

THE SPANISH COLONIAL TRADITION IN PHILIPPINE MUSIC

In 1521 the first Spanish ships arrived in the Philippines. The conquistadores had various motives for coming. Among these was the desire to gain control over the trade routes supplying the European market with spices and other exotic merchandise from Asia. To accomplish this, they needed to gain control over the native rulers. At the same time, they had to compete with the extensive influence of Islam and of Islamic leaders all over the islands. “God, gold, and glory” became the basis for the Spanish colonization of the Philippines.

Every Spanish expedition included a group of missionaries tasked to bring the Christian faith to the natives. Conversion involved not only embracing a new set of religious beliefs but also turning away from existing cultural practices. Thus the Spanish colonial regime from 1565 to 1898 reshaped Philippine culture in general and Philippine music in particular. The songs on the exploits of epic heroes and the rhythms of the native drums and gongs gave way to the chants of the Christian church and the harmonized music of the organ, harp, and guitar.

Liturgical Music

The Spanish discovered that the Filipinos were a singing people. In 1604 Pedro Chirino (Blair and Robertson XII:263) noted that:

government and religion is... founded on tradition... They preserve it in songs, which they know by heart and learn when children, by hearing these sung when they are sailing or tilling their fields, when they are rejoicing and holding feasts, and especially when they are mourning their dead. In these barbarous songs they relate the fabulous genealogies and vain deeds of their gods...

The early dictionaries written by the missionaries to enable them to teach the Christian faith to new converts included long and varied lists of native song types. Pedro de San Buenaventura's *Vocabulario de la lengua Tagala* (1613:141) enumerated the following under the entry “cantar”:

ait (romance), hila (remeros), sambitan (llorando muertos), nananambitan (llorando difuecto), sambotanin (emborrachera), hilirao (emborrachera), diyona (de borrachera), oyayi (arrolando los niños), dayao (victoria), tagumpay (la victoria)

The famous *Vocabulario de la lengua Tagala* by Juan Noceda and Pedro Sanlucar (1864:19) added to this list, “talindao ... indolanin, dolayanin (en el calle)... soliranin, manigpasin (los remeros), holohorlo ... (arrulos al niño), umbayi (triste), umiguing (suave) ... dopayanin ... balicongcong.”

Unfortunately for Philippine music, the sentiment prevailing among the clergy at the time of conquest was that such material was the province of the devil and a barrier to the spread of the Christian faith. To clear the way for the latter, the sights and sounds of the old rituals had to be eradicated. As a whole, the performance and practice of what must have been a rich music culture was so discouraged that much of it virtually disappeared, and only a few pieces survived, albeit in altered form.

But even as they suppressed native music, the missionaries doubled their efforts at teaching European religious music to the new Christians who proved to be adept and enthusiastic in learning the plainsong, the flute, the harp, and the guitar. Fifty years after the conquest, the Church established schools for teaching the *indio* the music of the faith.

In monasteries and churches, the first sounds of the Christian church that the “native” heard was the Gregorian or plainchant, an austere, unaccompanied monophony. This body of systematically codified and organized songs, put in order in the 6th century by Pope Gregory I, represents one of the oldest surviving Western music traditions. Gregory ensured the disciplined, uniform practice of plainchant by strengthening the Schola Cantorum, a singing school for the training of church musicians founded in Rome in the 5th century. The Schola became the center of training for all musicians within the church, an authoritative body that determined the character of church music and developed the musicians that would teach this practice all over the Christian world. Thus, the uniformity of style as well as the practice and quality of music were ensured.

It was this principle that led the Roman Catholic Church to include, among its missionaries to the Philippines, church musicians and music teachers. Notable among these were Juan Bolivar, Lorenzo Castelo, Ignacio de Jesus, and Manuel Arostegui, among the Augustinians; Pedro Bautista, Geronimo de Aguilar, and Jose de la Virgen, Franciscans; and Domingo Cera, Recollect. Church histories describe the duties of these missionary musicians as the musical training of young boys, the writing of books on music and music theory, the composing of music for liturgical purposes, the performance of music for the masses, and, particularly in the case of Fr. Cera, the training of young musicians in the manufacture of musical instruments.

In 1601 the first orchestra was organized by the Augustinians in Guadalupe. In 1606, the Franciscans, under the leadership of Juan de Garrovillas, founded a seminary in Lumban, Laguna where 400 boys were trained to sing, play, and manufacture musical instruments. The first director of the seminary was Juan de Santa Marta, who arrived in the Philippines in 1618 and who had been a singer in the Cathedral of Zaragoza. By 1609, there were already, according to Morga, fine choirs of chanters and musicians, especially around Manila. De Ribadeneira (1947:67) notes that the young boys in such schools:

play very well together and very softly; and as a whole are lovers of music. They serve Masses either by singing plainchant or playing the organ. Some are very good readers, such that to hear them sing an epistle and place accents, it seems they knew Latin.

By 1742, a full-fledged conservatory of music, the Colegio de Niños Tiples de la Santa Iglesia Catedral, was established in Manila. Solfeggio, vocalization, composition, organ and strings were part of the basic curriculum. Subsequent graduates of the Colegio, such as Salvador Piñon, Fulgencio Tolentino, Maxima Nazario, Manuel Lopez, Jose Canseco, Antonio and Hipolito Rivera, and Marcelo Adonay brought the standard and unified methods of the church into every Christianized province of the country.

An outstanding product of the Agustinian Colegio and composer of Filipino liturgical music was Marcelo Adonay (1848-1928) of Pakil, Laguna. He began his work at the age of eight when he was apprenticed as a sacristan at the San Agustin Church. He later became a choirboy and would, during his off-hours, escape to the choir loft and learn to play the organ by himself. He also learned to play the piano and violin, and to compose in both the contrapuntal and harmonic styles. He was later named *maestro di capella* and by 1870 was director of the church orchestra. He is praised by Antonio J. Molina for keeping his religious music in “harmony with the severe regulations of the church liturgy,” while projecting the “vitality... religious fervor and ... Christian faith, hope, love, and charity” that were often absent in the theatrical, showy music that was in vogue in his day (Manuel 1955:38).

Native-born musicians were the backbone of music practice in the Philippines, singing, playing, and composing for church activities. Prominent local artists active in church music in the 19th century were Balbino Carrion, tenor; his son, Juan Carrion, also a singer and violinist; Andres Ciria Cruz, who also sung with visiting Italian opera companies; Natalio Mata, organist and teacher; Simplicio Solis, organist and composer; and Jose Canseco, pianist and composer.

In this setting, religious music flourished. Aside from the Gregorian chant, more elaborate music in polyphonic and harmonic styles was also performed. A partial listing of works composed by Fr. Manuel Arostegui (Bañas 1924:28) called “Augustino Filipino,” gives us an idea of the repertoire that might have been familiar to a church musician of the 19th century: grand mass for full orchestra, with organ or piano and four or eight voices; “O Salutaris Hostia” and “Motete al Santissimo,” for solo baritone, with violin and harmonium accompaniment; “Salve,” for three voices, with organ or piano accompaniment; “Flores de Maria,” for three voices, with organ for harmonium accompaniment; and “Ave Maria,” for tenor solo with piano or harmonium accompaniment.

Much of this music was written for vocal and instrumental ensembles in various

combinations. The latter usually include the violin and other strings, piano, harmonium, and the queen of church instruments, the pipe organ. The last was usually imported from Spain, like that of the old church of Santo Domingo in Intramuros which supposedly possessed a “fine double open diapason on the pedals, its longest pipe rising 18 feet above the floor” (Bañas 1969:30). In time, some of the organs were manufactured locally. Pioneers in this effort were the Recollects who established a school for organ builders. In 1818, a native organ made of bamboo was constructed in Las Piñas under the direction of Fr. Diego Cera. Nine hundred pieces of bamboo were used and great care was taken to ensure the proper treatment of the fragile material. The builders had to wait until the proper season to cut the bamboo, which they then buried beside the sea for half a year to protect it from weevils and ensure durability.

In all aspects of music practice, the Roman Catholic church in the Philippines developed Western musical norms and ideals which through the centuries took firm root in fertile and receptive soil.

Paraliturgical Music

Because the Christian religion was such a powerful force in the Spanish colonial period, its influence extended outside the confines of the church liturgy and into the domains of daily life. This related in varying degrees to Christian belief. Some of these were initiated by the clergy themselves. Others might originally have been church-sponsored but later developed away from church supervision and lost much of their religious character. Still, others that developed outside church supervision combined Christian and non-Christian elements and forms.

Through time, Church authorities had mixed feelings about these practices, alternately encouraging them as expressions of simple piety and banning them as works of the devil.

These paraliturgical devotions abound in Philippine society until today. Some of these are practiced by all the major Christianized ethnolinguistic groups. Probably the most widespread of these practices are the Lenten *pabasa*, the Marian *flores de Mayo* and the *santacruzán*, both held in May; the Easter *salubong* and *bati*; and the Christmas *panunuluyan*.

The *pabasa* is the public chanting of the *pasyon*, a long verse narrative on the life and death of Jesus Christ. The earliest of these verse narratives set in octosyllabic quintillas, Gaspar Aquino de Belen’s monumental Tagalog poem ***Mahal na Passion ni Jesu Cristong Panginoon Natin na Tola*** (Sacred Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Verse), was first published in 1703. Other *pasyon* in other Philippine languages were published later, many of them translations of the anonymous 1814 Tagalog poem, ***Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipag-alab nang Puso nang Sinomang Babasa*** (An

Account of the Sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ Which Should Inflamm the Heart of Anyone who Reads It). It is not known when the pasyon first came to be performed in public, but by 1827, when a parish priest complained in a letter about erroneous doctrinal ideas being spread by such performances, it could be assumed that the pabasa was already a well-entrenched custom.

Today, the pabasa thrives as a Lenten practice all over Catholic Philippines, performed during the entire season, from Ash Wednesday to Black Friday. The style of chanting varies not only from region to region but even from town to town. Some *punto* or basic melodies are sung in unison and resemble plainchant. Others are borrowed from current popular melodies and are sung in two or three-part Western harmony. Still others are accompanied by instruments in many different groupings. The vocal quality is tense with a raised upper palate. A much admired type of voice is called *matinis*— high-pitched and penetrating.

The *punto*, a term used in pabasa singing in Batangas, is an interesting feature of the form. It refers to the basic or skeletal melodies associated with the pabasa. Almost any melody, whether a traditional one from the early centuries of Spanish rule or the newest popular song, can form the basic *punto*. Thus there are *punto* based on “Bahay Kubo” (Nipa Hut), “Aloha Oe,” and even the Philippine National Anthem, alongside such venerable tunes as the *tres caidas*, *kinalamyas*, and *biniyulin*.

While a given *punto* is fixed and easily recognizable, it is also usually the practice to weave ornaments—slow tremolos, slides and mordentlike embellishments—into the *punto*. This practice, called *pagduduyan* in San Mateo, Rizal, adds to the beauty and grace of the melodic line. Such ornamentation also gives the individual singers a chance to add their individual stamp to the chanting. This elaborate use of ornaments, coupled with the unusual vocal quality, aside from giving the pabasa color and variety, suggests an earlier, pre-Spanish vocal style.

Despite the disparate melodies, textures, and performance practices, all the pabasa are linked together by several characteristics. First, they are communal performances of a long narrative poem on the life of Christ. Second, the pabasa is performed for a long period of time, usually lasting at least 12 hours. Finally, this communal effort is considered the fulfillment of a *panata*. The *panata*, an element found in many folk Christian practices that developed outside the Christian Church, is a vow made to God, the Virgin Mary, or other favorite patron saints, in which a person promises to perform a difficult act or task in return for a favor bestowed by the deity, such as deliverance from illness or misfortune, passing a government examination, or securing a good job. The task often takes the form of a long and elaborate ritual involving, among other things, singing or chanting the praise of the *patron* (the aspect of God or the deity invoked). The pabasa, for example, is a *panata* offered to Jesus Christ and is practiced all over the Christian part of the nation. But many *panata* forms are practiced on a local or regional level and are offered to lesser deities such as patron saints.

Two such examples, the *subli* of southern Batangas and the *sanghiyang* of Cavite, show how established and accepted elements of universal Christianity may be merged with regional devotions to local icons.

The *subli* is a devotion-celebration with music, poetry, dance, and prayer. In its most famous version, found in the town of Bauan, Batangas, it is dedicated to and seeks the favor of the Mahal na Poong Santa Cruz (Beloved Lord of the Holy Cross), a miraculous wooden cross that is the popularly accepted patron of the town. The ritual, which may last from 6 to 8 hours, features uninterrupted dancing to the beating of drums and chanting in unison of mystic verses narrating the story of the Mahal na Poon. The major celebrations of the *subli* coincide with the Maytime *santacruz*. At one point in the ritual, the distinction between the story of Santa Elena and the true cross and the tale of the Mahal na Poon disappears and the two merge, one into the other.

The *flores de Mayo*, also known by the name *alay*, are devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Although each region, and sometimes each town, has a slightly different practice and a different set of songs, the basic form remains the same. On early afternoons in May, a procession of young women and girls carrying flowers winds its way through the town's main street, singing songs in honor of the Virgin Mary. In the church, the pairs of girls (or girls and boys) offer their flowers to the statue of the Virgin as they sing in two-part tertian harmony, to the accompaniment of the guitar, organ, or a small orchestra. The *flores* is climaxed by the big procession at the end of the month, which features the Virgin on a *carroza* (float), preceded by the *zagala* or young girls and ladies bearing symbols of the attributes of the Virgin Mary.

A second Maytime ritual is the *santacruz*, a devotion to the Holy Cross that reenacts the finding of the true cross of Jesus Christ by Queen Helena, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine. The moving pageant, accompanied by brass bands and choirs of singers, also moves through the town's main streets. The participants, dressed in elaborate costumes, personify characters from the story of the finding of the cross. As clerical control over these practices weakened, there was a tendency to combine the two Maytime devotions, leading to some confusion over their nature and character. Further secularization in the 20th century has led to their becoming the vehicle for a grand display of gowns and finery by the young elite members of the town.

A good example of how a secular form separated itself from an originally church-sponsored practice is seen in the panunuluyan (seeking entry) and its related form, *pamamasko* (Christmas carolling). The former is a nativity pageant staged in various places around the town. Townsfolk dressed as characters in the Christmas story take part in this sung reenactment. A travelling choir and orchestra performing Christmas carols accompany the actors.

This church-sponsored play might have been the origin of the practice of *pamamasko*, in which bands of young folk travel from house to house during Christmas time singing for alms. In the Leyte and Bicol regions, they are called *pastores* or *estudiantinas*, usually 12 girls and/or boys headed by a *capitana* (lady captain), and garbed in colorful costumes. Most of the tunes they sing are in the traditional Spanish villancico time of 6/8. In practice, however, folk musicians often change the rhythm and phrasing to *balse* or *paso doble* or even irregular time, altering the character of the original songs to suit local tastes. An example of this is the Catalan villancico, “Pastores a Belen,” by the pastores of Camalig, Albay which is transformed into a *paso doble*. Similarly, the *pamamasko*, although once part of the *panunuluyan*, has become part of the secular side of the Christmas celebration. Divorced from the religious pageant, it has been transformed into a fund-raising event and all proceeds raised by the young people are used to fund social dances or fiesta events for the next year.

During the period of *hondras*, the November festivals for the dead also known as *undras* or *todos los santos*, similar singing groups are called *mangangaluluwa*. They represent the wandering spirits of the dead that carol from house to house, begging for alms and playing pranks on stingy house owners. The villancicos, *danza*, *habanera*, and *balse* that form the bulk of their repertoire are based on popular Spanish or Mexican tunes, and are unrelated to the music of the Catholic Church.

Easter Sunday has its own set of extraliturgical celebrations. These commonly include the *salubong*, which begins with separate processions of the veiled Mater Dolorosa and the Risen Christ, sometimes accompanied by the choral singing of the “Stabat Mater” or a brass band. The processions wind up in the churchyard, where the meeting of the Virgin and Christ is then dramatized. The Virgin’s black veil of mourning is lifted by a little girl dressed as an angel, while a chorus of girls and young women sing the “Regina Coeli, Laetare” (Queen of Heaven, Rejoice), with antiphonal alleluias. Sometimes, *balse* and *mazurka* are performed before and after the removal of the veil. Sometimes, the *salubong* also includes a special dance, the *bati*, wielding flags and banners to the accompaniment of the drum. These songs and dances were most likely disseminated and encouraged by the church; they bear its stamp of approval.

The merging of local and universal is likewise seen in the *sanghiyang* of Cavite which invokes the basic icons of the Christian pantheon such as the Virgin Mary and the Santo Niño. But the *sanghiyang* mediums are also possessed by numerous other spirits such as the *hari ng kailaliman* (king of the underworld) and *San Juan Sambanog Tiwan-tiwan*. In this trance state, they perform unmeasured chants, half-spoken and half-sung. The entire ritual calls upon these deities with food offerings, chanted prayers, incense and flame to bestow health, good fortune and prosperity upon the celebrating community.

As typified by the *subli* and the *sanghiyang*, native ritual music that persisted

despite Spanish control, that responded to the new belief system, and thus entered the realm of “Christian practice” constitutes an important category of music of the Spanish colonial period.

Secular Music

As the ritual music of the native religion mixed with the music of the new faith, the many forms of secular indigenous music assimilated elements of European secular genres introduced from Spain and/or Mexico.

Like the joyous songs for greeting guests in the northern Cordillera, the *berso golpeado* of the Ibanag of the Cagayan Valley is a traditional greeting song in triple time accompanied by a *cinco-cinco* guitar which strums out chord progressions. The latter appear, at first, to be simple attempts at simulating Western harmonies. Upon closer inspection, however, these express a different concept of sound in which two alternating clusters of tones are played repeatedly to create a continuous, unbroken sound over which a vocal melody may be built. This feature may be seen in song forms in other Christianized regions of the country as well.

Secular ballads relating historical events, heroic deeds or humorous anecdotes may still be heard in hispanized areas. The *composo*, a narrative song type found in Panay, is a vehicle for the spread of local news. At happy gatherings, such as after-work drinking parties, ordinary townsfolk compose and perform songs that retell the tales of the last devastating typhoon, the exploits of rebels or bandit leaders, and even the latest juicy gossip. Musically, its diatonic melodies and chordal accompaniment on the guitar show the influence of Western melody and harmonic progression.

Perhaps the most famous of all of these hybrid song forms and styles is the dance-song *kumintang*. In the 19th century, numerous writers referred to it as the national song. Originating from Batangas, a province known in early times as Kumintang, it was actually a regional variant of the *awit*, a song in slow triple time. Cast in *plosa* verse or 12-syllable quatrains to a line, the texts usually dealt with love and courtship, although it could also be about more general topics, such as the hypocrisy and the follies of man.

The *kumintang* was first noted in a print by Nicolas de la Cruz Bagay dating back to 1734. The first extant example of notation is the “Comintang de la Conquista” (Comintang of the Conquest) found in Jean Mallat’s *Les Philippines*, published in 1846. Epifanio de los Santos, writing in 1916, warned that portions of this transcription—notably a piano line and a portion of the accompaniment that features some modulation or moving from one tonality to another—are probably additions of the transcriber (a certain Henry Cohen), and are not characteristic of the authentic *kumintang*. Indeed, if these elements are eliminated, this early

transcription bears striking structural similarities to the awit, still performed in the mountains of Batangas today. The *kinanluran* (“of the west”) and *sinilangan* (“of the east”) awit styles, as well as the guitar-plucking awit technique still known as kumintang resemble not only the “Comintan de la Conquista” but other 19th-century transcriptions as well, and provide a valuable link to an ancient tradition.

Secular music from Spain also made an impact in the form of light, popular songs and dances. The Spanish school system cultivated in the native and mestizo elite a taste for Italian operas such as *Aida* and Spanish zarzuelas such as *Jugar con fuego* (Playing with Fire) brought to the islands by troupes visiting from Europe, especially after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

Familiarity with these European forms became a mark of gentility. Young women of good breeding were expected to play waltzes, the habanera and mazurka on the piano or harp and sing popular arias.

Prominent families sponsored *tertulias*, informal parties at which the main activity was the reading of Spanish poetry and the performance of light classical works by Italian composers such as Rossini and Verdi.

Gradually, Philippine songs and dances modeled on these European forms developed. By the 19th century, writers for the propaganda movement could point with pride to song and dance forms in the European style developed in the islands. The most famous of these was the *kundiman*.

The kundiman is a lyrical song in moderate triple time. Unlike the kumintang, which has a strophic or a verse-and-refrain structure, the kundiman is divided into two or three separate sections, each with a different melody. Also unlike the kumintang and the berso golpeado, where two chords or clusters of tones are alternated repeatedly to produce a continuous, unchanging sound, there is in the kundiman a clear harmonic progression in the Western sense and even modulation. While it is possible for the two or three sections of the kundiman to be in a single key or tonality, it is more likely that each section is in a different mode.

The lyrics of the kundiman are about romantic love, although love of country and sorrow over the loss of a loved one are common themes as well. To the 19th-century Tagalog, the kundiman was the very soul of the beloved motherland. The most famous kundiman which fired the patriotic sentiments of *revolucionarios* (revolutionaries) in the struggle for liberation from colonial rule from 1896 to 1898 was “Jocelynang Baliwag” (Jocelyna of Baliwag).

Other Western forms were adopted by the Filipinos. The habanera— named after its place of origin of Havana, Cuba, and also known as danza or *danza habanera*— is in duple time, typified by “La bella Filipina” by Massaguer. The polka, a lively Bohemian dance in fast duple meter, is exemplified by the popular “Pamulinawen” (Stone-hearted) of the Ilocos. The jota, originally a Spanish folk

dance, has sections in duple and quadruple time, as seen in the *jota moncadeña*. The mazurka, which originated from Poland, is usually danced in 3/4 or 6/8 time by 8 to 16 couples. The paso doble, a dance in duple meter slightly faster than the march, is exemplified by “No te Vayas a Zamboanga.” The *rigodon*, based on the French court dance, is danced for state functions in duple meter, such as the *rigodon de honor*. The *marcha* or march in duple time is exemplified by “Alerta Katipunan” (Katipunan Alert) and Julian Felipe’s “Marcha Magdalo” (Magdalo March), which became the Philippine National Anthem. The most famous of all, the balse or waltz, is an Austrian dance in lifting triple time, examples of which include the famous “Ang Maya” (The Sparrow) composed in 1905 by the Filipino “waltz king”, Jose Estella. As may be seen in many of the examples, these forms continued to be popular among Christianized Filipinos during and even after the American colonial period.

Filipino musicians, by all accounts, took easily to European-type music. Speaking in 1892, Albert Friedenthal could say that, “as musicians the inhabitants have won fame all over the Orient.” The district of Pandacan was, in the 19th century, known as “Little Italy” because of its many skilled musicians, musical troupes, and orchestras (Bañas 1969:50).

The musical education and career of the prominent 19th-century composer-conductor from Pandacan, Ladislao Bonus, gives us an idea of the range of experience of the Filipino secular musician. Outside of the church, no formal system for musical education existed. Bonus learned his skills by taking lessons from older musicians, and by sitting in as assistant and apprentice player in the bands and orchestras that were often hired to accompany visiting *zarzuela* and *opera* troupes. Eventually he became a highly regarded contra bass player, versatile in other string instruments as well. Manuel (1970:57) notes that sometime in 1886 or 1887, an all-Filipino opera company was organized in Pandacan under his directorship. Among the operas performed by the company were *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Linda di Chamounix*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Traviata*, and *Fra Diavolo*. Teodora San Luis was its prima donna. Other soloists included Josefa Tiongson, soprano; Victoria Medina, mezzo-soprano; Andres Ciria Cruz, Pedro Alcantara, and Alejo Natividad, tenors; Domingo Guanzon, baritone; and Eduardo Ciria Cruz and Jose Canseco (who doubled as stage director), basses.

Aside from the opera company, Bonus also directed the famous Orquesta Feminina de Pandacan, an all women’s ensemble immortalized in painting and lithograph by Simon Flores de la Rosa. Organized and managed by Raymundo Fermin, also known as “Maestrong Mundo” or “Mundong Bulag,” this unique group of singers and instrumentalists actively performed in Pandacan as well as neighboring towns and provinces.

Bonus is also known as a composer, his best known work being the first full-length Filipino opera, *Sangdugong Panaguinip* (Dreamed Alliance), premiered in

1902, with libretto by Pedro Paterno.

The active career of this 19th-century Filipino musician trained in Western classical music seems to prove that by the 19th century, the local music scene was already populated by singers, instrumentalists, conductors and directors, and composers who were well equipped to staff a musical establishment patterned after that of Spain and the rest of Europe.

The light classical 19th-century style spread into the far areas of Christian Philippines. European staples such as the balse, the danza, and the polka, as well as popular overtures like those from *William Tell*, *El anillo de hierro* (The Ring of Iron), and *Poet and Peasant*, were familiar to the *rondalla* and *comparza*, ensembles of string instruments. While the composition of these ensembles differed from place to place, these usually included the piccolo, *bandurria*, *laud*, *octavina*, guitar, *bandola*, and *bajo de uñas*.

Another ensemble that was to have considerable impact on the music of Spanish Philippines was the brass band. The first bands were organized to provide marching music for the military. In time, this music was also used for all the major civic parades and functions, as well as religious festivals and processions. As the band grew in popularity, civic organizations and even prominent families would organize bands for their pleasure. At the *serenata* (open-air concert) held on the eve of town fiestas, competing bands would show off their technical prowess and dexterity, as well as their knowledge of the band repertoire, which would include marches and overtures from operas by famous Italian composers.

An indigenous offshoot of the brass band that deserves some mention is the *musikong bambong*. According to local accounts, these groups were attempts by 19th-century nationalists and revolutionaries to create a uniquely Filipino sound. These attempts led to the creation of the all-bamboo ensembles organized along the lines of the marching band, playing music composed by Filipino composers. The members of the St. Anthony Original Bamboo Band of Tonsuya, Malabon, Rizal are fourth-generation descendants of a band of Katipunero musicians who organized a musikong bambong ensemble in 1896. Their theme piece, *Veteranos de la revolucion* (Veterans of the Revolution), is a typical example of the band music in vogue before the turn of the century.

By the second half of the 19th century, the rise of nationalism had kindled an interest in indigenous culture. The scholarly publications by European ethnologists and enthusiasts of Philippine culture, such as Wenceslao Retana's *El indio Batangueño* (The Batangueño Indio) and Manuel Walls y Merino's *La musica popular de Filipinas* (Popular Music of the Philippines) gave us the first detailed picture of musical life in various parts of the Archipelago. Later works by Philippine scholars include Pedro Paterno's *El individuo Tagalo y su arte* (The Tagalog People and Their Art) and Isabelo de los Reyes' *El folklore Filipino* (The Filipino Folklore). Their combined efforts give us insights not only

into the forms of Philippine music but the social practices as well that surrounded the performances of these indigenous forms. The pasyon, the kumintang and the kundiman were among the most closely studied and described, but other dance songs, such as the pandanggo and balitaw, were also mentioned.

By the second half of the 19th century, there was a growing number of skilled composers, increasingly well versed in Western compositional techniques. A number of them consciously sought to bring indigenous folk forms such as the *hele-hele*, kundiman, balitaw, and zapateado into the genteel art music of the period. Julio Nakpil's "Recuerdos de Capiz" (Souvenirs of Capiz) and "Marangal na Dalit ng Katagalugan" (Noble Hymn of the Tagalog Region), Diego Perez's "Recuerdos de Filipinas" (Memories of the Philippines), and Jose Estella's "La Tagala" (The Tagalog Woman) are examples of such exploratory attempts. Other composers were Dolores Paterno, a student of Perez, who composed "La Flor de Manila" (The Flower of Manila) which has come down to us under the title "Sampaguita," and Julian Felipe, who composed the present Philippine National Anthem.

These efforts continued well into the 20th century, even with the imposition of American rule. These first attempts at defining and articulating a national music were followed up by later scholars and composers. Fueled by such figures as Epifanio de los Santos and by the nationalist movement in the first half of the century, the preservation and documentation of the native music that had absorbed strong Spanish elements led to the writing of more and more art music based on these forms. In the 1920s and 1930s, composers such as Nicanor S. Abelardo, Francisco Santiago, Francisco Buencamino, Bonifacio Abdon, Juan S. Hernandez, and Antonio J. Molina were to enshrine the kundiman and its related forms as the embodiment of Philippine music. "Nasaan Ka, Irog?" (Where Are You, My Love?) and "Pakiusap" (Plea), both kundiman; "Mutya ng Pasig" (Muse of Pasig), a kumintang; and "Hatinggabi" (Midnight), a danza habanera; and other so-called classics of the American period actually sprang from and were nurtured by an earlier time.

From the 1950s to the present, many Filipino composers of serious music have looked to lowland folk music for inspiration for their own compositions. Many of them built on the melodies of some famous songs, such as Lucio D. San Pedro's ***Suite Pastorale***, where the most famous piece "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" (As the Cradle Rocks) was inspired by an Angono lullabye; Bernardino Custodio's "Paululi" (Repetition), whose passacaglia is based on "Bahay Kubo" (Nipa Hut); Francisco Buencamino's ***Mayon Concerto***, whose principal theme is taken from "Sarung Banggi" (One Night); Redentor Romero's ***Philippine Portraits***, which anthologizes and interprets several folk songs.

Today, many of the folk songs produced by the regions have been popularized beyond their places of origin. They have become part of the national song repertoire, because of folk dance performances like those of the Bayanihan

Philippine Dance Company and the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group which incorporate songs into their dance suites; through choral concerts and competitions where the usual repertoire includes Philippine ethnic and folk songs; through radio and television programs which may feature these songs in contests or as themes; and through the physical education courses in the primary and secondary schools of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in which these songs are taught.

Epilogue

Nearly four centuries of Spanish rule brought irrevocable changes to Philippine music. European forms were introduced, taught, and imbedded in the Christianized Filipino's consciousness and psyche. They did not remain simple transplants for they were not only appropriated by the Filipinos, but became an integral part of the Philippine musical heritage, intricately woven into indigenous Asian strands. These interacting strains have resulted in an exciting and dynamic soundscape that remains today and continues to flourish not only in the countryside which produced this type of folk music, but in the urban centers as well. These musical forms have become synonymous with the very identity of the contemporary Filipino. • E.R. Mirano

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