deal, and rules and norms are followed when they are to the agent's immediate personal interest (54-55).

The conventional level is characterized by the agent's adherence to cultural rules and norms which stems from his/her desire to conform to his/her family, community, or nation so that he/she is perceived to have accepted and supported such rules and norms (Kohlberg and Hersh 55). This conventional level contains the third and fourth stages of moral development. The morally right at Stage 3, with its interpersonal concordance orientation, is assumed to be the agent living up to the expectations of people who are either close to him/her or are significant to the agent's particular role (55). The morally right at Stage 4, with its law and order orientation, is taken to be the agent's adherence to rules, norms, and laws except in extreme cases when these rules, norms, and laws contradict with some other more significant and established social duties and obligations (55).

Kohlberg explains that the post-conventional level is characterized by the agent transcending his/her cultural rules and norms as a consequence of his/her efforts to grasp what is morally good and bad independently from the views of his/her family, community, and nation (Kohlberg and Hersh 55). This post-conventional level contains the fifth and sixth stages of moral development. The morally right at Stage 5, with its social contract and legalistic orientation, is equated with upholding rules and values relative to the agent's specific community even though he/she is aware of the relativity of these same rules and values (55). Furthermore, at this stage, the agent recognizes that non-relative values, such as life and freedom, must be observed and respected in each and every community even when public opinion says the contrary. The morally right at Stage 6, with its universal-ethical-principle orientation, is understood as the agent's faithfulness to his/her self-determined, or self-chosen, ethical principles such as justice, human rights, and respect for the dignity of human persons (55).

With this three-level and six-stage moral development scale, Kohlberg clearly does not think every agent can fully develop and reach the highest stages. John

Gibbs, in his essay “The Cognitive Development Perspective”, explains: “Kohlberg...found that only 13 percent of his longitudinal subjects reached Stage 5 (even counting subjects who only showed Stage 5 as a minor stage), and all of these subjects ‘had some graduate education’” (36). Stage 6 proves to be an even tougher goal. Gibbs continues: “Kohlberg acknowledged that his definition of Stage 6 ‘came from the writings of a small elite sample, elite in the sense of its formal philosophical training and in the sense of its ability for and commitment to moral leadership’” (36). Whether attainable by the majority or not, Kohlberg’s Stages 5 and 6 remain to be moral ideals worth aspiring for. Worth noting are Kohlberg and his followers’ efforts at proving that this three-level and six-stage moral development scale is cross-culturally applicable by actually doing empirical research in countries such as Mexico, Israel, Turkey, Taiwan, Zambia, India, Venezuela, and a number of countries in Europe (Brabeck). In fact, because of this endeavor, Kohlberg contracted a parasitic infection in Belize that gave him extreme stomach pains, which eventually led to depression and suicide.

### **BROCKA’S MASTERPIECES**

Brocka created a total of sixty-seven films, the most memorable and greatest of which are *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang* (Weighed but Found Wanting), *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag* (The Claws of Light), *Insiang*, *Jaguar*, *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim* (This is My Country), and *Orapronobis* (Fight for Us) (Hernando 40; Carballo 47). The following paragraphs provide background information and synopses for these films to facilitate the moral analyses in the body of this paper.

#### ***Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang* (You’ve been Weighed and Found Wanting)**

This film was written by Mario O’Hara and produced by Cinemanila in 1974 with Christopher de Leon, Lolita Rodriguez, O’Hara himself, Eddie Garcia, and Hilda Koronel as the lead actors. The story revolves around Junior (played by de Leon), a sixteen year-old boy born into a provincial elite family, who is in a romantic relationship with a local beauty Evangeline (played by Koronel) who flirts with other boys. Junior hates being at home with his parents, whose constant arguments are caused by his father’s (played by Garcia) philandering. Frustrated with the hypocrisies of his family, the shallowness and betrayal of his friends and lover, Junior is drawn into the world of their town’s outcasts; he befriends Berto the leper(played by O’Hara) and Kuala the crazy woman(played by Rodriguez)who both struggle to live meaningful lives despite society’s rejection and ridicule. Junior gains life-changing

lessons and discovers much about himself and his family from his interactions with this couple. He eventually adopts the couple's baby after Berto is killed by police and Kuala dies shortly after giving birth.

### ***Maynila sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag (Manila, in the Claws of Light)***

This film was written by Clodualdo del Mundo Jr., based on the novel of the same Filipino title by Edgardo Reyes. It was produced by Cinema Artists in 1975 with Rafael "Bembol" Roco, Hilda Koronel, Lou Salvador Jr. and Tommy Abuel as the lead actors. The more literal translation of the Filipino title is "Manila in the Claws of Light", alluding to the enticements of the city's lights and the negative consequences of being suddenly drawn into the heart of the metropolis. The story centers on Julio (played by Roco), an innocent young man from the provinces working in the construction sites of Manila in search of his fiancée Ligaya (played by Koronel), a victim of human trafficking and white slavery. Julio experiences urban poverty and the city's unfair labor practices, and is driven into male prostitution. When he finally finds Ligaya, he learns that she has become the captive mistress of a Chinese-Filipino with whom she has a baby. The lovers plan to escape back to their province, but the Chinese-Filipino stops Ligaya and kills her in the process. Julio avenges the death of Ligaya and is consequently mobbed near the residence of the Chinese-Filipino.

### ***Insiang***

The film was written by O'Hara and produced by Cinemanila in 1976 with Hilda Koronel, Mona Lisa, Ruel Vernal, and Rez Cortez as the lead actors. The title bears the name of the film's main character, Insiang (played by Koronel), a young woman living with her abusive mother Tonya (played by Lisa) in the slums of Manila. Apparently, Insiang's father has abandoned the family some time before, leaving Tonya to raise her along. Tonya despises Insiang because she is reminded of the irresponsible husband and father who had left them. Tonya takes into their shanty her young lover Dado (played by Vernal) who in reality is lusting after Insiang. Fearing for her safety, she asks her fiancé Bebot (played by Cortez) to elope with her. But Bebot merely takes advantage of Insiang and leaves her soon after. Back at home, she is forced to give Dado what he wants in order to manipulate him into having Bebot mauled. Tonya is driven into a fit of rage that ends Dado's life and lands her in jail.

### ***Jaguar (Guard)***

The film was written by Pete Lacaba and Ricky Lee, based on a reportage piece by national artist Nick Joaquin entitled, "The Boy who Wanted to Become Society." The film was produced by Bancom Audiovision in 1979 with Phillip Salvador, Amy Austria, Menggie Cobarrubias, Johnny Delgado, and Anita Linda as the lead actors. The title—a play on the word "guwardiya," a Filipino word derived from the Spanish "guardia"—alludes to the fact that Poldo Miranda (played by Salvador) works as the bodyguard of Sonny Gaston (played by Cobarrubias), a rich young man of questionable character. While working for Sonny, Poldo is seduced by the comforts and excitements enjoyed by the wealthy. He has the delusion that Sonny is treating him as a friend and equal, despite his own mother's (played by Linda) counsel that the rich will only treat him as their lowly servant. Poldo goes on living in his fantasy world until he kills for Sonny and suddenly finds himself abandoned by his employer to face the consequences of his actions alone.

### ***Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim (My Country: Gripping the Knife's Edge)***

This film was written by Lacaba and produced by Malaya Films in 1984 with Phillip Salvador, Gina Alajar, Raoul Aragon and Paquito Diaz as lead actors. The literal translation of the Filipino title is *My Country: Holding on to a Dagger*, an allusion to a Filipino idiomatic expression for a desperate situation. The story revolves around Turing (played by Salvador), a lowly printing press worker. He asks for a salary advance from his boss, Jefferson Lim, to support his pregnant wife Luz (played by Alajar). His boss bluntly informs him that he will only get the money if he signs a waiver specifying he is not part of the labor unrest brewing in their company. When the labor strike happens, his colleagues ask him to join them, but Turing refuses because of the waiver he had signed. Consequently, he is branded a traitor by his colleagues. At the birth of his premature child, Turing is faced with another problem in the form of a huge hospital bill. He then, together with some hardened criminal friends, burglarizes his boss' residence. When police arrive at the scene, the criminals hold hostage the boss's wife, children, and housekeepers.

### ***Orapronobis (Fight for Us)***

This film was written by Lacaba and produced by Bernadette Associates International in 1986 with Phillip Salvador, Gina Alajar, Dina Bonnevie, Bembol Roco, and Pen Medina as lead actors. The title is a corruption of the Latin phrase "ora pro nobis,"

meaning “pray for us,” and alludes to the incantations and spells associated with the amulets of Filipino cult members. In the context of the film, Orapronobis is the name of a paramilitary cult. The story revolves around Jimmy Cordero (played by Salvador), a former priest and a recently released political detainee who goes on a fact-finding mission to the obscure town of Dolores to investigate the atrocities committed by Orapronobis, led by Commander Kontra (played by Roco). In Dolores, Jimmy reunites with Esper (played by Alajar), and discovers that he has a son with her after their relationship as underground fighters. Angered by the fact-finding mission, Commander Kontra attempts to kill Jimmy in an ambush, and abducts Esper and her son. After being raped by Commander Kontra in front of her son, Esper kills Commander Kontra using his own henchman’s gun. Esper and her son are both killed in the process, and this prompts Jimmy to return to his previous life as an underground fighter.

### **Moral Dilemmas and Resolutions in Brocka’s Masterpieces**

In his book *Knowledge, Fiction and Imagination*, David Novitz remarks that fiction “often explores, teases, and tests our moral standards and attitudes” which sometimes leads to the undermining of our attitudes, confounding our beliefs and instilling “new or different moral values” (139). Following Novitz’ line of thinking, several moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions are contained in the six masterpieces of Brocka, and these dilemmas are there for various reasons: to explore the Filipino moral landscape, to tease and test Filipino moral standards, to transgress and violate Filipino moral sensibilities, and to propose an altogether new morality.

It should be noted, however, that not all instances of moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions from these six masterpieces will be used in this paper’s Kohlbergian analyses. Instead, this paper focuses only on the specific moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions which are in accord with the overall moral reasoning of their source films. In other words, this paper selects only those narratives of moral reasoning that either tease and test Filipino moral standards, or propose an altogether new morality. With this consideration in mind, sixteen instances of moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions are culled from the six masterpieces. These are listed in Table 1, together with their respective moral agent/s and their source films:



**Table 1: Moral Dilemmas and Resolutions  
in Selected Brocka Films Analyzed in this Paper**

Scene	Moral Agent/s	Film
Parental Disobedience to Cesar	Junior	<i>Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang</i>
Pre-Marital Sex	Berto & Kuala	
Detention of Kuala	Members of <i>La Asociacion de las Damas Cristianas</i>	
Abduction of Dr. Ortega	Berto	
Male Prostitution	Julio	<i>Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag</i>
Extra-Marital Sex	Julio & Ligaya	
Killing of Chua Tek	Julio	
Parental Disobedience to Tonya	Insiang	<i>Insiang</i>
Trading of Sex for Protection and Vengeance	Insiang	
Killing of Dado	Insiang & Tonya	
Trading of Sex for Work/Fame	Cristy	<i>Jaguar</i>
Killing of Direk	Poldo	
Lack of Solidarity with Co-Workers	Turing	<i>Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim</i>
Theft and Hostage-Taking of Mr. Lim's Family	Turing	
Killing of Commander Kontra	Esper	<i>Orapronobis</i>
Return to the Underground Movement	Jimmy	

These sixteen moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions are the subject of the Kohlbergian analyses in the following section.

## KOHLBERGIAN ANALYSES

A cursory look at these dilemmas and their consequent resolutions reveal at least four recurrent moral themes that can be used for categorization and analysis: 1) detentions and abductions, 2) sexual relations, 3) killings and violence, and 4) disobedience and lack of solidarity. The sixteen dilemmas in Table 1 and their consequent resolutions are therefore examined using these four recurrent moral themes.

### Abductions and Detentions

Under the recurrent moral theme of abductions and detentions are the specific scenes on: 1) the detention of Kuala in the film *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang*, 2) the abduction of Dr. Ortega in the same film, and 3) theft and the hostage-taking of Mr. Lim's family in the film *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim*.

### **On the Detention of Kuala**

The moral agents in this dilemma are members of La Asociacion de las Damas Cristian as (The Association of Christian Ladies) who were shocked by their discovery that Kuala the crazy woman is pregnant because of a relationship with Berto the leper. The members of this association proceed to abduct and detain Kuala to keep her safe from Berto and to allow her to give birth under their care. Abduction and detention may be wrong but the members of the association rationalize their wrongdoing as being for the benefit of Kuala and her child. They are certain that their provincial society will approve of their deed and see it as consistent with their association's reputation of beautifying their town and instilling religious values among the townspeople. At this level of the narrative, members of the association appear to be working at stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale of moral development, as they remain committed to the rules, norms, and laws of their provincial society—even if they decide to circumvent such regulations for the sake of the more significant Christian duty of ensuring the safety and health of Kuala and her baby. But by mocking the fervor and righteousness of the association members, Brocka creates another level of moral narrative that shifts the role of moral agent from association members to his viewers. Although members of the association appear to be working at stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka makes viewers to feel uncomfortable with the association's moral reasoning. He provokes viewers into rising higher, to reach stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale, and to perceive the relativity of the provincial society's rules, norms, and laws. At the same time, viewers are moved to recognize non-negotiable items such as the autonomy of Kuala and Berto, and their right to happiness and meaning amidst the social stigma they face. Although the scene tells the story of some moral agents working at Stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka appears to be pushing for a Stage 5 kind of moral reasoning.

### **On the Abduction of Dr. Ortega**

The moral agent in this dilemma is Berto, who is in emotional distress after Kuala escapes from the protection of the members of La Asociacion de las Damas Cristianas and returns to his hut reeling from labor pains. Unprepared for such an event, Berto rushes to the home of Dr. Ambrosio Ortega, asking the physician to deliver his and Kuala's baby. The doctor refuses since to his knowledge, Kuala remains under the protection of the association members. Despite Berto's pleading, Dr. Ortega threatens to call the police. With a pair of scissors aimed at the physician's neck, Berto drags Dr. Ortega to the hut where Kuala waits in labor. The commotion causes the townspeople to wake and curious onlookers follow the two men towards Berto's

hut. Berto assures Dr. Ortega that he will not be harmed and all he wishes is for the physician to ensure that Kuala gives birth safely. When the police arrive and order Berto to surrender, Berto desperately continues to drag Dr. Ortega to the hut. The police fire and kill Berto, freeing Dr. Ortega. From Berto's perspective, his decision to abduct Dr. Ortega operates at Stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale as he continues to adhere to the rules, norms, and laws of society, even if he violates them for the more important and urgent reason of securing the safe delivery of his and Kuala's baby. But again, there is another level of moral reasoning that Brocka wishes to elicit from his viewers. Brocka deftly shows that the social rules, norms, and laws that Berto momentarily transgressed are the same rules, norms, and laws that allow Berto's and Kuala's marginalization and ridicule. Such a revelation of moral shortcoming on the part of society has in effect relativized its rules, norms, and laws. Brocka expects viewers to weigh the relative social rules, norms, and laws on one hand prohibit abduction, and on the other hand Berto's option to use this same abduction as a means of preserving non-negotiable items, specifically the lives of Kuala and their baby. The viewer's moral reasoning therefore rises to Stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale. Again, although the scene tells the story of a moral agent operating at stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka appears to indirectly push for a Stage 5 kind of moral reasoning.

### **On the Theft on and the Taking of Mr. Lim's Family as Hostages**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Turing, who is desperately looking for money to settle the hospital bills incurred from the premature birth of his and Luz's baby. He is forced to contact an old friend from Manila's criminal underworld who had earlier offered to involve him in a robbery gang's plan to burglarize the residence of Turing's boss, Mr. Lim. As a former employee, Turing knows how to enter the walled perimeter of the printing press and residence. While Turing and the gang steal Mr. Lim's equipment and appliances, Mrs. Lim awakes and calls the police. Cornered inside the walled perimeter, Turing and the robbers take Mrs. Lim, her two children, and two housekeepers as hostages. A television crew is permitted to enter the police cordon. In an interview, Turing airs his side by questioning the hospital's policy of not discharging patients with unsettled bills, by lamenting the plight of his co-workers who are laid off after Mr. Lim declares bankruptcy, by pointing out the court's inaction regarding their labor dispute, and by decrying the lack of decent jobs for many Filipinos. Among the three instances of abductions and detentions, this hostage-taking proves to be the most morally complex. Turing sees himself as working at Stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale, supposing himself to be a mild and law-abiding person pushed to the extreme by the desperate need of his wife and

baby. But Brocka presents Turing as a flawed hero, someone who myopically sees only his immediate context, and who is therefore a moral agent at Stage 3, the lowest point. Brocka apparently intends to goad viewers into realizing that Turing makes the wrong choice, and that the better choice would have been Turing's solidarity with the labor union. But such solidarity demands that Turing and all other Filipino workers see the relativity of the Filipino cultural norm of patronage, and instead insist on some non-negotiable items such as the dignity of the worker and the right to humane work and wages. Brocka therefore pushes viewers to rise higher to Stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale. Although the scene tells the story of a moral agent operating at Stage 4, Brocka presents the narrative as if the agent were merely at Stage 3, with the overall intention of driving the viewers towards a Stage 5 kind of moral reasoning.

Among the three cases of abductions and detentions, only the case involving Dr. Ortega is in some sense positively represented by Brocka. But with all the three cases, Brocka attempts to tease and test Filipino moral standards and subsequently proposes an altogether new and higher moral outlook. In all three cases, there is a tangible attempt to infuse the narratives with the potential for multiple layers of interpretation. Although the narratives may have literally conveyed a lower stage of moral reasoning, Brocka appears to goad his viewers to reach higher stages of moral reasoning.

### **Sexual Relations**

Under the recurrent moral theme of sexual relations are specific scenes on: 1) the pre-marital sex between Berto and Kuala in the film *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang*, 2) the male prostitution of Julio in *Maynila sa Kuko ng Liwanag*, 3) the extra-marital sex between Julio and Ligaya in the same film, 4) the trading of sex for protection and vengeance by Insiang in the eponymous film, and 5) the trading of sex for work/fame by Cristy in the film *Jaguar*.

### **On the Pre-Marital Sex Between Berto and Kuala**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Berto, as Kuala is an insane woman exempted from being a rational agent. Under Philippine laws, it is a crime for a person to have sexual intercourse with another person who is mentally incapacitated. Berto is an outcast because of his leprosy, but being human, he also feels sexual desire and dreams of having his own family. Prostitutes in the town's brothel do not allow him near them even if he has saved enough money for their services. Berto finds in

Kuala the fulfillment of not just his carnal needs but also of his instincts and fantasies of being a husband and father. This is dramatized in the film through Berto's daydream of being an unblemished man frolicking in a windswept meadow with a mentally fit Kuala and their imaginary offspring. For Berto, his sincere love and desire for Kuala are enough to justify his intimate and sexual relationship with her. He thus operates at stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale as he continues to adhere to the rules, norms, and laws of his society, even if he makes exceptions for his existential drive of wanting to love, be loved, and have his own family. Again, there is another level of moral reasoning that Brocka wishes to provoke in his viewers. Just like in the abduction scene of Dr. Ambrosio, Brocka also demonstrates in this scene how the social rules, norms, and laws that condemn Berto's act are actually the same rules, norms, and laws that cause both Berto and Kuala to be marginalized and stigmatized. At this level of interpretation, what Berto transgresses are only relative rules, norms, and laws, making his actions rise to Stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale. Again, although the scene tells the story of a moral agent operating at Stage 4, Brocka seems to be indirectly pushing for a Stage 5 kind of moral reasoning.

### **On Julio's Male Prostitution**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Julio who is laid off from a construction project and is forced to wander among the homeless at Luneta Park. He is befriended by a veteran male prostitute, who recruits him into the flesh trade. Julio's plunge into the world of gay sex appears to be a movement at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale since prostitution is seen as a fair exchange of sex for money. Julio gives up something, or does something difficult, but still gains a significant amount of money in return. However, Brocka seems to be dissatisfied with this lower-stage moral narrative. His motive for portraying Julio's male prostitution may be a statement that while there may be social rules, norms, and laws that denounce the flesh trade, there are also social structures and processes that drive many individuals into such a state of desperation that they find themselves willing to do anything just to survive. Although the scene tells only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka may be encouraging a Stage 4 kind of reasoning among his viewers.

### **On the Extra-Marital Sex Between Julio and Ligaya**

The agents of this moral dilemma are Julio and Ligaya, who after so many years of separation find each other again. Ligaya is lured to Manila with the promise of a good job and a possible college education, but is forced into white slavery. A regular

client, the Chinese-Filipino named Chua Tek, eventually purchases her freedom but makes her a mistress in return. When Julio finds Ligaya in a church near Chinatown, she already has a child with Chua Tek. The lovers go to a movie theatre to talk and proceed to a cheap hotel for sex and more conversation. Julio, Ligaya, and Brocka converge on the moral reasoning that sexual intercourse in this scene should be acceptable to society since Ligaya is made the common law wife of Chua Tek against her will. Julio and Ligaya are the true lovers, and their love for each other justifies their act; Chua Tek is just an intruder in this relationship. Julio, Ligaya, and Brocka are all acting at Stage 3 of the Kohlbergian scale.

### **On Insiang's Trading of Sex for Protection and Vengeance**

The agent in this moral dilemma is Insiang, the titular character. After suffering psychological abuse from her mother, raped by her mother's lover Dado, and being used and rejected by her boyfriend Bebot, Insiang resolves to manipulate Dado, using his desire for her to protecting herself from her own mother and to exact vengeance on Bebot. In other words, Insiang agrees to again have sex with her rapist so that her own life could become a little more bearable. This resolution makes her appear to operate at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, since for her exchanging sex for protection and vengeance seems a fair deal. But as in the case of Julio's male prostitution, Brocka also seems dissatisfied with this lower-stage moral narrative. Brocka demonstrates that while there may be social rules, norms, and laws that do not tolerate Insiang's scheme, there are also spaces in society where such rules, norms, and laws are absent, exposing vulnerable individuals to predators and to the cruelties of stronger individuals. Such situations often drive the vulnerable into desperation, just to preserve their safety and psychological health. Although the scene shows only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka may be calling for a Stage 4 reasoning among his viewers.

### **On Cristy's Trading of Sex for Work/Fame**

The agent in this moral dilemma is Cristy Montes, a poor young woman aspiring to become a movie actress. In pursuit of her dreams, she agrees to be the mistress of a failed director, Direk San Pedro, who makes her work as a nightclub dancer. Seeing no future with Direk, Cristy abandons him to become the mistress of Sonny, a magazine publisher who claims to have connections with movie outfits. With Sonny's help, Cristy begins to receive acting contracts. Like Julio the male prostitute and Insiang the psychologically and physically battered young woman, Cristy sees her

relationships with Direk and Sonny as fair exchanges involving sex for work/fame. She therefore acts at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. But, again, Brocka is not merely telling a lower-stage moral narrative here. Instead of presenting Cristy as a puny moral agent, he creates an image of a young woman who cares for her adoptive family as well as for her body guard, Poldo, also a victim of both Direk's and Sonny's lust for flesh and power. Cristy becomes the object of Direk's and Sonny's violent rivalry. Brocka appears to portray Cristy's trading of sex for work/fame in a manner that underscores how in the movie industry, there are practices that leave young talents, who often have no other choice, vulnerable to exploitation. Hence, although the scene tells only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka seems to encourage a Stage 4 kind of reasoning among his viewers.

Among these five cases of sexual relations, only two cases—Berto and Kuala, Julio and Ligaya—were positively represented by Brocka. The male prostitute Julio and the sexual transactions of Insiang and Cristy are represented as objectionable acts that are nonetheless tolerable because of their actual and existential circumstances. In these five cases of sexual relations, Brocka appears to uphold the general system of Filipino morality on one hand, but argues for exemptions on the other hand. Except for the case of Julio and Ligaya, Brocka again attempts to infuse the moral narratives with the potentiality for multiple layers of interpretation that pull their stages of reasoning higher in the Kohlbergian scale.

### **Killings and Violence**

Under the recurrent moral theme of killings and violence are specific scenes on: 1) the killing of Chua Tek in the film *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*, 2) the killing of Dado in the film *Insiang*, 3) the killing of Direk in the film *Jaguar*, 4) the killing of Commander Kontra in the film *Orapronobis*, and 5) the return of Jimmy to the underground movement in the same film.

### **On the Killing of Chua Tek**

The agent in this moral dilemma is Julio, whose world is turned upside down. After finally finding Ligaya in Chinatown, and after planning with her their homeward escape from the city, he learns through a tabloid that Ligaya has died, apparently murdered by Chua Tek. Certain that Ligaya's death will not be given justice since Chua Tek will use his influence to whitewash the crime and make the murder

appear to be an accident, Julio takes matters into his own hands and avenges Ligaya by stabbing her murderer with an ice pick. From the point of view of Julio, the death of Chua Tek is a fair exchange for death of Ligaya, and therefore Julio appears to be operating at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. But again, Brocka seems uninterested in telling this lower-stage moral narrative. He may not see the killing of Chua Tek as a fair deal, because he makes Julio pay for taking the law into his own hands by having him lynched by a mob in a dead-end alley. Brocka shows in a very subtle way that Julio, like Turing, fails to see the potential for class solidarity to be the long-term answer to the many social injustices spawned by the imbalance of power among Philippine social classes. Just like in Turing's case, going for class solidarity would demand that Julio and all other members of the Philippine lower classes should see the relativity of social rules, norms, and laws in order for these to be rectified by activism. By showing Julio's Stage 2 moral narrative, side by side with real footage of a political march heading towards Malacañang Palace, Brocka may be indirectly pushing viewers to Stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale.

### **On the Killing of Dado**

Although both Insiang and Tonya are agents in this moral dilemma, the former is the main agent while the latter stands only as an instrument. Dado maneuvers to become the aging Tonya's lover to gain access to her young and pretty daughter Insiang. When Insiang tells her mother of being raped by Dado, Tonya sides with her lover and reprimands her daughter, accusing her of flirting with Dado. Forced to exact vengeance on her own, Insiang manipulates Dado into a situation where Tonya overhears them and sees a glimpse of their supposedly tender moment. Tonya in a blind rage repeatedly stabs Dado to death with a pair of scissors. Dado is killed and Tonya is placed behind bars, both of them paying for their abuses towards Insiang. Similar to Julio, Insiang sees her manipulation of Dado and Tonya as fair exchange for their evil deeds, and is acting at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. But unlike what happens to Julio, Insiang appears to be exonerated by Brocka. She is neither killed by a mob nor is she imprisoned for her scheme. After all, it is Tonya who kills Dado on account of his unfaithfulness; Insiang only creates the occasion for Tonya to realize Dado's real motives for living with her. But from Brocka's perspective, the killing of Dado is not just a simple matter of fair exchange. Insiang does not cause Dado's death for self-defense but for vengeance. She takes matters into her own hands, which under normal circumstances should have been relegated to society and the state. However, in the claustrophobic context of Insiang's life, society as represented by Tonya and Dado turns out to be her own tormentor, and the state has very little reach and even less concern for the complex dynamics of life in Manila's



slums. In this context of broken and dysfunctional justice, Insiang had no choice but to assert her own self-determined, self-chosen ethical principles that are founded on justice and respect for the dignity of human persons. Hence, although the scene tells only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka may be inciting viewers to move higher to a Stage 6 kind of moral reasoning.

### **On the Killing of Direk**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Poldo, who is thrust between Sonny and Direk's rivalry over women and power. Poldo has the delusion that Sonny considers him a friend and brother, when in fact he is only seen as a trustworthy bodyguard. When Sonny takes Direk's mistress for the first time and the latter angrily confronts the former, Poldo mauls Direk and his bodyguards. When Sonny again takes Direk's succeeding mistress, Cristy, he does not stop there, flaunting Cristy at Direk's nightclub. Poldo, as a loyal bodyguard, is forced to join the brawl that ensues in defense of Sonny, who departs with friends and leaves Poldo alone to defend himself. When cornered, Poldo aims a gun at Direk, who approaches without fear to taunt him. Poldo pulls the trigger and kills Direk. The bodyguard sees himself as an innocent embroiled in the violent rivalry of Sonny and Direk, and he kills in self-defense. From his own perspective, Poldo is acting at Stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale. But Brocka does not see the killing of Direk the same way. He does not exonerate Poldo, who is jailed at the end of the film. Like Turing, Poldo is a flawed hero who sees that killing Direk is a fair exchange for his delusion that Sonny is a friend and brother. For that imaginary friendship and brotherhood, Poldo is willing to do anything for Sonny. Brocka therefore presents Poldo as moving only at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. Of course, Brocka does not remain at this lower stage moral narrative, as he was interested with a loftier moral discourse. Poldo meets his tragic end because he is coopted by degenerate members of the upper classes. The film, however, fails to clearly lay down Poldo's alternative salvation. Looking at Brocka's other films, we can surmise that this salvation would be solidarity with other members of the lower classes. Hence, just like the narrative of Turing's theft and hostage-taking, and that of Julio's killing of Chua Tek, Brocka is pushing here for a Stage 5 moral reasoning.

### **On the Killing of Commander Kontra**

The agent in this moral dilemma is Esper who is abducted by Commander Kontra together with her son Camilo on the charge that she is a communist. In the safe

house of the vigilante group Orapronobis, Esper is raped in front of Camilo by Commander Kontra. Afterwards, Commander Kontra orders his henchmen to take their turns with her. When an infuriated Camilo attempts to beat the commander with his toy sword, Commander Kontra kills Camilo with a single shot. Esper then grabs the gun from one of her rapists and fires at Commander Kontra, who retaliates by killing her and her fellow captives. But upon seeing Commander Kontra fatally wounded, contrary to his claims that he is invulnerable, his own henchmen finish him for fooling them. From the point of view of Esper, Commander Kontra deserves to die not only for his previous abuses against her family and people but more so for raping her and killing her son. Killing Commander Kontra is therefore premised on a fair exchange that makes Esper move at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. But from the perspective of Brocka, Commander Kontra's death is not a simple matter of fair exchange. Like Insiang, Esper does not kill for self-defense but for vengeance. She takes the matters into her own hands, which under normal circumstances should be relegated to the state. However, in Brocka's narrative, Commander Kontra is the leader of a vigilante group authorized by the state to flush out communists in Esper's town. It would be futile, therefore, for Esper to count on the state when it is implicated in the crimes and abuses of Commander Kontra. In this context of the breakdown of state justice, Esper's killing of Commander Kontra rises to Stage 6 of the Kohlbergian scale as Esper is forced to assert her own self-determined, self-chosen ethical principles that are founded on justice, human rights, and respect for the dignity of human persons. Hence, although the scene tells only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale, Brocka appears to incite his viewers to a Stage 6 moral reasoning.

### **On Jimmy's Return to Underground**

The agent in this moral dilemma is Jimmy, a newly released political prisoner based on the general pardon declared by the post-dictatorship government of President Corazon Aquino. As a freeman, Jimmy returns to his human rights advocacy work and becomes involved in a fact-finding mission on the alleged abuses of Orapronobis. In this mission, he meets again his former girlfriend Esper and discovers that he is the father of Esper's son, Camilo. But Commander Kontra abducts Esper, Camilo, members of her family, and other inhabitants of her town. Jimmy frantically searches for them in the major detention centers of Metro Manila and seeks assistance from military and church officials. When Jimmy learns that both Esper and Camilo, together with other captives, were killed in Commander Kontra's safe house, he immediately visits the site and carried the lifeless body of his son to a nearby chapel. When he returns home, he makes a phone call to an old underground contact,

signifying his intention to rejoin the armed struggle. Jimmy's decision to return to the underground movement is analogous to Esper's shooting of Commander Kontra. With the death of Esper, Camilo, and other captives, Jimmy loses all hope for the post-dictatorship government of Aquino. Hence, from Jimmy's perspective, his decision is a fair consequence not only of the government's lack of concern for human rights and justice, but also for its more active disregard of abuses by paramilitary vigilante groups. On the surface, Jimmy appears to operate at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. But Brocka, as in Esper's killing of Commander Kontra, also infuses Jimmy's decision with a higher moral narrative. Jimmy likewise can no longer count on the state to dispense justice and protection in Philippine society. Within this context of a dysfunctional state, Jimmy's return to the underground seems to be the only viable alternative left for him. As Jimmy is pushed to assert his own self-determined, self-chosen ethical principles founded on justice, human rights, and respect for the dignity of human persons, Brocka invites viewers to operate at Stage 6 of the Kohlbergian scale. Although the scene tells only the story of a moral agent functioning at Stage 2, Brocka demonstrates a Stage 6 kind of moral reasoning.

Among the five cases of killings and violence, only the killing of Direk appears to discourage catharsis among viewers. However, Brocka does not appear to condone the four other cases of killings and violence, since he allows Julio to be lynched. Only the killings of Dado and Kontra, as well as Jimmy's decision to rejoin the armed struggle, were positively presented. In the killings of Dado and Direk, Brocka appears to be upholding the general system of Filipino morality. But in the killings of Chua Tek and Commander Kontra, as well as in Jimmy's decision, Brocka appears to be arguing for a class-based political critique and a revision of Filipino morality. In all five cases of killings and violence, Brocka again attempts to infuse the moral narratives with the potential for multiple layers of interpretation and meaning at higher stages in the Kohlbergian scale.

### **Disobedience and Lack of Solidarity**

Under the recurrent moral theme of disobedience and lack of solidarity are the specific scenes on: 1) the disobedience to Cesar in the film *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang*, 2) the disobedience to Tonya in the film *Insiang*, and 3) the lack of solidarity on Turing's part in the film *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim*.

### **On the Disobedience to Cesar**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Junior, who becomes more and more attached to Berto and Kuala as he withdraws farther and farther from his own family and friends. His father, Cesar, specifically warns him against befriending the leper and the crazy woman because they are not normal members of society. He tries to frighten Junior with the possibility that interacting with them exposes him to the danger of being infected with their disease and ailment. But Cesar's real motive is that he does not want his son to discover the cause of Kuala's mental breakdown, which is the trauma of an abortion forced on her by Cesar. A known womanizer, Cesar was the father of Kuala's child. At his young age, Junior recognizes the hypocrisies and limitations of the norms of his family and the town. When faced with the choice between these norms and his search for life's meaning, he opts for the latter. From Junior's perspective, Cesar appears to represent the town's traditional norms while Berto and Kuala's struggle to find their own happiness represents Junior's own existential struggles to grasp what it means to be human. Hence, Junior's filial disobedience rises to Stage 6 of the Kohlbergian scale as he insists on his self-determined choice of pursuing justice, human rights, and respect for the dignity of human persons.

### **On the Disobedience to Tonya**

The agent of this moral dilemma is Insiang, who suffers much abuse and neglect from her own mother, Tonya. Insiang's obedience and respect for her mother disappears when, after the daughter tells of her rape by Dado, Tonya prefers to believe her lover's side of the story. From Insiang's perspective, this disobedience and lack of respect is a fair exchange for years of abuse and neglect dealt by her mother. Thus, she appears to be acting at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale. Brocka presents Insiang as no different from Junior, as both characters see the hypocrisies and limitations of the norms and values adhered to by their family and society. Both Insiang and Junior are forced to insist on their self-determined and self-chosen option for justice, human rights, and dignity of human persons. But unlike Junior's ethical dilemma which includes fighting for the respect of other persons, Insiang is primarily fighting for her own dignity, for her psychological safety and health. Nevertheless, her filial disobedience is rendered by Brocka—more subtly than in Junior's case—to provoke a Stage 6 kind of moral reasoning among viewers.

### On Turing's Lack of Solidarity

The agent in this moral dilemma is Turing, who is forced to sign a waiver saying he is not part of the labor union at the printing press where he is employed. When the labor leaders formally invite him into their organization, Turing declines, citing the precarious financial situation brought about by his wife's high-risk pregnancy. This moral narrative may be seen as Brocka's inter-text for the other moral narrative in the same film: Turing's burglary and hostage-taking of Mr. Lim's home and family. Turing sees the value of being part of the workers' union but in the context of his dire needs he prioritizes the situation of his family and wife. Thus, from his point of view, he seems to be working again at Stage 4 of the Kohlbergian scale. But Brocka presents Turing as a flawed hero who myopically sees only his narrow context and is thus mired at the lowest point of Stage 3. When read side by side with the narrative of his theft and hostage taking, Turing's refusal to join the workers' union becomes a crucial failure to follow the path towards the redemption of his social class. Brocka may be pointing to the need for Turing and all other Filipino workers to see the Filipino cultural norm of patronage for what it is and instead insist on the dignity of the workers and the right to humane work and wages. Although the scene tells the story of a moral agent operating at Stage 4, Brocka presents the narrative as if the agent were merely at Stage 3, perhaps with the intention to drive viewers towards a Stage 5 kind of moral reasoning on the Kohlbergian scale.

Table 2. Summary of the Kohlbergian Analyses in this Paper

Moral Themes	Scenes	Film	Positive/ Negative	From the Perspective of the Agent	Brocka's Counter- Perspective	Brocka's Overall Perspective	Average Overall Perspective per Moral Theme
Abductions and Detentions	Detention of Kuala by the Members of <i>La Asociacion de las Damas Cristianas</i>	<i>Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang</i>	Negative	4	None	5	5.00
	Abduction of Dr. Ortega by Berto	<i>Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang</i>	Positive	4	None	5	
	Turing's Burglary and Hostage Taking of Mr. Lim's Family	<i>Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim</i>	Negative	4	3	5	

Table 2. Summary of the Kohlbergian Analyses in this Paper (cont.)

Moral Themes	Scenes	Film	Positive/ Negative	From the Perspective of the Agent	Brocka's Counter- Perspective	Brocka's Overall Perspective	Average Overall Perspective per Moral Theme
Sexual Relations	Pre-Marital Sex of Berto and Kuala	<i>Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang</i>	Positive	4	None	5	4.00
	Male Prostitution of Julio	<i>Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag</i>	Negative but Tolerable	2	None	4	
	Extra-Marital Sex of Julio and Ligaya	<i>Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag</i>	Positive	3	None	3	
	Insiang's Trading of Sex Protection and Vengeance	<i>Insiang</i>	Negative but	2	None	4	
	Cristy's Trading of Sex for Work/Fame	<i>Jaguar</i>	Negative but Positive	2	None	4	
Killings and Violence	Julio's Killing of Chua Tek	<i>Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag</i>	Negative	2	None	5	5.60
	Insiang and Tonya's Killing of Dado	<i>Insiang</i>	Positive	2	None	6	
	Poldo's Killing of Direk	<i>Jaguar</i>	Negative	4	2	5	
	Esper's Killing of Commander Kontra	<i>Orapronobis</i>	Positive	2	None	6	
	Jimmy's Return to the Underground Movement	<i>Orapronobis</i>	Positive	2	None	6	
Disobedience & Lack of Solidarity	Junio'r Parental Disobedience to Cesar	<i>Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang</i>	Positive	6	None	6	5.67
	Insiang's Parental Disobedience to Tonya	<i>Insiang</i>	Positive	2	None	6	
	Turing's Lack of Solidarity with Co-Workers	<i>Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim</i>	Negative	4	3	5	
	<b>Average (Sum)</b>		(Positive, 8; Negative, 5; & Negative but Tolerable, 3)				

Among these three cases of disobedience and lack of solidarity, only the narrative involving Turing is negatively represented by Brocka. But with all the three cases, Brocka attempts again to test Filipino moral standards and perhaps propose an altogether new and higher moral outlook. In all three cases, there is again that tangible attempt to infuse the narratives with the potentiality of multiple layers of interpretation, giving them the power to elicit from the viewers higher levels of moral reasoning.

## CONCLUSION

The following table summarizes the Kohlbergian analyses done in this paper on the sixteen selected moral dilemmas and their consequent resolutions taken from six films by Brocka:

A number of insights can be gleaned from this table. First, Brocka uses positive moral narratives, such as Junior's parental disobedience to Cesar in *Tinimbang Ka ngunit Kulang*; negative but tolerable moral narratives, such as Julio's prostitution in *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*; and altogether negative moral narratives, such as Poldo's killing of Direk in *Jaguar*, in order to push for his overall positive moral agenda.

Second, one of the techniques that Brocka uses in pushing for his overall positive moral agenda is to contrast the moral reasoning of his fictive agent with his own moral reasoning. This technique infuses his moral narratives with the potentiality for multiple interpretations which ought to be read side by side. This can be seen, for example, in the case of Insiang's trading of sex for protection and vengeance in *Insiang*, where the character of Insiang is negatively but tolerably reasoning at Stage 2 of the Kohlbergian scale while Brocka is positively reasoning at stage 4 of the same scale.

Third, in some instances, this contrapuntal technique is used to dialectically induce the emergence of a third moral reasoning in the minds of the audience. This happens, for example, in the case of Turing's lack of solidarity with his co-workers in *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim* where the character of Turing is negatively reasoning at Stage 4, but is portrayed even more negatively by Brocka as reasoning at Stage 3, with the overall intention leading the audience to a Stage 5 moral reasoning.

Fourth, Brocka's moral narratives have the tendency to challenge Philippine traditional norms and rules as well as the hypocrisies of the Philippine society. Such a tendency is apparent in all of the films studied by this paper, except for *Insiang*.

Fifth, Brocka has the tendency of intertwining his moral and political discourses. In particular, we see Brocka advocating for class solidarity as the remedy for the injustices brought about by the power imbalance among Philippine social classes. Such a tendency and advocacy recurs in *Maynila sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag*, *Jaguar*, *Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim*, and *Orapronobis*.

Finally, based on the overall average of the sixteen moral narratives, Brocka's moral reasoning appears to be at Stage 5 of the Kohlbergian scale. With such a high level of moral reasoning embedded in works that are intricate, complex, and deep, Brocka should not only be used as material in the study of Philippine film, or in the study of political and social criticism, but more so as material for the study of ethics and morality, especially in the context of the Philippine conditions.

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