



AN ODE FOR APO WHANG-OD

by: EKXEL CARLO T. DEGOLLACION

Veins protrude, skin translucent,

It aged beautiful but ugly too.

A centennial rogue outlived the war,

The last mambabatok, Maria Oggay.

Her skin was gnarled and loose,

A memento I chose to memorize.

Lines wrinkled that tell stories

Of the Kalinga men and brides.

Even the Butbut tribe admired

The victories on their canvass.

In wedlock too, a bridal veil,

An inked armor, worn in affairs.

In black and soot, catharsis unveiled

At the tip of a nettle point thorn

With each prick, a war conquered,

Batok, a tradition continued, found.

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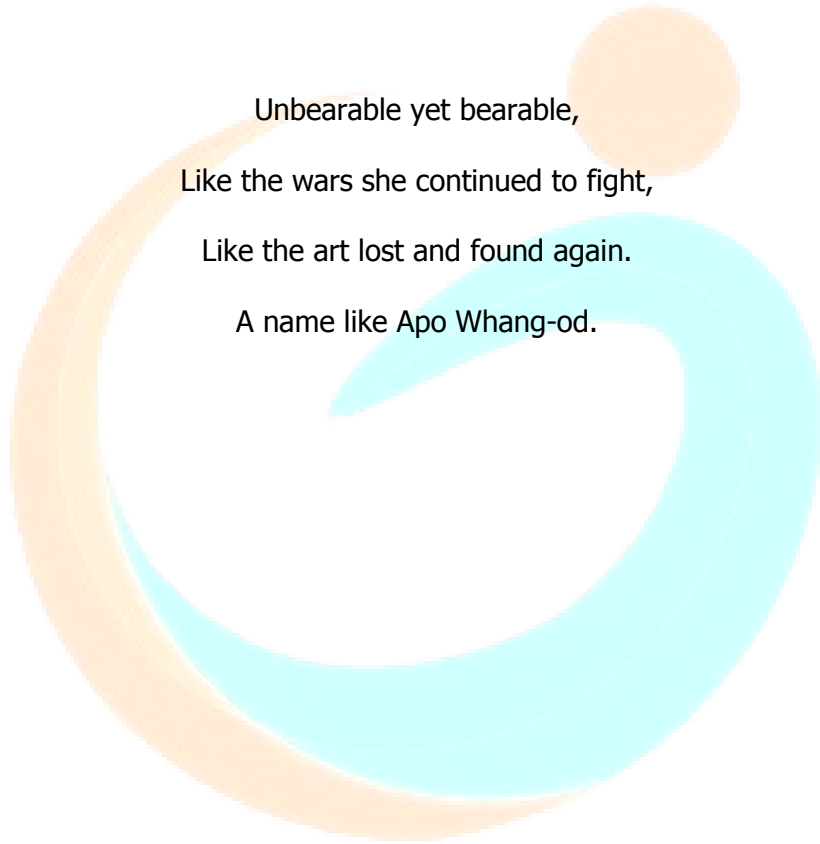
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The mark of Buscalan etched on me
From scorched charcoal of aged wood.
It burnt my skin as the pigment sank,
It bleeds my roots, my ancestry sang.

Unbearable yet bearable,
Like the wars she continued to fight,
Like the art lost and found again.
A name like Apo Whang-od.



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