Philippine Music in the Context of Hispanization and Christianization.

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The annexation and incorporation of the Philippine Islands into the Spanish Empire, lasting for more than three centuries (1565-1898), brought about the subsequent reshaping of Philippine society through the introduction of Western social and cultural ideals. Spain became the dominant force as it intervened in and directed the political, ecclesiastical, social, economic, and cultural landscape of the region. The almost four hundred years of Spanish rule in the country made possible not only the widespread propagation of the Catholic faith but also the eventual transplantation of a predominantly Hispanic culture in most parts of the archipelago, bringing into this part of the globe the prevalent cultural and musical traditions of the Western world.

The incorporation of the Philippines into the Hispanic empire in the second half of the sixteenth century ushered in a new period in colonial history. Spain acquired the link that would eventually connect the world and gain control of the global trade route. This was done through the Manila galleons that made possible not only the economic but more importantly the cultural exchange of this worldwide enterprise. At the center of this global transculturation was music. Music became the most important tool missionaries used in the evangelization process as they were tasked to convert and bring the natives under the rule of the Spanish crown. By the end of the sixteenth century, five religious orders were in the Philippines to accomplish the task of evangelization: the Agustinians (1565), Franciscans (1578), Jesuits (1580), Dominicans (1587), and Recollects (1606). Missionaries, knowledgeable and trained in music, were sent to the colony and brought with them the traditions of sacred music from the Peninsula. Music, then, became central to the communal religious celebrations and lifeways of the natives, as they sang the *doctrinas* and played Western musical instruments.

Music, more than language, became the entry point for missionaries in reaching out to the natives. In fact, with the more than three hundred years of its colonizing presence, the Philippines never became a Spanish-speaking nation, though numerous missionaries noted the exceptional ability of the Tagalogs (natives) in singing and learning the craft of music. Accounts of musical life during the early Spanish regime are extensive but fragmentary, and very few musical sources have survived. Nevertheless, the performances of *loas, auit, villancicos, zarzuelas, canto gregoriano, salve reginas, motets*, et al., described in various historical accounts have fascinated music researchers and historians working on the music of the colonial Philippines. As one looks at the celebratory and musical practices of the Hispanic Philippines, one cannot help but be in awe of the intricately rich and complex musical life of the region. It is unfortunate, though, that with the end of the Spanish regime in 1898 and the coming of a new colonial power—aggravated by the total destruction of Intramuros, the heart of Manila, during the Second World War—the Philippines have not only arbitrarily forgotten much of Spain's musical legacy but lost much of its musical source materials as well.

Due to the absence of the music from this period, musicological studies in the Philippines have focused on the study of the music of indigenous tribes. With the pioneering work of Jose Maceda on the Maguindanao Ensemble of the Muslims in southern Philippines in 1963, many music scholars followed in his footsteps to produce a large body of Philippine ethnomusicological studies. This left the Hispanic music that flourished in the region and practiced by nearly 90 percent of Filipinos largely unexplored. This uncharted terrain of Philippine music would find its voice only in the late 1990's, when awareness of the importance of this Fil-Hispanic heritage deepened among local and international music scholars. This revival coincided with the 1998 centennial celebration of Philippine independence from Spain. It is also timely that scholars from abroad have devoted themselves to the study of the Philippines' rich tradition of Hispanic music. Dr. William Summers, through his extensive research on the music of historic Manila and the Corella music collection in Bohol, led and inspired a group of Filipino music scholars to continue to work on this little-explored area of Philippine music. His yearly month-long visits to the Philippines never fail to revitalize and invigorate the spirits of local scholars to continue in this particular area of study. He was the driving force that led to a renaissance of Philippine heritage musicology. Another scholar who has made substantial contributions to our understanding of early colonial music in the Philippines is Australian musicologist Dr. David Irving, of Cambridge University. Beginning in 2000, he has been increasing our knowledge of early sources of Philippine colonial music dating from 1565 to 1815.

It was more than a decade ago, in 1997, when the *cantorales* of Baclayon were brought to my attention by Fr. Manuel Maramba, OSB, through Fr. Milan Ted Torralba, Vicar of the church of Baclayon at that time, and Prof. Ricky Jose, the eminent Philippine church-art historian, who inspired me to delve into these musical treasures. This inaugurated my research journey into the realm of Hispanic music. The existence of these choirbooks represented an important opportunity in Philippine musicological studies, making possible a comprehensive examination of the musical style and characteristics of a significant corpus of nineteenth-century sacred music that flourished in the region.

Church music in Baclayon in the nineteenth century

Bohol, an island in Central Philippines, holds an important place in the history and development of the Catholic Church in the country. The church in the island was established by the Jesuits in 1596, with Baclayon as the *cabezera*, and was ceded to the Recollects in 1769, when the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish dominions. Being one of the first provinces converted to Catholicism, Bohol has preserved a large amount of religious art from the country's colonial past. Furthermore, its geographical location and isolation spared the island from merciless bombing during the war, which made possible the preservation of these artistic artifacts. With its long history of conversion and Hispanization, and the wealth of musical material that survives there, the province of Bohol is a significant link connecting us to this international web of Hispanic music culture.

In the church of Baclayon, as one traverses its thick church walls, well-kept Spanish-tiled flooring, wide and spacious staircase leading to the *convento*, and the decrepit choir loft with a rather squalid smell, one is transported to an era long gone by. Age-old musical instruments, worn-out manuscript choirbooks made of parchment, and aged pipe organs point to a deep-seated influence of Spain in the music of this town, which has adapted much of Spain's cultural legacy. According to Jose, this island boasts a total of twelve Baroque pipe organs, which, based on documentary evidence, is the largest number of organs in any of the country's provinces.

The presence of such a remarkable music patrimony leads us to marvel at a glorious tradition of sacred music. The archival records of the church are intact and make it possible to recreate the musical milieu of the early 1800's. The *Libro de Inventario* (Inventory Book), and the *Libro de Recibo y Gasto* (Accounts Book) of the church, dating as early as 1795, attest to this golden age of sacred music.

The record books show that much attention was devoted to the composition of church music. There were important entries in the production of choirbooks, acquisition of expensive instruments, employment of an *escriviente de solfa* (music scribe) and *organista*, hiring of a *maestro de musica* (music teacher), and the construction of the pipe organ in 1824. The Baclayon pipe organ was the first in the island, and other towns made it a point to acquire similarly magnificent instruments for their churches in succeeding years. This made organ music a significant part of Bohol's musical heritage. In present-day Bohol, pipe organs of Dimiao, Garcia-Hernandez, Loboc, Loon, and Maribojoc, are still conspicuous in the choir lofts of the local churches. Jose notes that mechanical parts of pipe organs are still present in Antequera, Cortes, and Duero. The parish archives of Jagna and Tagbilaran report the existence of such instruments in their churches.[1]

The proliferation of pipe organs in the province during this period was attributed to Fray Diego Cera de la Virgen del Carmen. He arrived in Manila in 1792 and became known as the master organ builder of his time.[2] He built the organ in the Recollect mother church San Nicolas in Intramuros in 1793-94; the organ of the Manila Cathedral in 1802-1804; and the famous bamboo organ of Las Piñas built during the period 1816-21.[3]

Other Recollect priests instrumental in the promotion of sacred music in the church were Fray Andres de la Santissima Trinidad and Fray Blas de la Virgen del Carmen. Fray Andres served Baclayon from 1776 to 1787. He was the only curate of Baclayon church who was directly connected with music. Born in Toledo on November 21, 1726, he was the official organist in his convent in Spain before he was sent as a missionary to the Philippines.[4] His long stay in Baclayon likely played a role in the cultivation of church music there.

Fr. Blas, on the other hand, was curate of Baclayon from 1818 to 1838. An important figure in the development of sacred music in Baclayon, his signature appears in the *Libro de Inventario* and the *Libro de Recibo y Gasto* from the year 1820. He was actually responsible for much of the musical development of the church that began in this

particular period. It was his extraordinary ability and interest in music that paved the way for the developments that brought about the Golden Age of church music in Bohol.

The *Kirial de Baclayon 1826* and its music

Presently housed in the ecclesiastical museum of the church of Baclayon is a set of four large-format choirbooks made of parchment and dating from 1826. The choirbooks that make up the set are the *Kirial de esta Yglesia de Baclayon año 1826,* the *Antifonario de esta Iglesia de Baclayon,* the *Salterio de esta Iglesia de Baclayon,* and the *Misal o Yntroitos de esta Iglesia de Baclayon año 1827*. These *cantorales* were massive, measuring about three feet tall and two feet wide. They were intentionally made large so that the choir could read from them at a distance. The covers consist of wooden boards covered with black carabao leather, while illuminations of the initial letters of the text are elegantly ornamented and decorated with red and yellow ink. The choirbooks were placed on a four-sided music lectern or *facistol* that can be rotated to facilitate the changing of the books. These were used by the choir under the direction of the *Cantor Mayor*, who was the head of the church music.[5]

The *Kirial de esta Yglesia de Baclayon año 1826,* in particular, consists of 136 numbered parchment folios made from cowhide. Dr. Summers has noted that one cow will produce a bi-folio or four pages of parchment. One can just imagine how many cows were slaughtered to produce just this one cantoral. Its repertory consists of a large collection of twenty-six complete mass cycles. The titles of the mass compositions are varied. Most often they refer to place-names (*Toledo, Baclayana, Zaragozana,* and *Salamanca*). Others were named after important occasions in the liturgical calendar or feasts of Saints (*Advento y Quaresma*, *Correa, de la Virgen,* and *de la Concepcion*), classes (*Imperial* and *Provincial*), liturgical ranks (*Semidobles, Doble Menor,* and *Doble mayor*), surnames (*De Angeles, De Alcala*, *De Ahorcados*, and *De Sales*), and others (*San Bernabe, De Quitolis, De Trompas,* and *Mercenaria*). I t is difficult to be as certain where these titles came from or whether they were copied from other sources. At present, there are no identified composers of the repertory.

Music compositions in the choirbooks were notated in an obsolete form of mensural notation, employing the use of square and diamond note heads. To be able to read and translate this music, musical paleography was an essential component in studying its notation and encoding properties. The main task was to decipher the notational system and to provide information on its codicological description that would render the compositions into modern-day music notation. This made possible the reconstruction of this nineteenth-century tradition of liturgical music.

In terms of its compositional style, the music of the cantorales was traced to resemble the ones that were cultivated in the cathedrals and parochial churches of eighteenth- and nineteenth- century Spain. Similar musical styles were found in other regions such as Alta California, Brazil, and Mexico. (Summers, 1997). A majority of the compositions in the *Kirial* choirbook of Baclayon resemble the figured chant music or measured plainsong tradition that was discussed in Spanish tutor books written by

eighteenth-century Spanish theorists such as Marcos y Navas. A book by this Spanish *tratadista*, the *Arte del Canto Llano y Figurado: En Metodo Facil* was found in the church's archive. This book was published in Madrid in 1862 and was based on an earlier manual by the Spanish theorist. The entry on Marcos y Navas in the *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada* states that he wrote a musical treatise concerning the practice of ecclesiastical church music in Spain, entitled *Arte o Compendio General del Canto Llano Figurado y Organo* (1777). Musical treatises such as this one became the theoretical basis for the music of the cathedrals and parishes that preferred the more conservative style of sacred music. The existence of this book in the archives of Baclayon was vital for the study of this tradition of music. At present, this is the only known copy that survives in the Philippines.

Other compositions in the *Kirial* are in the *canto llano* tradition, i.e., in monophonic unmeasured style notated utilizing note shapes different from the neumes of Gregorian chant. Some portions of the mass compositions are in *canto de organo*, which refers to simple polyphonic settings in two or more vocal parts. An example is the *Misa de Sales*, which is the only truly polyphonic mass composition in the *Kirial* repertory.

The Hispanic music traditions of Loboc, Bohol

The study on the cantorales of Baclayon had, in a way, reconstructed from existing archival records the lost and forgotten tradition of Hispanic sacred music in nineteenth-century Baclayon. Ironically, in Loboc, a town around twelve miles away from Baclayon, there are neither available records nor musical sources, printed or manuscript, located in the church or the museum. A river town, Loboc is prone to devastating floods, which have destroyed a substantial amount of musical evidence. For example, anecdotal evidence indicates that as recently as 1984, three boxes of orchestral music were lost during the storm "Nitang." Even the 1837 Loboc cantorales are in a dreadful state, with missing pages, water stains, disordered pagination, etc. Even worse is the fact that they were not even in the patrimony of the Loboc church. They were found and uncovered in the Intramuros Administration Museum in Manila. It is fortunate, though, that the Loboc pipe organ remained in the choir loft of the church testifying to the practice and growth of this Baroque sacred music tradition.

Despite the lack of existing material evidence, it is remarkable that music lives on in the numerous religious practices of the people of Loboc, thriving not in written sources of music but in oral tradition. It is amazing that in this simple town survives a dynamic tradition of Hispanic music, actively performed and experienced. Subsequently, I realized why Loboc is appropriately referred to as the "music town of Bohol."[6]

Loboc was established as a religious center by the Jesuit priests Fr. Juan de Torres and Gabriel Sanchez in 1602. From Baclayon, where they founded the first church in the province in 1596, they transferred the *cabecera* to this densely populated area. The devout acceptance of the Catholic faith and the musical ability of the people of Loboc were already acknowledged in early accounts. In 1609, Pedro Chirino (1557-1635), one of the early Jesuit historians wrote:

> . . . on Sunday we had in the church of Loboc six or seven hundred souls, which is the usual attendance. If your Reverence could see in the early morning nearly one hundred children from the mountains, boys and girls but recently baptized march with praise to God in a procession along the bank of this river, singing the *Doctrina* with angelic voices that seem to come from heaven, I verily believe that your Reverence would be moved to devout tears at seeing how God has brought them down from these mountains and dragons' caves that they may praise and glorify Him.[7]

Music in this town is a way of life for the people, lived and experienced by the town folk in their everyday existence. It is first and foremost a communal undertaking done as an expression of spirituality, a form of prayer or an offering to glorify a particular saint or the Almighty Father. The religiosity and musicality of the Lobocanons are two inseparable entities complementing and enhancing each other for self-expression and salvation.[8] The Loboc calendar of music is organized around important dates in the liturgy, particularly the commemoration of the life and death of Jesus Christ and the celebration of the feast days of special saints. At present, the numerous religious rituals and celebratory fiestas are still tied with the singing of Latin masses, *gozos*, *Salve Reginas*, *villancicos*, and *motetes*. *Cantoras, cantores,* and *tiples* with the band musicians continue to participate in musically rich traditions such as the *sambat*, *suroy, altares,* and the *bolibongkingking*, which represent the influence, hybridity, and native syncretism in the country's colonial experience.

The feast of Christmas is the central focus of all Christian celebrations. The nine-day *Misa de Gallo* that starts on December 16 is celebrated with the singing of the mass cycle in Latin. On Christmas eve, the midnight mass is held with the choirs singing the *Misa Pastorela, villancicos*, and *gozos*. A fascinating musical tradition unique to Loboc follows after the mass that is referred to as *Calenda*. This ritual is performed as a "rite of passage" by a male teenager who will "graduate" as a full-fledged musician. He stands by the altar table and sings solo to the entire congregation. The initiation will gain him formal acceptance as a member of the Loboc Band. Sung entirely in the plainsong tradition, the *Januarii Octavo Calenda* is done in the Visayan language. It speaks of the history of the world from the creation until the coming of Jesus Christ. No one knows the origin of this music, but it has been handed down from generation to generation and continuous to be actively performed.

The musical celebration of Christmas does not end with the *Calenda*. This continues with the *suroy* (to go around), a tradition of caroling that begins in the morning of December 25 and goes on until February 2, a total of forty days. This unique Lobocanon tradition consists of going to all the houses in the different *barangays* of the town to bring them the joy and spirit of music making. Specific dates have been permanently assigned to the different *barangays* with regards to the celebration of the *suroy*. Owners of the various houses prepare food for the members of the band as well as the visitors from other towns who attend the event. The Loboc Band takes center stage in this tradition. Accompanied by cantoras, cantors, and tiples, they perform music and sing

a mixture of Spanish, Latin, and Visayan songs. The repertoire of the *suroy* is not limited to Christmas songs such as the *daygon* and the *villancicos*. In fact, a broad range of musical compositions are sung during this event—from *Hay Que Celebrar*, a Spanish song in celebration of one's birthday, to *Libera Me*, which is a song for the deceased. Tiples, or children in the choir who serve as assistants to the band members for this event, perform *pastores* to solicit money from the owner of the house.

Easter is another significant event observed and awaited with much adoration and reverence by Catholics. In Loboc, as in other towns in the province, this occasion is celebrated with the staging of the *hugos* (literally "to hang"). The hugos, like the *salubong*, is a re-enactment of the meeting of Mary and Jesus at the dawn of Easter Sunday and the coming down of the angel Gabriel, memorialized through chants and songs. A tiple, a boy of about 10 years old, garbed in the raiment of a beautiful angel, will be secured around the waist to be lowered down from inside the *hugusan* while singing the *Regina Coeli*. A delightful musical performance of antiphonal singing between the angels and the congregation follows.

The fiesta of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the much-loved second patroness of the Lobocanons, is commemorated on May 24 and 25. This is to celebrate favors received from the Virgin, since the people believe that She had a hand in overcoming the cholera epidemic that hit the town in 1843. The fiesta is celebrated to this day with intense religious devotion, expressed through musical opulence and sumptuous feasts. The celebration commences with a novena held for nine days preceding the feast day of the Virgin. Gozos, songs of praise and joy either in Spanish or Visayan, are sung after the novena and just before the beginning of the daily mass. A *sambat*, a fluvial parade at the river, is held on the eve of the feast. Band members ride the *balsa* with the Virgin, together with the parish priest and other important figures of the church and the government, to perform marches and procession music.

On the day of the fiesta of the Virgin of Guadalupe, on May 24, *altares* are carried out just before the Pontifical Mass. Four small altars are set up outside the four doors of the church, with the image of the Virgin in each altar. Cantoras and cantores together with the congregation perform chant verses and *oremus*, and they sing hymns accompanied by an orchestra and the brass band.

For three days beginning from the day of the fiesta of the Virgin, a ritual devotion of dance and music is executed to commemorate Her healing of the people during the cholera outbreak. This is the *bolibongkingking*, whose name is an onomatopoeic reference to the sound of the *guimbao*, the drum (*bolibong*), and the *agong*, the gong (*kingking*). This devotion is also believed to be a healing ritual. With the intricate beat of the drums and gongs, the dancers move the different parts of their bodies, particularly those that are experiencing aches and pains, in front of the image of the Virgin. Anybody can participate in the dancing, even infants and children, who are held and carried by the dancers. This tradition is fascinating and of great importance since it is the only instance where indigenous instruments are used, although the devotion originated from a Christian point of view.

Conclusion

As Spain's most distant colony, this Asian nation absorbed and appropriated traditions introduced by the colonizers, resulting in a culture that is an amalgamation of East and West. Research on the Baclayon cantorales offers a glimpse of the musico-cultural milieu of the island during the Spanish occupation. Furthermore, the examination and analysis of its repertory proved to be a most worthwhile undertaking that directed the way to the reconstruction of this long-forgotten tradition of sacred music. Loboc, on the other hand, presents a stunning testament to the dynamism and richness of this cultural reality as many of the musical traditions are still actively practiced today. Although the towns of Baclayon and Loboc share similar historical and cultural underpinnings, nonetheless, dynamics of cultural processes, intervention of traditions, and degrees of appropriation, alongside the geographical considerations of the locale, have caused them to develop on different trajectories. The complexity of the country's colonial musical legacy has been explored in this study, revealing the wealth of musical experiences in these two highly Hispanized towns. Our research establishes the Philippines' rich Hispanic musical past as a testament to our complex colonial legacy.

[1] Regalado Trota Jose, "Music-Making in Old Bohol: Notes from Three Bohol Parish Archives," paper presented at the Second Music Conference on Heritage Musicology and Music Paleography, in 1998.

[2] Francisco Carmen del Sadaba, *Catálogo de los religiosos agustinos recoletos de la Provincia de San Nicolás de Tolentino de Filipinas: desde el año 1606, en que llegó la primera misión à Manila hasta nuestros días* (Madrid: Asilo de Huérfanos del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, 1906).

[3] In 1999, the pipe organ of the parish of Loay was restored and reinstalled in the choir loft of the church, while the restoration of the Loboc pipe organ was completed in 2004. Presently, the Baclayon pipe organ is in a workshop in Manila for restoration. At the forefront of historic-pipe-organ restoration in the country is Diego Cera Organ Builders, Inc., headed by Mr. Cealwyn Tagle.

[4] Sadaba, op cit.

[5] M. Carceller de la Sagrada Familia, *Historia General de la Orden de Recoletos de San Agustín*. Tomo Decimo1808-1836 (Madrid, 1962).

[6] Ma. Alexandra Iñigo-Chua, "Kirial de esta Yglesia de Baclayon Ano 1826: A Study of an Extant Sacred Music Manuscript of the Spanish Colonial Period in the Province of Bohol" (Master's thesis, University of the Philippines, College of Music, 2000).

[7] Pedro Chirino, *Relacion de las islas Filipinas i de lo qve en ellas an trabajado los padres de la Compañia de Iesvs* (Roma: Paulino, 1604).

[8] Ma. Alexandra Chua, "Calenda, Suroy, Altares, Bolibongkingking, et al.: The Hispanic Musical Traditions of Loboc, Bohol," *Musika Jornal*, Center for Ethnomusicology, University of the Philippines (2008).