

Musical forms of luzon essay



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The music of the so-called Hispanized lowland Christian, and village peoples of Luzon, Visayas, Mindoro, and Palawan. Their culture is essentially Southeast Asian, fused with a strong animistic core, though with elements of Latin culture (Mexican, Italian or Hispanic). The lowland folk are composed mostly of farmers, fishermen, artisans, vendors and traders, and common folk. They have a deep faith in God, whom they serve with utmost devotion. Their key celebration is the fiesta, which revolves around the Sto. Nino, Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ or a patron saint.

The devotional orientation of the lowland folk is a valuable resource for creative yet painstaking and repetitive tasks that require great patience like weaving, embroidery, carving, and metalwork. Their music is often referred to as folk music (ex. pasyon, balitaw, daigon). Some notable examples of Filipino folk music are: Putungan_, a Marinduque traditional ritual for welcoming important guests; _Pamulinawen, a favorite Ilocano song in polka form about a hardhearted woman's deafness to a lover's supplications: an Ilonggo-Kiniray-a song medley; and Rosas Pandan, a Cebuanobalitaw which celebrates the beauty and charm of a village maiden.

Though belonging to the same subculture, we may observe carefully the intriguing contrasts between the expressive forms of the Ilocano and the Visayan, as manifested in their folk music and dances. Whereas the Ilocanos like their music notes close to each other, Visayan music notes are quite far apart. While Ilocanos love closed, inward movement, the Visayans cherish open, outward movement, as seen in the hand and arm gestures of the dances. Given a dance space, the Ilocanos hardly move away from a center, while the Visayans move around very freely.

The Ilocanos' way of peeling fruits is usually directed towards the body, while the Visayan way is directed away from the body. These opposing styles could be indicative of the contrasting temperament and values of the Ilocanos and the Visayan - the Ilocanos being more reserved while the Visayans more exuberant. Historian Teodoro Agoncillo astutely noted that while Ilocanos are gifted towards survival, Visayans have a penchant for celebrations. -

Highlands

Philippine Music comes in a variety of forms, covering a wide spectrum of sources, geographically and historically; and representing more than 100 ethnolinguistic groups as well as different social and cultural environments in the Philippines. The totality of these forms may be categorized into three distinct repertoires: 1) Asiatic oral traditions; 2) westernized oral traditions; and 3) western-influenced art and popular music, and semi classical music.

The first category covers forms that are closely related to the cultural traditions of Southeast Asia. In the Philippines, such traditions are practiced among the villages in the Cordillera Administrative Region, in the upland areas of Palawan, Mindoro and eastern Mindanao, the predominantly Muslim communities in western Mindanao and Sulu, as well as the different Negrito communities across the archipelago, e. g. Northern Luzon, Bicol and parts of Panay and Mindanao.

Most of the musical forms are performed in connection with rites of passage and life cycle events as well as occupational activities. These occasions consist of birth, initiation and graduation ceremonies; courtship and marriage; death and funeral rites; hunting, fishing, planting and harvest;

healing and various forms of armed conflicts. In public gatherings, most of the musical performances are integrated with dancing and some form of physical movement, as well as the participation of the community or audience.

Solo playing or small group singing are done without much movement. In Philippine literature, these forms are usually referred to as Indigenous Philippine music. The second category of musical forms consists of orally transmitted genres and compositions that are performed in rural Christian communities in Luzon, Visayas and parts of lowland Mindanao, and are generally referred to as Philippine “folk music”.

Their origins may be traced through four evolutionary processes: 1) forms that have been introduced by the Spanish colonial power and later adopted and modified by local artists and performers (metrical romances); 2) syncretic and hybrid forms that have been locally assimilated elements from Western religious traditions (subli, sanghiyang); and 4) locally processed songs based on older pre-colonial tunes (planting songs, children’s play songs, lullabies, love songs and serenades).

Much of Philippine folk music are found in the religious and paraliturgical repertoires of countryside Christian communities, as well as in various forms of entertainment and rites of passage such as marriage and funeral ceremonies. The most important occasions during which folk music is performed in the Christian calendar year include the may flower devotions to the Virgin Mary that culminates in the Santacruzán pageant, Lent and Christmas seasons.

Particular religious hymns are connected to specific activities like the Alay (Flower Offering) in May; the pabasa and pasyon (chant reading of the life and passion of Christ), the senakulo (pasyon theater), and salubong (meeting of the risen Christ and Mary) during lent and Easter; and the panuluyan (search for an inn) during Christmas eve. Each community has other religious and semi-religious occasions such as the feast of the patron saint and other special festivals; e. g. the harvest festival called pahiyas in Quezon province or the commemoration of the feast of the Sto Nino (Holy Child) in Panay Island called “Dinagyang”.

It should be noted that many of the forms under this category began as compositions by the clergy and/or locally trained musicians, but have nevertheless become part of the over-all oral literature and learned spontaneously through centuries of practice. The third category of Philippine musical forms are found in urban communities and centers of population. In the last 100 years, Filipino composers have written works in the standard Western art music forms (chamber music, symphonic music, opera, serswela, etc.) and contemporary music styles, as well as the latest popular music industry- Latin American, jazz, country, rock, folk, rap, etc.

In addition, modern compositions have also been written for such theatrical forms as dance and/or ballet, drama, musicales, and cinema. Outside the symphony orchestra tradition and the Filipino theater, the Filipinos have also developed a repertoire for three distinct musical ensembles: the band (brass and bamboo), the rondalla and the chorus. The Philippine band repertoire consists of marches, overtures, symphonic poems, concertant pieces, and medleys of Filipino folk tunes, which are performed during the military and

civic parades, as well as formal and semi-tests the playing prowess and physical endurance of the competing musicians.

Incidental pieces for the comedia and other forms of local theater have also been written for the band. The rondalla(plucked string ensemble) that was introduced by Spain as the estudiantina and comparsa, has a similar repertoire. It consists of marches and pasodoble pieces (fast and brilliant music in two), medleys and arrangements of Filipino folk songs, overtures, concertant music, and folk dance accompaniments.

In recent years, Filipino composers have written serious art pieces for the rondalla or individual rondalla instruments. In modern compositions, the rondalla instruments are also combined with symphonic instruments. In the field of vocal music, choral music in the Philippines has dramatically expanded in the last fifty years, with the rise of the high quality choral singing and the countrywide proliferation of choral groups in all sectors of society : church , government, business and culture.

Initially, Philippine choral music consisted of folksong arrangements, old masses and hymns, as well as locally composed operas and sarswelas. Today, the repertoire has been augmented by local madrigal-like pieces, arrangements of popular love songs, and large scale compositions are very much in demand during choral competitions and choral festivals that occur during the Christmas season. Although Philippine musical forms may be classified according to a few general categories, e. . welcome song, song debates, courtship music, etc. each culturally-related genre has its own distinctive features which include, language and/or idiom, style of rendition

and other elements. For example, the pasyon in Pampanga and the pasyon from Bulacan would greatly differ from each other in language, the tunes used, the number of singers, and performance style (leader-chorus, antiphonal, etc.).