Dissonant Voices: Tagalog Zarzuela and the Politics of Representation in the Philippines, 1902 to 1942

By

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Abstract

The end of Spanish colonialism and the beginning of the US colonial administration at the turn of the twentieth century mark an important period in Philippine history. This was the time when anti-colonial struggles fueled aspirations for Filipino nationhood, and when debates about nationalism were made not only in the political arena but also on the theatrical stages in and around Manila. The zarzuela, a Spanish-inherited genre combining spoken dialogues and music, reflected the complexities of the colonial experience as it transformed into a vernacular practice in the Philippines. The zarzuelas' early proponents saw the genre as a medium to express their vision of Filipinos as modern citizens to counteract the often-negative portrayals of the local population in US colonial rhetoric. Because of the novelty of this genre and the use of the vernacular at this particular moment in Philippine history, the Tagalog zarzuelas came to be seen, heard, and imagined as distinctly Filipino by subsequent scholars of Philippine music and theater.

This dissertation is a history of the development of the Tagalog zarzuela that goes beyond anti-colonial narratives. It examines the role of musical theater in exposing the fragmentary nature of nationalism and how the performing arts shaped Filipino modern identities during the fraught period of US colonial rule. Bringing together a rich archive of materials including music scores, librettos, newspaper accounts, sound recordings, and visual images, I demonstrate how the zarzuela became a multivalent form of popular entertainment. These various sources reflect the multiplicity of meaning in the zarzuelas given by different historical actors that contributed to the popularization of the genre: playwrights, composers, performers, and audiences all projected their own ideas about Filipino identity that complemented and, at times, conflicted with each other. Critically, I underscore how questions of race, class, and gender account for the

ideological dissonances that accompany such a process of identity formation. Changing social and political conditions including urban secularization, regionalism, increasing class disparities, and the rise of the women's suffrage movement in the Philippines drive these questions and lay bare the often-problematic ways that identity and difference are represented in the zarzuelas.

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Introduction

Music, Nation, and Identities

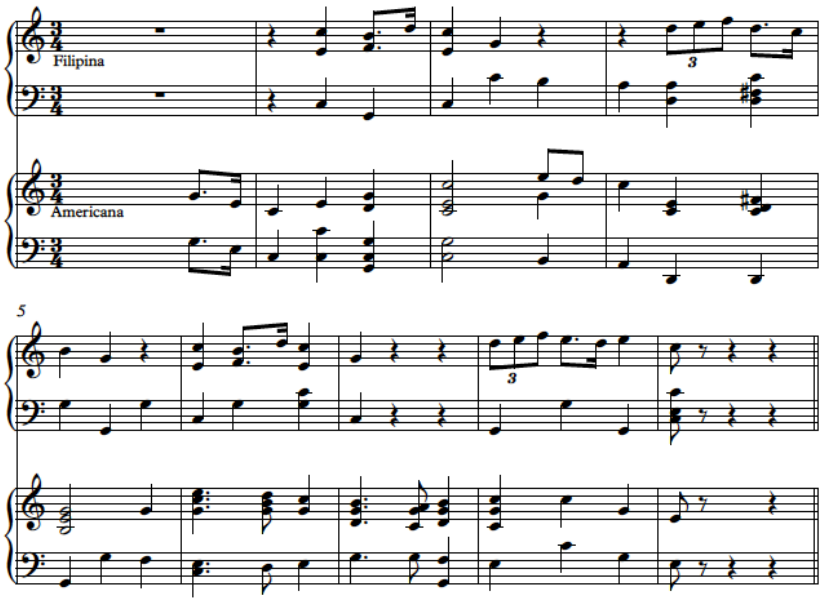
A standing-room crowd greeted the premiere of *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon o Ang Pagbibili ng Pilipinas sa Hapon* ("The Sale of the Philippines to Japan"), a Tagalog *zarzuela* that took place at the Teatro Zorrilla in Manila on the night of July 7, 1906. The audience responded with equal enthusiasm to the national anthems of the US and Japan that were played while "Aguinaldo's March," the anthem of the Tagalog revolutionaries against Spain from 1898, was "cheered to the echo."[1] Set as a comic work, *La Venta* was a critical response by the playwright Severino Reyes to the Philippines being sold by the US to Japan, an emerging global power after its recent victory in the Russo-Japanese war. In the final song number of the zarzuela, the composer José Estella juxtaposed the "Star-Spangled Banner" with "Aguinaldo's March" (marked as "Marcha Nacional Filipina" in Estella's score) by distorting the original duple meter of the march to fit into the American anthem (see Example 1). This short musical introduction then gave way to the protagonists singing the final chorus:

Say to America, if they will give up already
Ah!
don't sell [us] to others
because we will buy it
and we will protest
but if the Japanese wish
that they have control
our country will be like a roasted pig![2]

[1] "Venta de Filipinas al Japon," *The Manila Times*, July 9, 1906.

[2] Original Tagalog text: *Sabihin sa Amerika/cung siyai aayao na/¡Ah!/huag ipagbili sa iba/at ang bibili tayo na..at tayo,i, macatutol/ sacalit ibig…ng hapon/na siya ang magcacontrol/bayan tulad sa Lichon!* (All libretto text and song lyrics translations in this dissertation are mine unless otherwise noted.)

The final song's text can be read as a comically absurd critique of imperialism on the one hand, or the playwright's shrewd attempt to mitigate the US colonial government's exercise of power on the other, while the final lines hint at a resigned attitude towards the perpetual experience of colonialism. The sounding of the various national anthems and the relatively enthusiastic responses each elicited points to the ambiguity of meaning that the music signified for Manila's diverse audience.



Example 1. Introduction to "Concertante Final" from *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*

Likewise, Estella's juxtaposition of the "Marcha Nacional" would have been heard either as a subtle reminder of the erstwhile armed revolution against Spain—perhaps a veiled threat to the new colonial masters—or merely echoes the final chorus's plea for benevolence as the US anthem resonated strongly in its unadulterated form. Such a multiplicity of interpretations underscores how artistic works are extensions of the practitioners' subjectivities as much as these works are given meaning by audiences. Nevertheless, this particular scene from *La Venta* serves as a striking illustration of how the musical theater stage at the beginning of the twentieth

century was steadily becoming a powerful vehicle for Filipinos to express their ideas about national and cultural identity as they confronted their colonial past, present, and potential future.

Indeed, the end of Spanish colonialism and the beginning of the US American colonial administration at the turn of the twentieth century mark an important period in Philippine history. This was a time when anti-colonial struggles fueled aspirations for Filipino nationhood and cultural identity and when debates about nationalism were made not only in the political arena but also on the theatrical stages of the colonial capital of Manila. Three centuries of Hispanic contact had given rise to a multi-faceted cultural life, fusing local practices with outside influences. One product of this cultural fusion was the zarzuela, a Spanish musico-dramatic genre that transformed into a local form of popular entertainment in the Tagalog language. Because of the novelty of this genre and the use of the vernacular at this particular moment in Philippine history, the Tagalog zarzuelas came to be seen, heard, and imagined as distinctly Filipino by subsequent scholars of Philippine music and theater, who regarded it largely as a tool of anti-colonial subversion. But, as the scene from *La Venta*'s premiere illustrates, the Tagalog zarzuelas can be interpreted in multiple ways. While Tagalog works that were more explicit in their critique of colonialism (both Spanish and US) did exist, a comprehensive study of the zarzuela's development in the Philippines must also take into account the myriad ways that music and theater came to express other subjectivities alongside that of the national. The anti-colonial themes found in zarzuelas often distracted scholars from carefully examining overlooked repertoire and the often-fraught politics of inclusion and exclusion that accompany the project of nation-building.

This dissertation is a history of the transformation of the zarzuela into a vernacular practice in the Philippines. It examines the role of music and theater in shaping Filipino modern

identities during the fraught period of US colonial rule in the first half of the twentieth century. This project, however, is not solely a study of a particular genre and its connections to the idea of Filipinoness. Instead, I argue that the Tagalog zarzuela reveals the fragmentary nature of Filipino identity and how local artists used the theatrical stage to respond to their contemporary lived-experiences. Bringing together a rich archive of materials including music scores, librettos, newspaper accounts, and visual images, I demonstrate how the Tagalog zarzuela became a multivalent form of popular entertainment. These various sources reflect the multiplicity of meaning that can be derived from the zarzuelas through the contributions of different historical actors: playwrights, composers, performers, and audience members all projected their own ideas about Filipino identity that complemented and, at times, conflicted with each other. Critically, I underscore how questions of race, class, and gender account for the ideological dissonances that accompany such a process of identity formation and self-determination of Filipinos. Changing social and political conditions including urban secularization, regionalism, increasing class disparities, and the rise of the women's suffrage movement in the Philippines drive these questions and lay bare the often-problematic ways that identity and difference are represented in the zarzuelas.

The zarzuela also became a vehicle for projecting the Philippines as a modern society as it transitioned from one colonial state to another. Zarzuelas of the early decades of the twentieth century depicted moralizing stories that broadly promoted secularization and public education in efforts to modernize the local theatrical scene. In this regard, the Tagalog repertoire functioned as didactic works where playwrights critiqued what they perceived to be blind religiosity and superstition among the local population that were inherited from Spanish colonization. Writers and intellectuals advocating for the zarzuela also saw the genre as an ideal medium to portray

contemporary issues and present-day stories. Moreover, the local musical theater stage became a crucial platform in the representation of Filipinos as modern citizens to counteract their negative portrayals in US colonial rhetoric. In particular, the zarzuela's strong musical component provided local composers, singers, and musicians an unprecedented opportunity to showcase musical competency in Italianate singing and orchestral performance, which in turn added to their image as cosmopolitan artists.

In the later decades of the 1920s and '30s, the Tagalog zarzuela stage became even more crucial in how local writers, artists, and musicians creatively responded to the rapidly changing social conditions in colonial Philippines. In these later decades, new forms of popular music (both local and imported) were influential in the creation of zarzuela scores and subsequently fueled larger questions of modernity and mass culture. The commercialization and influx of US American popular music, in particular, ran up against rhetoric of cultural nationalism during the period. Moreover, new performance platforms and technologies such as the vaudeville stage, film, and sound recordings gave the zarzuela a boost in popularity in the 1920s, even as contemporary critics and later historians eulogized its early decline. Rather than framing these different media as oppositional, zarzuela writers, artists, and musicians embraced these other performance platforms and became part of a larger network of an emerging local popular entertainment industry.

Literature on music and theater in the Philippines

Philippine musicology is especially ripe for new historical research, and a reassessment of the history of the Tagalog zarzuela as an important musical theater genre in the first half of the twentieth century is long overdue. The study of Philippine music had long been preoccupied with

musical practices largely untouched by colonialism but new historical research has reinvigorated the study of music as a social and cultural practice set within the backdrop of the country's long colonial history. D.R.M. Irving's *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* and Christi-Anne Castro's *Musical Renderings of the Philippine Nation* are among the very few comprehensive historical accounts.[3] Whereas Irving's account situates Manila within a global network of the trade galleons from the late sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, Castro's work is a careful study of music and music-making in the creation of the Filipino nation in the years following Philippine independence in 1946. More recently, meLê yamomo's monograph, *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific, 1869-1946: Sounding Modernities* (2018), fills the historical gap in the literature with a transnational approach and situates Manila's theater scene as part of a global history of music and theater.[4] His work explores the role of globalization in creating modern subjectivities by tracing the movement of Manila's migrant musicians and the arrival of European music and theater companies in Asia in the latenineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Literature specific to the history of the zarzuela centers largely on the dramatic text and the particular socio-political conditions that shaped the repertoire. Works by Nicanor Tiongson, Doreen Fernandez, and Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio are formative in understanding the broader history of theater in the Philippines.[5] Tiongson's expansive histories on different dramatic genres

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[3] D.R.M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). Christi-Anne Castro, *Musical Renderings of the Philippine Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[4] meLê yamomo, *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific, 1869-1946: Sounding Modernities* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[5] See, for example, Doreen G. Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela: Indigenization and Transformation," *Philippine Studies* 41 (1993): 320-343; idem, *Palabas: Essays on Philippine Theater History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996). See also Nicanor Tiongson, *An Essay on Dulaan, Philippine Theater* (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1989); idem, *Philippine Theater: History and Anthology, Komedya* 2 (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1999).

that became popular and spread in the archipelago offer a rich landscape of colonial entertainment in which to situate the Tagalog zarzuelas. Cultural historian Doreen Fernandez's work similarly outlines the process of indigenization that the Spanish zarzuela underwent in the early twentieth century. Her research on the history of the Iloilo zarzuela (Hiligaynon-language repertoire) remains one of the better-documented studies on a local theatrical practice that highlights the everyday operations of staging zarzuela performances in another major port-city outside of Manila.[6] Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio's work focuses on the so-called "seditious dramas" produced between 1902 and 1907.[7] Her work is foundational in understanding the extent to which local playwrights and intellectuals used the theatrical stage to vocalize anti-US sentiments at a time when the Sedition Law was enacted, which in turn led to several arrests of those involved in producing such works.

In the much smaller field of Philippine musicology, writings on the music of the zarzuela are few and far between. Helen Samson-Lauterwald's 1977 dissertation on the music set to the zarzuela texts of playwright Severino Reyes (republished in 2016 by the University of the Philippines Press) and Ramon Santos' article on general stylistic influences on the local zarzuelas are two key texts. Samson-Lauterwald's work presents an analysis of the music for Severino Reyes's zarzuelas that examines its melodic and harmonic content. She also provides

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[6] See Doreen G. Fernandez, *The Iloilo Zarzuela: 1903-1930* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1978). Alongside Fernandez' work, historian Alfred McCoy's essays on the Hiligaynon zarzuela as a social document draw parallels between the production of zarzuela repertoire and the mobilization of the masses in colonial Iloilo. With rich biographies of key playwrights like Jose Nava, McCoy outlines how Iloilo's colonial literati moved beyond the "narrow nationalism of the colony's political elite" and identified with the plight and aspirations of Iloilo's working class population. See Alfred McCoy, "Culture and Consciousness in a Philippine City," Philippine Studies 30, no. 2 (1982): 208; idem, *Lives at the Margin: Biography of Filipinos, Obscure, Ordinary and Heroic* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), 279-335.

[7] Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights: Early American Occupation* (Manila: Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines, 1972).

brief but previously unavailable biographies of zarzuela composers with whom Reyes collaborated along with summary descriptions of their compositional styles.[8] Ramon Santos's essay, on the other hand, traces musical stylistic influences from Spanish sources and from European opera on the Tagalog zarzuela. He also argues for the native zarzuela's importance in cultivating and popularizing more indigenous vocal genres well into the 1920s.[9] Both writings, however, leave much room for a stronger engagement with the musical sources that takes into account how composers integrated their music into the drama and how compositional practices changed throughout the first half of the twentieth century. My work addresses these key musicological questions alongside inquiries on the changing audience reception and circumstances of zarzuela productions throughout the decades in order to reconstruct a more nuanced history of the role of the performing arts in nationalist discourse in the Philippines.

Reconstructing the Tagalog zarzuela archive

This project takes on various approaches to the study of the musical theater genre by looking at its texts (i.e. the librettos and the musical scores), its multiple performances, and the social and political contexts that enabled the continued production of the zarzuelas in the early twentieth century. This multifaceted approach grows out of the variety of materials gathered during my research in libraries and archives in the Philippines and in the US. These sources include librettos and music scores that are largely unpublished, performance programs, published reviews, sound recordings, and photographs. Several collections in institutions across the greater Manila area

[8] See Helen F. Samson-Lauterwald, *Music in the Zarzuelas of Severino Reyes ("Lola Basyang")* (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2016).

[9] Ramon Santos, "Musika ng Zarzuela-Sarsuwela: Isang Pag-aaral sa Etimolodyi, Katangian at Kahalagahan ng Paghahayag-damdaming Filipino," in *Philippine Humanities Review: Sarsuwela* 11, no. 2 (2010): 277-319.

were particularly rich in materials for reconstructing a cultural and musical history of the Tagalog zarzuela. These are the Severino Reyes Collection at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Hermogenes Ilagan Collection and José Estella Collection at the University of the Philippines, the Delfin R. Manlapaz Sarsuela Collection at the Ateneo de Manila University, and the Atang de la Rama collection at the National Library of the Philippines. These collections mostly consist of original manuscripts and copies of music scores and handwritten notebooks and typescript copies of librettos alongside personal memorabilia that included personal documents, letters, newspaper clippings, and photographs. [10] In the first three collections mentioned, zarzuela scripts and corresponding musical scores remain largely intact and illustrate the phenomenon of playwrights and company directors retaining the musical scores that accompany librettos. In the case of the Manlapaz Collection, the bulk of the materials are from the repertoire of one of the last remaining active zarzuela troupes in the late 1930s and '40s, the Samahang Gabriel. Each of these collections remarkably points toward representative zarzuela practices from different decades of the early twentieth century.

Through a careful analysis of the librettos and music scores of specific zarzuelas, I offer a closer look at how composers either reinforced or contradicted the playwright's intended meanings of the dramatic text. These close readings remark on the complicated relationship between music and identity, and how certain types of musical sounds constructed racial/ethnic difference on the theatrical stage that reinforced perceived cultural steretypes among the diverse population in colonial Philippines. Furthermore, I extend the scope of historical accounts of the Tagalog zarzuela repertoire beyond the early 1920s to include previously overlooked scores and

[10] Rarely are these music manuscripts full orchestral scores. Most music manuscripts are in piano-vocal scores and very few have extant orchestral parts (see chart in Appendix A).

librettos written in the 1930s. This later repertoire undermines the oft-repeated telling in the literature of the zarzuela's demise in the advent of cinema in the late 1920s. Sound recordings from this later period also provide insight into the performance and popularization of zarzuela repertoire. These auditory sources are particularly significant in reconstructing a history of the Tagalog zarzuela that pays attention to nuances of vocal performance, which reflect the changing tastes of local contemporary audiences.

Looking beyond the zarzuelas' text and music, I have found a wealth of information in the periodicals and journalistic writing from the period. Hundreds of pages of advertisements for performances, reviews from local as well as foreign critics, various debates on music and culture, and artist interviews all point to the rich landscape of music and theater in the Philippines. These documents help reconstruct audience reception and differing attitudes toward Filipino cultural identity among the local intellectual and political elites of Manila. In articles and reviews of the zarzuela productions, writers and leading intellectuals of the earlier decades identified and exploited the mass popularity and appeal of the zarzuelas to suit their own political agendas surrounding the question of a Philippine independence from the US. Tracking different positionalities—namely, that of the playwright, composer, performer, audience members and critics—I explore how Filipinos deployed music and theater to further their own goals.

Combining methodologies from history, musicology, literary analysis, and sociological inquiries, my work is a critical contribution to studies of music cultures and practices impacted by various forms of material and cultural exploitation that accompanied Western territorial expansion. Whereas scholarship on racial and ethnic representation in the lyrical stage has often considered examples found in the Western repertoire, my project resituates the theatrical stage in colonial Manila and addresses the localized conditions that such colonial encounters created. In

this regard, my work speaks to the growing body of scholarship on the global circulation of the zarzuela and contributes to understandings of cultural nationalism within the fraught history of colonialism in the Philippines.

Popular music theater and Spanish legacy: historical background

As a Spanish theatrical genre, the zarzuela is a broad label for Spanish works often categorized in English as "light opera," "operetta," and, even, "musical comedy." Musicologists and historians of the Spanish zarzuela trace its history back to the mid-seventeenth century as a form of theatrical entertainment for the aristocracy, which then gradually moved to Madrid's popular theaters in the 1700s.[11] The Italian bel canto opera's huge popularity in nineteenth-century Spain caused a decline in the zarzuela's popularity. However, in the mid-1800s, a group of composers began using the term "zarzuela" in their compositions and integrated Spanish folk melodies in their scores. The zarzuelas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in particular, reflect what historian Clinton Young describes as a type of Spanish popular nationalism that "enabled Spaniards to come to grips with the vast modernizing changes taking place in their country. Spain was slowly but surely urbanizing and industrializing from the 1880s through the 1920s, and the zarzuela did more than reflect these changes: the genre demonstrated to Spanish society what such a nation could look like."[12] These zarzuelas often featured urban settings, working class characters, and dance music in urban leisure activities. Young cited as a primary example

[11] See Clinton D Young, *Music Theater and Popular Nationalism in Spain, 1880-1930*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2016), 5. Histories of the Spanish zarzuela often refer to the 1657 performance of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *El Laurel de Apolo*, which featured extended musical numbers akin to Italian opera, as the origins of the genre. The name "zarzuela" came from King Philip IV's hunting lodge where the performance took place, called Palacio de zarzuela.

[12] Young, *Music Theater and Popular Nationalism*, 17

Tomás Bretón's *La Verbena de la Paloma*, which features several elements such as an opening neighborhood scene depicting a "slice of life (of 1894 Madrid)," the use of Spanish dance genres such as the *seguidilla*, and the marked realism that contrasted with the grandiose, mytho-historical romantic nationalism of Verdi or Wagner.[13]

The Tagalog zarzuela parallels the trajectory of the Spanish repertoire's increasing focus on realistic depictions of local daily life, especially as the Philippines went through another form of colonization under the US at the turn of the twentieth century. The transformation of the zarzuela from a Spanish-inherited genre to a vernacular practice in the Philippines, however, must be understood within the context of a much longer and diverse history of music and theatrical practice in the archipelago. Fernandez outlines indigenous theatrical practice in the Philippines (those she defines as having distinctive "mimetic action" or an element of "pretend") through various forms of epic chanting, ceremonies that, at times, also included song and dances performing the cyclical rituals of everyday life. Other theatrical examples are found in non-ceremonial contexts like games and competitions with an accompanying narrative structure.[14] Early Hispanic influences, introduced via Nueva España (Mexico) sometime in the late sixteenth century, can be traced in the native *awit* and *corrido*, which are the primary examples of popular poetry derived from metrical romances featuring stories of chivalry and hagiographies of martyrs and saints.[15] With the introduction of Catholicism in the Spanish colony, clerics used verse recitations and staged dramas both in Spanish and in local languages to proselytize and preach to native converts. By the eighteenth century, a local form of staged performance in poetic verses

[13] Young, *Music Theater and Popular Nationalism*, 15-16.

[14] See Fernandez, *Palabas*, 2-5.

[15] Fernandez, *Palabas*, 5.

called *comedia* (later *komedya*) emerged. Scholars of Philippine theater have commented on the possible connections between Philippine *comedia* with the *moro y cristianos* from Mexico, a type of dance-drama that included stories about Charlemagne and the twelve peers of France.[16] Local comedia may depict various different stories but it often portrayed the conflict between the Christian nobilities of Europe and their Muslim counterparts. Local musicians often played instrumental band music in the comedias, which largely included marches for exits and entrances of actors and accompanied the battle scenes (referred to as the "moro-moro") between the Muslim and Christian characters (see Figure 1).

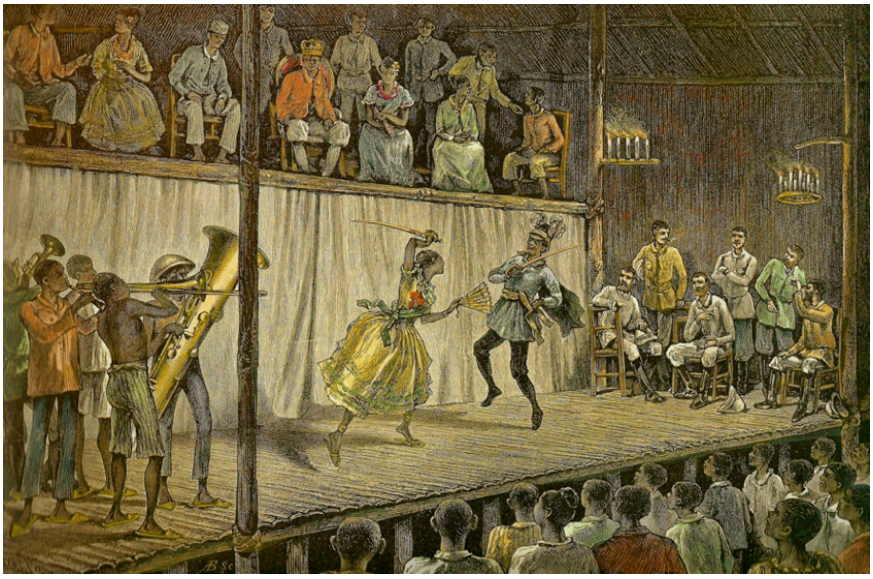

Figure 1. 19th-century print depicting a "moro-moro" scene performed in the Bicol region[17]

[16] Fernandez, *Palabas*, 8.

[17] Tiongson further analyzes this print of a "moro-moro" scene as an analogy for native subjugation and local social hierarchies under Spanish colonialism with the following annotation: "Natives below look up to the royal characters on thrones and the Spanish soldiers on stage the way they actually did in colonial Philippines." See Tiongson, *Philippine Theater: History and Anthology, Komedya*, 5.

These battle scenes were the highlight and the most-awaited part of comedia performances such that the term "moro-moro" came to refer to the entire drama itself. The comedia endured throughout the nineteenth century when it became the staple entertainment in religious festivities and communal events sponsored by the clergy and wealthy patrons in various principalities in Spanish colonial Philippines. As will be elaborated in the following chapter, the comedia was so popular among the local masses by the beginning of the twentieth century that it became a target for critique by playwrights and other intellectual elites who advocated for the zarzuela as a better and more modern form of theater for Filipinos.

Other types of theater that existed in Manila and in other urbanizing cities in the nineteenth century include Spanish plays, comic operas, and Italian operas (often translated to Spanish) performed by visiting European troupes and transplanted Spaniards in the colony, or by local companies formed by Filipino theater artists and musicians.[18] One such example is the opera company of Ladislao Bonus, a bassist later turned composer, who formed his own company in 1887 in Pandacan, one of the *arrabales* (neighboring suburbs) of Manila. Bonus's company mounted productions of Italian operas including *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Lucia di Lamermoor*, *Linda di Chamounix*, *La Traviata*, and *Fra Diavolo*.[19] Another company called FERSUTA—after the first letters of the last names of its notable lead artists Práxedes "Yeyeng" Fernández, Venancia Suzara, and Patrocinio Tagaroma—produced Spanish zarzuelas in Manila and in extensive tours in the Southern regions, particularly in Negros and Iloilo.[20] These pioneering

[18] For more on the history of traveling troupes and performances of repertoire imported from Spain and elsewhere in Europe, see Mariano Roger Quijano Axle, "Tonight: Zarzuela at 8 o'clock (If the Weather Allows It): Zarzuela Scenes in Manila Between 1852 and 1892," *Philippine Humanities Review: Sarsuwela* 11, no. 2 (2010): 405-424.

[19] Cristina Laconico-Buenaventura, *The Theater in Manila, 1846-1946* (Manila: De La Salle Uuniveristy Press, 1994), 90.

[20] E. Arsenio Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography volume 1* (Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1955), 168-169.

artists demonstrate the remarkable contribution of women in the development of local music theater in the Philippines, which paved the way for the career of other artists such as Atang de la Rama, the focus of my last chapter.

Spanish musical theater repertoire came to the Philippine archipelago sometime in the 1850s, which was also around the time when the zarzuela was gaining renewed momentum in Madrid and enjoying popular support amidst the Spanish aristocracy's long-standing appreciation for Italian opera.[21] Musicologist Mariano Axle makes the definite link between the Spanish zarzuela and its importation to the Philippines with the figure of Dario Céspedes, who had experience managing a zarzuela company in Spain prior to arriving and working as a bureaucrat in Manila. Sometime between 1878 and 1879, Céspedes's company (brought directly from Spain) staged a production of Francisco Barbieri's *Jugar con Fuego*, which was at that time already considered by contemporary critics as among the more notable works of Spanish zarzuela. [22] Other notable Spanish artists like Elisea Raguer and Alejandro Cubero soon followed, working as full-time actors and company managers and later becoming responsible for providing opportunities for local actors and training Filipino artists such as Nemesio Ratia, José Carvajal, and Práxedes Fernández of the famed FERSUTA.

These different types of theatrical performances with strong ties to Spanish and other European repertoire were patronized by the upper elites and the well-educated, often multi-lingual *ilustrados* who then became the primary movers in the shift towards using local languages to create newly written zarzuelas. Theater historian Cristina Lacónico-Buenaventura notes, however, that in other theatrical venues (especially those that catered to the lower-classes),

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[21] Young, *Music Theater and Popular Nationalism in Spain,* 7-8.

[22] Axle, "Tonight: Zarzuela at 8 o'clock," 407.

Tagalog comedias often shared the stage with Spanish zarzuelas and plays translated in Tagalog, which attest to a varied repertoire for native consumption.[23]

The Tagalog zarzuela emerged in this lively theatrical scene, with local playwrights and composers drawing on similar themes and musical influences from the Spanish repertory. As Tiongson asserts, Spanish zarzuelas served as models for intellectuals, writers, composers, and directors in crafting their own works. Several characteristics from the Spanish zarzuelas carried over to the zarzuelas produced in the Tagalog and other regional languages, including romantic plotlines, stock characters, and musical forms that borrow from popular dances such as waltzes, mazurkas, and tangos. Other musical conventions include the configuration of vocal scoring for solos, duets, and *concertante* (ensemble) settings, set to soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass vocal types, while orchestral instrumentation in local zarzuelas largely mirrored that of Spanish productions and smaller operetta performances across Europe.[24] With music as a vital component of the zarzuela genre, the proliferation of locally written works provided new opportunities for musicians and singers outside of then conventional musical practices like church rituals and religious festivities, military bands, and the ubiquitous comedia. Local composers incorporated Hispanic genres that eventually became localized, such as the *habanera* and *danza*, and they also made use of the more indigenous forms of the *kundiman* and *balitaw* to further convey the sentiments called for in specific scenes.

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[23] Lacónico-Buenaventura, *Theater in Manila*, 20-21; 185. Teatro Tagalo de Tondo, for example, was initially made of lighter construction, ran for more than fifty years from the 1840s up until around the time before the revolution of 1896 erupted and hosted a variety of theatrical productions including Tagalog comedias, Spanish plays and excerpts of zarzuelas, as well as operas.

[24] Nicanor Tiongson, "A Short History of the Philippine Sarsuwela (1879-2009)," *Philippine Humanities Review: Sarsuwela* 11, no. 2 (2010): 153.

A broader survey of Tagalog-language productions mounted in Manila and its surrounding environs reveal a much larger corpus of works comprising about one hundred and fifty titles (see Appendix A).[25] Most of the titles I included in this list are labeled as a zarzuela or some variant of the term by at least its playwright or composer. As writers began to use the local languages, terms such as *sarsuwela*, *sarsuelet*, *drama-lirico*, *sarsuyla*, *dulang hinonihan*, *dulang inawitan*, and *dulang may awit* were sometimes used.[26] The term *opereta* also became popular in the late 1920s and 30s and was often used interchangeably with *sarsuela* or *sarsuwela* in the Tagalog repertoire.

Multiple zarzuela practices in the Philippines

The variety in terminology also reflects the diversity of zarzuela production and performance that emerged almost simultaneously throughout different regions in the Philippine archipelago. Although this project focuses on the Tagalog zarzuelas, it is important to note that the creation of zarzuelas outside of Manila and the larger Tagalog-speaking region in south central Luzon proliferated almost simultaneously in other developing cities and provincial towns across the archipelago.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, playwrights from different provinces began to write scripts in their respective local languages. As soon as the Spanish migrants and local artists started performing Spanish zarzuelas throughout the archipelago, zarzuelas in different regional languages almost simultaneously emerged. Some early examples are *Budhing Mapagpahamak*

[25] The zarzuela production chart is a listing of all titles I have come across in various primary sources including extant scripts, music scores, newspaper reviews and advertisements, as well secondary materials, primarily playwright and composer biographies.

[26] Nicanor Tiongson, "A Short History of the Philippine Sarsuwela," 149.

(ca. 1890) by playwright Maximino de los Reyes and composer Isidoro Roxas in Bulacan, and the Kapampangan zarzuela *Ing Managpe* (1900) by Proceso Pabalan Byron and composer Amado Gutierrez David, whose score exhibited the inherent musicality of the Kapampangan language. Other important Kapampangan writers were Crisostomo "Crissot" Soto, whose work *Alang Dios!* (1902) remains one of the most popular, and Felix Galura, who also adapted and translated Spanish works for the Kapampangan stage. Composers who collaborated with the playwrights include Pablo Cordero, Pablo Calma, and Camilo Dimson.[27]

Further north in the Ilocos region, Mena Crisologo from Ilocos Sur ranks as among the most influential writers who also wrote his own music. Among his most popular works are *Noble Revalidad* and *Codigo Municipal*. Other writers active from around the early 1910s up until the decades following the Second World War include Pascual Guerrero Agcaolili, Isaias Lazo, and Barbaro Paat. Composers for the Ilocano zarzuelas were Policarpio Bravo and Remigio Paron of Vigan, and Anselmo Pelayre and Brigido Ragasa of San Vicente, who were also orchestra directors. Paron also led the Remy Swing Band and remained active in writing music for stage dramas until the 1950s.[28] In Pangasinan, writers such as Pablo Mejia and Catalino Palisoc were influential not only in their region but also in spreading Pangasinan culture through radio programs in the 1920s. Tropang Mejia was also quite active and performed zarzuelas from 1907 to 1934.[29] In the Bicol region, church-trained musicians like Mariano Ripaco and Valentin Janer wrote music for the zarzuela writers Asisclo Jimenez and Jose Figueroa. Their works were

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[27] See Julieta C. Mallari's "Indigenizing the Zarzuela: Kapampangan Ethnocentric Adoption of the Foreign Genre," *Coolabah* No.5 (2011): 161-175.

[28] Mario G.R. Rosal, *Zarzuelang Iloko: Mga Salin Sa Filipino, Kalakip Ang Orihinal Na Iloko* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1993).

[29] See Priscelina P. Legasto's critical work *Sarswelang Pangasinan* (Quezon City: Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1996).

written and performed roughly between 1906 and 1913 by groups such as the Compania de Zarzuela Sorsogon. The Bicol-language repertoire have yet to be studied in depth and offers further insights into performance practices in regions outside of Manila.[30]

Zarzuelas were also quite popular in the Visayas islands, the central region of the Philippine archipelago. Vicente Sotto's *Maputi ug Maitum* (1902) is among the earliest zarzuelas written in Cebuano. Other writers include Piux Cabahar, Buenaventura Rodriguez, and Fernando Buyser. In the Hiligaynon stage, playwright Valente Cristobal worked with composer Juan Paterno on his popular zarzuelas, *Ang Capitan* (1903) being one of the earliest. Younger writers such as Jose Maria Nava, Serapion Torre, and Miguel Montelibano produced works from the late 1910s and '20s that addressed the plight of the lower class and the poor working conditions within the burgeoning agrarian sugar industry of Iloilo.[31] On the islands of Samar and Leyte, zarzuela productions in Spanish and in the local Waray language began to be performed in the 1890s. Norberto Romuladez, Sr. and Alfonso Cinco were among the more prominent playwrights. Cinco was also a composer and musician who founded the Orquesta Naciente in 1906, which provided the music for the stage productions.[32]

As diverse in language and style as these zarzuelas were, the stories largely served as commentaries on current events and came to be comedies of manners, a kind of social documentation recording everyday life already familiar to each regional production's immediate audience. Didacticism was a common strategy in which local intellectuals and playwrights sought to educate as well as entertain the local population. Issues of good governance and the

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[30] Bikol Collection: Valentin Janer Papers, Special Collections, University of the Philippines, Diliman.

[31] See Doreen Fernandez, *The Iloilo Zarzuela: 1903-1930* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press 1978).

[32] Clarita C Filipinas and Evelyn Andrada- Lanuza, *Lineyte-Samarnon Zarzuela (1899-1977): History & Aesthetics* (Tacloban City, Philippines: Divine Word University Publications, 1991), 35-41.

role of education were popular topics as well as domestic plots that often touch upon the role of women in the home. Playwrights used such themes and topics in projecting an image of a modernizing Filipino polity as the Philippines transitioned from a Spanish to an American colonial state.

On modernities and mapping multiple voices

The idea that modernization shaped notions of identity and nation is not an altogether new concept. Scholars of music and theater have previously elaborated on the social and cultural conditions of modernity and its application in analyzing cultural changes specific to the Philippine context. Christi-Anne Castro's work on music and performance in postcolonial Philippines is particularly useful in thinking through the idea of modernity and its ties to the formation of a national consciousness.[33] Castro outlines how modernity had often been associated with Westernization and the "desire to belong to a global community of nations, and the legitimation of self-rule."[34] Such a notion finds resonance in the ways that composers, playwrights, musicians, and various theater critics advocated for the Tagalog zarzuela in the early years of its development, and how they conceived of the zarzuela stage as central in showcasing Filipino literacy and virtuosity in Western music. Read against the complex history of colonialism in the Philippines, however, this narrative seems simplistic and tends to equate the idea of progress with the West. Castro counters this formulation by emphasizing a keener understanding of modernity in colonial histories that takes into account the ways in which cultural syncretism figured in the process of constructing identities.[35] As I elaborate in the

[33] Castro, *Musical Renderings of the Philippine Nation*, 6-7.

[34] Castro, *Musical* Renderings, 7.

[35] Castro, *Musical Renderings*, 7.

succeeding chapters, the question of foreign influence versus local traditions is a recurring theme, particularly in outlining how zarzuela composers and artists consistently wove together musical genres and idioms perceived as indigenous alongside globally circulating popular genres. For the zarzuelas' main creators and producers, moreover, the vernacularization of the genre went beyond mere mimicry of foreign artistic forms. Rather, the adaptation of the Spanish zarzuela into a Tagalog practice provides crucial insight on how local writers, artists, and musicians perceived their ever-changing social world and responded to the new conditions in which they found themselves.

Similarly, meLê yamomo's emphasis on the plurality of modern subjectivities that formed in different sites across the Asia Pacific region aids in my own thinking of how the Tagalog zarzuela produced a multiplicity of Filipino subjectivities, albeit on a more microscopic scale and within limited geographic boundaries. In his section on the development of music theater and its "sonic articulation" of the embryonic Filipino nation, yamomo points to the Philippine *sarsuwelas* (as opposed to the Spanish zarzuela) as a "repository of popular music" and how it "readily absorbed the musical traditions of its listening publics."[36] This is an important assertion and serves as a jumping-off point for my historical inquiries on the changing perception of musical tradition and popular music—especially in the later decades when the use of jazz in the zarzuela scores of the 1920s and '30s ran up against contemporary discourse on musical nationalism and nativist impulses in composing new music. Literature on the Tagalog zarzuelas have yet to account for the persistent use of jazz music and other related popular dance genres by zarzuela composers and how this compositional process helped re-cast the zarzuela as an integral part of the emerging popular entertainment industry in the Philippines.

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[36] yamomo, *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific*, 159.

Further, musicologist José Buenconsejo outlines the history of modernity in the Philippines as characterized by the country's "entanglements with the larger social order of international politics and imperial capitalists' search for new markets in Asia that brought in urbanization and continuing colonization…" Such entanglements, Buenconsejo further argues, brought about the rise of a local middle-sector, whose progressive ideals appropriated learned values of "secularism, liberalism, American democracy, and French Enlightenment in creating a consciousness of individualism and self-governance."[37] This middle-sector, which overlapped with the so-called *ilustrado* class of educated elites of Philippine society, navigated a tenuous political landscape in the aftermath of the revolution against Spain of 1896 to 1898 and the subsequent Filipino-American war that "officially ended" in 1902.[38] The early years of transition from Spanish to US colonial rule saw the emergence of local political organizations that debated the merits of immediate independence versus the profitability of the continued democratic tutelage under US colonial rule. These debates continued in the decades that followed while the reality of the US colonial regime in the country pushed the question of Filipino sovereignty further into the future.

Popular music theater in the Philippines similarly echoed this multiplicity of voices, with playwrights and intellectuals expressing different ideas about the role of performing arts in projecting their own notions of the modern Filipino society. As the Tagalog zarzuelas did not enjoy sustained institutional or state support, particularly in the theatrical genre's early stages, companies relied heavily on wealthy patrons and playwrights who often bankrolled the productions themselves or wielded their social capital in order to support performances. This

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[37] José Buenconsejo, "Introduction," in *Philippine Modernities: Music, Performing Arts, and Language, 1880 to 1941*, ed. José Buenconsejo (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2017), xiv.

[38] Pockets of armed resistance continued in various provinces and locales outside of Manila at least until 1913.

control of the means of zarzuela production often resulted in competing aesthetic and political goals for those invested in local theater as a way to educate and elevate the cultural tastes of the growing working-class audience of Manila. In the first chapter, I look at how playwrights conceived of the zarzuela as the best vehicle to educate Filipinos while allowing intellectual elites to project their ideas about Filipino identity and nationalism. A central figure in the Tagalog zarzuela's early development was the playwright Severino Reyes, who advocated for the zarzuela and its social commentary. This chapter tells the story of the playwright's most prolific years during the first decade of the twentieth century as these coincided with the transitional and uneven bureaucracy under the US colonial administration in the Philippines. Reyes's most popular work is the anti-Spanish and anti-clerical piece *Walang Sugat* ("Not Wounded," 1902), which aligned him with other contemporary "seditious" and anti-American playwrights in the existing literature on Tagalog theater.

A closer look at Reyes's other works from this period, however, complicates his reputation as a staunchly nationalist playwright, especially when read within the context of his connections with the politically moderate Partido Federalista. The Partido Federalista has been generally characterized in Philippine history as the locus for local elites' politics of compromise and anti-nationalist agenda in the early years of the American colonial bureaucracy. I argue against this simplistic account and emphasize instead the Partido's primary goal of educating and modernizing the Filipino masses as a nationalist project, which also coincided with Reyes's vision for writing and producing Tagalog zarzuelas. Moreover, the emergence of the Tagalog zarzuela in Manila accompanied the debates among different intellectual camps on which theatrical form—the *comedia* or zarzuela—best served the audience for popular entertainment. Playwrights like Reyes and critics highlighted the utility of the zarzuela as a didactic tool to

comment on social vices and blind religiosity among lower class audiences, an important feature that they found lacking in the comedia. In these debates, journalistic writing became as important as the actual zarzuela productions, and the newspapers offered a forum for writers to "perform" their intellectual work and influence a fast-growing audience for music theater.

Composers of the Tagalog zarzuelas similarly worked through notions of education and cultural uplift, yet closer readings of specific examples reveal a disjunction between the text and the way that it is set to music. In the second chapter, I focus on Reyes's and composer Juan de Sahagun Hernandez's *Minda Mora* from 1904. Though Reyes's works have long been singled out for their portrayals of Filipino modernity and civil progress, *Minda Mora* also featured exoticizing practices reminiscent of Western representations of "others," such as when the portrayal and representation of Muslims from the southern islands of Mindanao serve to distinguish between savagery and civility in constructing an ideal Filipino identity. In this work, I look at different strategies of musical representation and how particular musical vocabularies (i.e. pentatonic melodies, augmented seconds, minor modalities) became tools for Filipino composers such as Hernandez in representing racial and ethnic difference onstage. Furthermore, the public reception of *Minda Mora* adds another important layer in understanding how race operates in the early formulations of national identity among Filipinos elites.

The role of the audience and public consumption also reveals how zarzuelas came to reflect the experience of Filipino modern life. With the shift to the use of local regional languages set to newly composed music, the zarzuelas were able to reach a much larger and socially diverse audience beyond the affluent *ilustrado* families who spoke Spanish and English. Indeed, the zarzuela stage opened up a new space for local theater that became accessible and marketable for multiple audiences at the beginning of the twentieth century: while the Tagalog

language brought in new audiences for the zarzuela, the more "classical" and operatic style of performance (vocally and instrumentally) provided a recognizable soundscape for the upper-class audience and foreign nationals looking for locally produced entertainment and who were already familiar with Spanish zarzuela or other Western forms of music theater. Playwrights like Severino Reyes banked on this feature of the Tagalog zarzuela and actively marketed his works to local and foreign audiences alike.

This relatively diverse audience, however, changed in the later decades. The rise in popularity of film, vaudeville, commercial sound recordings, and Tagalog literature in the 1920s and '30s expanded the landscape of popular entertainment in the Philippines, which resulted in a significant shift in both the content of the new repertoire and the audience that patronized the zarzuelas. In these later decades, stories about economic hardship, social mobility, and labor migration between the urban center of Manila and the largely agrarian provinces catered to the largely lower working classes, which prompted contemporary critics to remark on the zarzuelas' "decline" at this time. In the third chapter, I focus on the Manlapaz Collection of zarzuela librettos and scores, a previously unmined archive of works written and produced in these later decades.[39] Very little has been written about this period and, whenever mentioned, the repertoire from these years has been lumped together with those from the earlier zarzuelas of Severino Reyes. The Manlapaz Collection is largely comprised of the repertoire of the Samahang Gabriel (Gabriel Company), a theatrical group that became prolific in the 1930s, and challenges the oft-repeated narrative that zarzuela productions were quickly displaced by the advent of film and

[39] The collection is held in the Pardo de Tavera, Special Collections at the Ateneo de Manila University. The provenance of the collection itself is worth studying, as it ties in to the issue of cultural preservation and publishing that the collector, Delfin Manlapaz actively worked on in the decades following the Second World War.

vaudeville in the Philippines. Instead, I argue how the production of zarzuelas in this period became closely intertwined with the early development of film and how the zarzuelas became an integral part of a widening industry of popular entertainment in the country, which also included the vaudeville stage, sound recordings, and serialized Tagalog popular literature.

Zarzuela librettos (and in some cases entire stage productions) were adopted for the screen in the late 1910s and early 20s, while Tagalog short stories and novels serialized in newspapers and popular magazines were rewritten as zarzuelas in the 1930s. Likewise, some compositional techniques were shared between writing for the stage and for film, while artists and musicians from the theatrical stage were often the same personalities that gave voice to the early sound recordings that often featured music from the zarzuela repertoire. This transmedial nature of the popular entertainment industry in the Philippines underlines the continued relevance of the Tagalog zarzuelas even in the age of newly emerging media technologies. Further, the Samahang Gabriel repertoire provides ample materials for a comparative musical analysis with those of the earlier repertoire. The proliferation of jazz, in particular, became influential to later zarzuela composers while posing a counterpoint to the insistence of other composers (mostly those working within the music academe) on the aesthetic superiority of using folk songs and genres in local compositional practice.

Taking the metaphor of "multiple voices" even further, I examine the role of zarzuelistas (zarzuela artists) and their performances as an equally important locus of creative authorship as that ascribed to playwrights and composers. In the final chapter, I examine the particular contributions of the zarzuelista Honorata "Atang" de la Rama and the power of the female voice in the continued production of Tagalog zarzuelas. Here, I use the term "voice" to mean several things: 1) the distinctiveness of de la Rama's own voice as heard in extant sound recordings and

reflected in contemporary reviews and the ways that her performance adds a different layer of signification to the written music and text; 2) de la Rama's own authorial voice as a playwright and producer; 3) and the political significance of the female voice in the emerging women's movements in the late 1910s and 20s in the Philippines, which is the backdrop for my study of the role of women in the history of the Tagalog zarzuela.

Focusing on the life and career of de la Rama, I make more explicit the social and cultural capital that women artists and performers wielded in the production of local theater. While playwrights sought to create a world that mirrored the dramas of middle-class domestic life and the largely patriarchal social order of early-twentieth century Manila, de la Rama's portrayals reveals the artist's renegotiation of gendered identities inscribed by its male authors. By considering recordings of popular zarzuela repertoire by Atang, I highlight the more affective qualities of the songs she performed and the characters she portrayed. Shifting my focus from an analysis of particular works (i.e. of texts and their setting to music) to the specificities of performance allows for an alternative reading where female performers like dela Rama negotiated the male-inscribed ideas of femininity in the zarzuelas. Furthermore, Atang's role not only as a performer but also as a playwright and producer of stage performances serve as a prime example of female voices in early Philippine theater. By examining the contributions of these different groups—playwrights, composers, performers, and audience members—I highlight the collaborative nature of the zarzuela as a genre that is multi-layered in its content and the possibility of multiple interpretations and meanings that can be simultaneously created in each performance.

Conclusion

In her careful study of the German concept of homeland, or *heimat*, cultural historian Celia Applegate points to how *heimat* and the idea of nation teaches us about "the durability of the communitarian impulse as about the multiplicity, and the tenuousness, of its forms."[40] This dissertation aims to examine the multiplicity that Applegate articulates. Although the grand narrative of nationalism has largely influenced and continues to influence histories of Philippine culture, my project seeks to contribute to the less-explored connections between the performing arts and the complex politics of identity that shaped the production of Tagalog zarzuelas. From the social commentaries and aesthetic choices inscribed by its playwrights, composers, and performers to the audience reception of specific works, the zarzuela tells a much richer story than what is portrayed in extant scholarship. This project brings to the fore works that do not conveniently fit within the narrative of anti-colonial nationalism but instead reveal the contradictions and ambivalences surrounding the performance and reception of music theater in a diverse colonial city. By doing so, we may begin to reflect on the multivalent nature of the Tagalog zarzuela and "turn our ears" to the more dissonant elements that make up our understandings of Filipino identity.

[40] Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), x-xi.

Chapter One

Battle of the Drama Kings and the Rise of Severino Reyes

It was a balmy Saturday night in April 1902 when loud noises were heard coming from the roof top of the Teatro Rizal in Tondo, Manila,[1] It was not torrential rain that came crashing down but stones cast by protestors outside the theater hosting a repeat performance of Severino Reyes's play *R.I.P.* ("Requiescat in Pace"). The play in question was a satirical work that directly attacked the popular type of local drama, the Tagalog *comedia*, which was represented in the play as a slowly dying practice. The playwright's critique of the ubiquitous theatrical form was vividly portrayed in its final scene wherein actors bury their costumes in a coffin to symbolize the death of the comedia. The continued performance of *R.I.P.* in Manila quickly prompted the comedia's real-life practitioners—the *comediantes*—to stage the protests. The police, who also happened to be inside the Teatro Rizal during the performance, scrambled to catch the perpetrators but failed. This unfortunate incident, reported in newspapers at that time and commented on in histories of Philippine theater, marked the ascendancy of the Tagalog zarzuela.[2]

This chapter sets the stage in examining the emergence of zarzuelas as a form of popular entertainment through a re-assessment of the early career of playwright and company director

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[1] The Philippines Weather Bureau, *Annual Report [Scientific] of the Weather Bureau: Part II Hourly Observations of Atmospheric Phenomena at the Manila Central Observatory, 1902* (Bureau of Printing, 1902).

[2] "Una Represalia. Lluvias de piedra," *El Renacimiento*, April 22, 1902. Original text: "Durante la representación del "R.I.P." (disparate cómico satírico del Sr. Reyes) en el Teatro Rizal, (Tondo), el Sábado por la noche, una lluvia de piedras cayó sobre la techumbre del teatro produciendo un ruido estrepitoso y el susto consiguiente en los primeros momentos. Hay que advertir que la obra del Sr. Reyes es una crítica bien escrita de las extravagancias y ridiculeces del "moro-moro", por lo que se supone que algunos partidarios de las desgraciadas representaciones de esos engendros descabellados, fueran los autores de la pedrea. La policía, que estaba dentro del teatro, salió a buscar a los airados "moromoristas", sin que desgraciadamente diera con alguno de ellos. ¿Comentarios? ¿para qué? Cada uno es dueño de hacerlos a su gusto."

Severino Reyes. Looming large as the torchbearer for modern Tagalog theater, Reyes created works that blended realism and didacticism with the goal of educating the Tagalog-speaking lower-class audience while also providing a new kind of entertainment to the more affluent Filipinos already familiar with the Spanish zarzuela. Amidst protests from Filipino intellectuals and artists who supported the comedia, Reyes and his Gran Compania de Zarzuela Tagala's offerings appealed to a diverse group of Filipino and foreign audiences alike. Known for his biting criticism of the comedia, Reyes championed the zarzuela as the ideal form of Tagalog theater to serve as an antidote to the perceived backwardness of the older, more ubiquitous theatrical form. Along with *R.I.P.*, other works from 1902—namely *Ang Kalupi* ("The Wallet") and *Walang Sugat* ("Not Wounded")—are touted as his most important works in histories of Tagalog theater.[3] The zarzuela *Ang Kalupi* was Reyes's first foray into the genre, while *Walang Sugat* was a salient critique of colonialism, which in turn solidified Reyes's status as a canonic and "seditious" playwright and theater director even at a time of harsh American censorship. These works became exemplary in the literature of Philippine theater and aided in the perception of Tagalog zarzuela's rootedness in Filipino nationalism and anti-colonialism.

However, in contrast with common historical and popular narratives of early zarzuelas as outright propaganda against foreign—particularly US American—rule, I argue how Reyes's career and oeuvre reveals a striking dissonance with anti-colonial readings of his zarzuelas in historical accounts.[4] Following historian Resil Mojares's critique of the "simple bipolarity of

[3] See Doreen G. Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 329. Also, Nicanor Tiongson, "A Short History of the Philippine Sarsuwela," 155-56.

[4] Musicologist Helen Samson-Lauterwald makes a brief note of this but does not further expand on the questionable inclusion of Reyes among the "seditious playwrights" of the first decade. See Samson-Lauterwald, *Music in the Zarzuelas of Severino Reyes*, 12. Also, Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 12; 31.

resistance and submission" in the arts and culture under US colonial rule, I look at Reyes as a historical subject who navigated the changing landscape of colonial bureaucracy and consumption of popular entertainment in Manila at the beginning of the twentieth century.[5] Reyes, alongside other writers and public figures, worked through questions of tradition and modernity in the Tagalog theater as well as what he saw as zarzuela's critical role in the cultural and social uplift of its local mass audience.

A more comprehensive look at Reyes's works during his early career reveals the playwright's ambivalent views toward US presence in the Philippines and the role of "colonial tutelage" in modernizing the colony. The first part of this chapter focuses on Reyes's emergence in the theatrical scene in Manila during the particularly tense period between 1902 and 1905. At the time, Tagalog-language productions attracted suspicion among the colonial authorities and the US press. Not understanding much of the local language, the authorities were suspicious of theatrical works and the possibilities of expressing resistance and inciting colonial unrest through popular theater. Although Reyes initially became a target primarily of the American press in Manila and was accused of inciting his audience through *Walang Sugat*, he was ultimately successful in navigating the murky and volatile conditions of staging Tagalog-language productions; other contemporary playwrights and actors were arrested on the grounds of their violation of the newly established "Sedition Law," while Reyes evaded arrest.[6] Reyes's success can be partly traced to his affiliation with the Partido Federal, a political organization that emerged in 1900. The organization was instrumental in negotiating Filipino control over the

[5] Resil B. Mojares, "The Formation of Filipino Nationality Under U.S. Colonial Rule," *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 34, no. 1 (2006): 25.

[6] The "Sedition Law," or Act 292 of the Philippine Commission, was enacted Nov. 4, 1901, and sought to eradicate calls for independence and separation of the Philippines from the US.

archipelago in the early years of US colonial rule and in facilitating the surrender of many other Filipino revolutionary fighters. Because the Partido Federal depended on US support to realize local reforms and policies, the party and its key members are often vilified in historical accounts as traitors to the earlier armed revolution against Spain.[7] Reyes's political affiliation remains largely absent in any discussion of his role in the history of music and theater in the Philippines.[8] I trace Reyes's connections to this political organization and the ways in which Federalistas' ideologies were reflected in Reyes's works. In order to more fully consider Reyes's role in the formation and development of Tagalog zarzuela, a reassessment of the political networks that Reyes navigated cannot be ignored.

In the second half of the chapter, I contend that the continued popularity of Reyes's zarzuelas throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century hinged on the genre's rich possibilities for moral and cultural uplift of the predominantly working-class Filipinos while also providing entertainment for its local elite and foreign audiences. Such a vision for the Tagalog zarzuela worked in conjunction with the Federalistas' goal to educate and empower the local population. Far from a simplistic categorization of anti-colonial works and artists, my reconstruction of the early years of the Tagalog zarzuela mirrors the complexities of colonial Manila, where the inconsistencies of colonial bureaucracy intersected with the emerging role of the theatrical stage as an effective tool in shaping and regulating new ideas about a Filipino modern identity.

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[7] For a more comprehensive and non-Manichean look at the Partido Federal, see Ruby Parades, "The Partido Federal, 1900-1907: Political Collaboration in Colonial Manila. (Volumes I and II)" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1989).

[8] Michael Cullinane briefly notes this political connection, but nothing is mentioned in the literature of music and theater in the Philippines. See Michael Cullinane, "Bringing in the Brigands: The Politics of Pacification in The Colonial Philippines, 1902-1907," *Philippine Studies* 57, no. 1 (2009): 122.

Theater as sedition, sedition as theater

The years immediately following the Filipino-American war (1899-1902) were especially tense as a result of the enactment of the Sedition Law in 1901, which sought to silence calls for independence among the so-called "insurrectos" of the new colonial subjects. While Filipinos in Manila and emerging provincial politicians negotiated for more administrative autonomy, pockets of local resistance opposing the US colonial regime continued across the archipelago and caused bureaucratic problems for the new colonial order. Any public discussions of Philippine independence and armed resistance were closely monitored and widely condemned in the American presses. Tagalog theater became one of the sites that was monitored more closely around the same time that Reyes's popularity was increasing.

The three-act zarzuela *Walang Sugat* ("Not Wounded") premiered on June 14, 1902, and is widely known as Reyes's most prominent work. As an anti-Spanish and anti-clerical work, *Walang Sugat* is an oft-cited example of "seditious" theater, further substantiating the playwright's inclusion in the pantheon of Filipino nationalist figures. The reception history of *Walang Sugat*, however, needs to be seen in relation to other contemporaneous works that became targets of US censorship at the height of crackdowns on "seditious" theater. A much more nuanced account of zarzuela production in this early period not only sheds light on the more ambivalent nature of the playwright's views toward US presence in the Philippines, but also exposes the messy terrain of Filipino and US colonial relations in Manila that nationalist narratives tend to overlook.

Walang Sugat is part love story, part anti-colonial drama set in the years of the revolution against Spain from 1896 to 1898.[9] The zarzuela tells the story of the couple Julia and Teñong, who become separated as Teñong joins the Katipunan (revolutionary forces) to avenge the death of his father at the hands of the Spanish friars. Although the libretto is explicit in its criticism of Spanish colonialism and the various abuses perpetrated by the Spanish clergy on Filipinos, there is some debate in the secondary literature as to whether the work should be read as an anti-US American work. Musicologist Helen Samson-Lauterwald, for example, points to the questionable inclusion of Reyes and his work in John Foreman's 1906 account of "seditious" plays in the Philippines.[10] Foreman put Reyes's works alongside other notable productions such as Juan Matapang Cruz' *Hindi Aco Patay* ("I am not dead") and Aurelio Tolentino's *Kahapon, Ngayon at Bukas* ("Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"), works that have been cited for their explicit anti-US colonial message.[11] Theater historian Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio argues that *Walang Sugat* is a type of "chameleon play," and that it was only in later productions that the zarzuela transformed into an anti-American work.[12] Scenes initially written in the libretto depicting the Filipino revolution against Spain were reinterpreted in later productions as a call to arms against the current US colonial rule, which made Reyes an easy target for censorship and accusations of sedition. In 1903, a year after *Walang Sugat*'s premiere, labor leader Dominador Gomez was accused of inciting the masses through his organizing work. The court proceedings against

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[9] The existing typescript in the Severino Reyes Collection at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives has the subtitle "Historico 1896-1898" in the title page.

[10] Samson-Lauterwald, *Music in the Zarzuelas of Severino Reyes*, 125, endnote 50.

[11] John Foreman, *The Philippine Islands: A Political, Geographical, Ethnographical, Social and Commercial History of the Philippine Archipelago, Embracing the Whole Period of Spanish Rule, with an Account of the Succeeding American Insular Government* (Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore and Yokohama: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1906), 554.

[12] Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 31.

Gomez alleged that his organization Union Obrera supposedly staged a production of *Walang Sugat* and included a scene in which a Filipino revolutionary fighter ("insurgent officer" in the report) triumphs over another character portrayed as "Uncle Sam."[13]

The 1903 re-stagings of *Walang Sugat* coincided with performances of other works in Manila and in nearby provinces like Aurelio Tolentino's *Kahapon, Ngayon at Bukas* ("Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow"), Juan Abad's *Tanikalang Guinto* ("Golden Chain"), and Juan Matapang Cruz' *Hindi Aco Patay* ("I Am Not Dead"). These works were more explicit in criticizing the US presence in the Philippines and, in the years between 1903 and 1905, authors and actors involved in these productions became targets of arrests and censorship by the local authorities and the American press in the Philippines.[14] The *Manila Times,* a leading press in the colony, reported that during a staging of Tolentino's *Kahapon, Ngayon, at Bukas* on May 14, 1903 at the Teatro Libertad, American soldiers in attendance disrupted the play after witnessing scenes that directly criticized the US government. The *Manila Times* article goes on to document the quick response of US colonial officials in policing Manila's Tagalog theater scene with a thinly veiled warning to other playwrights:

> It is regrettable that the Government is compelled to invade the theaters and regulate the plays produced in them but the Filipinos can thank themselves alone. Almost perfect freedom has been extended to them and they have abused the confidence reposed in them. It is the old story of the lack of appreciation of generosity. I do not anticipate that there will be any trouble over this matter. The Police will be directed again to watch carefully the theaters and there will be action against every offense. When some of these ambitious managers and actors, meditate on this question on the right side of the fence at Bilibid [prison] they will no doubt see the error of their way, and a few examples will cure all of these people.

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[13] Lapeña-Bonifacio posits several scenes where Uncle Sam might have emerged on stage. Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 31. A Reyes-Gomez collaboration is also highly unlikely as the two were from different political circles. Although it is quite possible that these were, indeed, *Walang Sugat* productions albeit hijacked without the author's knowledge. Reyes was careful to copywright his librettos afterwards (ca. 1907).

[14] See Lapeña-Bonifacio for more direct analysis. Juan Abad was charged with sedition after a performance of *Tanikalang Guinto* in the province of Batangas on May 10, 1903. Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 30-31.

Couched in the patronizing language of colonial benevolence, the article reflects the extent of censorship in the early years of the US civil government in the Philippines.

Two days after the uproar around *Kahapon, Ngayon at Bukas*, another scathing editorial appeared in *The Manila Times*, entitled "The Theater as Sedition Breeder," which named the local Tagalog stage as a social nuisance that could incite violence and armed "insurrection" against the US colonial government. Although no evidence directly supports this accusation, the article also insinuated how playwrights were probably just trying to profit from the controversies and gain a greater audience. The editor claimed that "[t]hose who are of a low order of intelligence and cannot read are by this method schooled in anti-Americanism as they could be in no other way."[15] Citing Severino Reyes and Manuel Xerez Burgos as among those of the "more intelligent *hombre* [sic] from the city" that incite the "ignorant masses" of the provinces, the editorial further accused the writers, stating that they:

> are enemies of good government and happy peace, and they are the ones who should feel the threat of the dangling noose and have the hand of the law laid heavily upon them...Under these circumstances we would give our attention especially to such men as Burgos, Reyes, and others of their class who are wantonly treading dangerous ground and are ready to precipitate a state of affairs which may result in the useless death of hundreds if not thousands of their own people.[16]

Xerez Burgos, then Chief of the Bureau of Statistics and member of the Partido Federalista, also wrote a Spanish-language play entitled *Con La Cruz y Con La Espada*, which premiered on January 1, 1900. The play was similar to *Walang Sugat* in that it celebrated the 1896 Revolution against Spain. Burgos later produced an English translation and presented a copy to President

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[15]"The Theater as Sedition Breeder," *The Manila Times*, May 16, 1903. Lapeña-Bonifacio bitingly comments on the writer as "[t]his same American editor who wrote many other highly prejudiced and highly influential editorials…[which] …seem to dismiss all those against American domination of the islands as ignoramuses and the whole process of revolutionary protest as ladronism and insurrectionism against 'good government and happy peace.'" Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 48-49.

[16] "The Theater as Sedition Breeder," *The Manila Times*, May 16, 1903.

McKinley with a dedication that reflected a more optimistic outlook towards US presence in the Philippines in comparison with the colonial experience under Spain:

> Hoping that America's valuable influence may make such painful impressions disappear from this land and that her strong arm may prevent a repetition of such horrible scenes, I humbly beg Your Excellency will accept this work as a token of esteem and respect.[17]

Whether the dedication signified a kind of self-promotion for Burgos or a veiled cautionary tale for the new colonial masters, such sentiments echoed the optimism for social reforms that the Federalistas held at the onset of US colonial rule.

In response to the *Manila Times* editorial, an article featuring an interview with Xerez Burgos came out in the same paper a few days later. Burgos, who supported Reyes's first zarzuela productions, came to the playwright's defense.[18] Countering the accusations launched by the editorial, Burgos stated explicitly that there was nothing in *Walang Sugat* nor would there be in Reyes's future works that could be deemed as seditious. Burgos further claimed that Reyes "has no desire to offend the patriotic feelings of Americans in the Philippines, because he is a member of the Federal Party."[19]

The case of *Walang Sugat*'s mixed reception illustrates the tensions within the early colonial bureaucracy in which the struggle over authority between American administrators and locally-elected officials led to arbitrary censorship policies. In mid-1903, Tagalog authors forwarded copies of their scripts to provincial governor of Rizal, Arturo Dancel, to seek protection from the sedition law, and Reyes may have been among them. In a report submitted

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[17] Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 67-87.

[18] Burgos, along with another Francisco Buencamino (another Federalista), wrote Reyes a letter commending his *Walang Sugat* production. Signed letter in the Severino Reyes Collection at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives.

[19] Manuel Xerez Burgos interview, *The Manila Times*, May 16, 1903. Burgos also corrected the erroneous information circulating around the time of playwright Aurelio Tolentino's arrest that Fulgencio Tolentino, the composer Severino Reyes mainly worked with on his early zarzuelas, was a brother of the arrested playwright.

by the Philippine Commission on October 15, 1904, the Assistant Attorney General of the Philippine Constabulary, George R. Harvey, claimed that playwrights produced works "in which the burden of their complaint was against Spain and the friars," and approached Dancel, who had earlier issued the certificates vouching for the non-subversive nature of the materials and recommended them for public performance.[20] However, Harvey stated that the plays "used insurrecto emblems and uniforms, and their most exciting lines were quite as applicable to the American as to the Spanish Government," and concluded that the works "were clearly intended, in connection with the scenery and costumes, to incite the people against the existing government."[21] When members associated with the unnamed productions were arrested, Harvey dismissed the certificates issued by Dancel produced by the authors on the grounds that no one within the colonial bureaucracy had any authority to issue them. After much back-and-forth with Harvey, Dancel returned copies of scripts entrusted to him by other Tagalog authors and offered no further certifications.

Although no specific works or authors were named in the report, Harvey's pronouncements echo the hostile American reception to subsequent productions of *Walang Sugat* mentioned in the *Manila Times*. This hostility was most prevalent among the military (to which the Philippine Constabulary belonged) and reflected the differences between the military and civil branches of the American colonial government in their attitudes toward Filipinos as colonial subjects.[22] Reyes, who at that time had been producing zarzuelas for only two years, successfully

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[20] US Philippine Commission (1899-1900), *Annual Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War*, US Government Printing Office, 1905, 433.

[21]US Philippine Commission (1899-1900), *Annual Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War,* 433.

[22] Members of the earlier civil government were more pragmatic in their dealings with colonial elites. See Cullinane, "Bringing the Brigands," 49–76.

survived this volatile period through his connections with the Partido Federal and by making his works accessible to English-language speakers. An English version of *Walang Sugat*'s libretto, translated and printed by his brother Modesto Reyes, shows how Severino tried to clear his name and his work from accusations of anti-Americanism.[23] With the subtitle "Philippino Histories," the translation include commentaries that make more explicit the "Spanish cruelties" in the former colonial era and suggests a subtle comparison between the aversion to the perceived backwardness of Spanish colonialism and the general optimism that welcomed the early days of US colonial rule. [24]

Other evidence further undermines Reyes's reputation as a "seditious" playwright. Shortly after the first crackdowns on the works of Aurelio Tolentino and other playwrights, another Reyes zarzuela—*Manga Pinagpala ó Los Mártires de la Patria* ("Martyrs of the Country")—was staged in 1903 as a benefit production for Filipino *pensionados,* or scholars leaving to study in the US as part of a project initiated by the American government.[25] Contrary to accusations in the American press that the zarzuela was another seditious work, *Los Mártires* is similar to *Walang Sugat* in its critique of Spanish friars and its calls for the separation of church and state endorsed by many intellectuals and colonial elites. The zarzuela is set during the latter years under Spanish colonial occupation when free-thinking Filipinos, especially those

[23] The undated English translation was edited by JAD Gush. Facsimiles of the flyer are found in the pamphlet collection of the Library of Congress and at the New York Public Library. Modesto Reyes, who was a lawyer and one of the founding members of the Partido Federal, owned a printing press and took care of the printing of performance programs and other zarzuela paraphernalia for Severino's productions.

[24] I compared Modesto Reyes' English translation here with the version found in Simplicio Flores and M. Jacobo Enriquez' *Sampung Dula Na Tig-Iisang Yugto* along with the reconstructed version of *Walang Sugat* in Lapeña-Bonifacio's *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*. See Simplicio Flores and M. Jacobo Enriquez, *Sampung Dula Na Tig-Iisang Yugto* (Philippine Book Company, 1947; 1973), 145-190 and Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 89-134.

[25] "La function de anoche," *La Patria*, October 8, 1903. The zarzuela was subtitled as "Páginas de sangre de la Historia de Filipinas."

identified as freemasons and intellectuals, were arrested and killed. By directing all proceeds to benefit the pensionados, Reyes's critique of the Spanish friars' anti-intellectualism highlighted the importance of American education for Filipino progress. Moreover, the performance was attended by top colonial officials, including then Governor Taft and members of the Philippine Commission Pardo de Tavera and Benito Legarda, who were also prominent members of the Partido Federal. In her comprehensive study of the Partido Federal, Ruby Paredes argues for the "ideological convergence of Filipino *ilustrado* (lit. "enlightened") reformism and the American Progressive social engineering" in the shaping of policies under the US colonial management.[26] In this "ideological convergence," Paredes maintaines how the Federalistas' emphasis on education and professionalism became the main determining factors for a "'Filipino capacity' within a system of meritocracy and modernization." In emphasizing the role of education as a means to achieve social reform, the Federalistas strongly believed that "a working democracy required an educated polity, [otherwise] tyranny flourished among uninformed subject people."[27] More importantly, Paredes identified a "sub-elite" group of upwardly mobile Filipinos, some of whom held powerful economic and even political positions, that were part of a "new middle class" who served as intermediary between the colonial elite and colonized masses. While Reyes never held any public office, his role as playwright and producer of zarzuelas situated him as an intermediary and his works as public lessons on social reform and modernization.

Although Reyes's name was initially connected to the stream of works branded by the US colonial government as "seditious," his career and later successes suggest otherwise. Whereas Juan Abad and Aurelio Tolentino's careers as playwrights were cut short or interrupted by their

[26] Paredes, "The Partido Federal," 168. "Ilustrado" is a term often used in Philippine history to refer to the educated class of Filipinos in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.

[27] Paredes, "The Partido Federal," 132.

run-ins with the colonial authorities, Reyes remained prolific in the years to come. Barely a year after the arrests and censorships, Reyes became one of Manila's most eminent playwrights, and his company, the Gran Compania de Zarzuela Tagala, was among the city's busiest. Reyes's connections with the Partido Federal not only gave him much visibility and support to produce and advertise his productions during his first years as a playwright, but, as the following section details, also informed his goal of using the zarzuela as an effective vehicle for educating the larger public of Manila.

Zarzuela as moral and artistic "uplift"

While *Walang Sugat* remains the most popular of Reyes's works, it is not representative of his overall output, which advanced the Tagalog zarzuela beyond critiques of Spanish colonialism. *Walang Sugat*'s reputation as a stridently anti-colonial work draws attention away from the playwright's main agenda for promoting zarzuela as the ideal form of theater as moral and artistic uplift for the masses. With this dual goal, Reyes envisioned the Tagalog zarzuela stage as both a teaching tool for the consumption and edification of the masses and as a platform for the talents of local artists and musicians. In the first decade of the twentieth century, Reyes used the musical theater stage as a vehicle for educating the burgeoning working classes of Manila and promoting social reform from within the Tagalog communities than as a direct critique of American colonialism. In these works, Reyes criticized the blind religiosity and superstition of the native population that carried over from the Spanish period and the various vices such as alcoholism, gambling, and prostitution among Manila's emerging working class. The music that accompanied the drama, on the other hand, provided an unprecedented creative space for local performers and offered the native audience a new kind of secular entertainment.

Reyes's dual vision for the Tagalog theater comes through strongly in his criticisms of the Tagalog natives' choice of popular entertainment, the *comedia*, at the beginning of the twentieth century. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the comedia developed into a ubiquitous form of popular entertainment within and outside of church-related festivities throughout the archipelago during the Spanish colonial period. The comedia featured highly stylized acting, sing-song delivery of 8 to 12-syllable quatrains, and band music that typically provided marches for exits and entrances of actors. But the focal point of the drama—and perhaps the key element that made it the most popular form of theater at the turn of the century—was the *moro-moro*, a staged battle scene often choreographed as dance and reminiscent of the *moro y cristianos* dance common in Southern Spain and Mexico.[28] The moro-moro scene was so popular that it became synonymous with the term comedia. By the time of Reyes, however, Spanish and local Tagalog writers had already been lamenting the popularity of the comedia and disparaged what they perceived to be its formulaic plots, its colorful and bawdy costumes, and its highly-stylized acting and dialogues. Often, critics of the comedia commented on its obsession with fantasy and superstition and how it served as a form of escapism for its mostly lower-class audience.[29]

As comedia performances remained popular among Tagalog audiences, educated and elite Filipinos preferred productions of Spanish-language dramas and zarzuela repertoire imported from Spain. Spanish translations of Italian operas and other European languages were also produced and performed by traveling theatrical troupes as well as amateur groups formed by

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[28] Tiongson, "Mexican-Philippine Relations in Traditional Folk Theater," *Philippine Studies* 46, no. 2 (1998): 143-145. See also Isaac J. Donoso, "The Hispanic Moro y Cristianos and the Philippine Komedya," *Philippine Humanities Review: Komedya* 11 (2009): 87-119.

[29] Nicanor Tiongson, *Philippine Theatre: History and Anthology*, 7.

the local Spanish community in Manila. At the turn of the twentieth century, Filipino actors and singers began to participate in these performances and later formed their own theater and zarzuela groups devoted to staging Spanish repertoire. Theater historian Laconico-Buenaventura notes how local writers (writing in Spanish) from the first decade of the twentieth century often referred to theatrical works in the Tagalog language as *teatro tagalo* or *teatro plebayo* while using the term *teatro aristocrático* as synonymous with *teatro español* in describing a variety of theatrical works in Spanish.[30] Such labels, Laconico-Buenaventura contends, also refer to audience types based on class. Indeed, *teatro tagalo* came to be directly tied to the comedia, which were often performed on open-air makeshift bamboo stages and were frequented by lower-class audiences. It is important to note, however, that many of these teatro tagalo venues in various *arrabales* (suburbs) in Manila in the 1890s also occasionally featured Tagalog translations of Spanish zarzuelas and dramas, pointing to a broader audience for Spanish repertoire than is depicted in existing scholarship.[31]

This mixing of local and imported repertoire in the teatro tagalo venues signaled to Reyes an opportunity to broaden the scope of Tagalog-language theatrical productions. The playwright made it his objective to "elevate" teatro tagalo through Tagalog zarzuelas by taking advantage of its conversational dialogues, everyday characters, and potential to incorporate more music and integrate it into the drama. One such performance that illustrated Reyes's goal of transforming teatro tagalo took place in April 3, 1902, at the Teatro Librertad. The night's program included the play *R.I.P*, which became the center of the comedia debates and controversies, and its tandem

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[30] Lacónico-Buenaventura, *The Theater in Manila*, 105-110. See also Epifanio De los Santos Cristobal, "El teatro tagalo," *Cultura Filipina* 2, no. 2 (May 1911): 149-162.

[31]Theaters such as the Teatro Infantil Tagala, Comedia Infantil Malateña, and Teatro Tagalo Infantil de Barrio Aguila were open air and of lightly constructed materials (nipa and bamboo), and staged Spanish zarzuelas and Tagalog comedias alike. See Laconico-Buenaventura, *The Theater in Manila*, 187.

one-act zarzuela, *Ang Kalupi* ("The Wallet"). Although Reyes was not the first to write and produce a Tagalog zarzuela, this specific performance featured a notable selection of contemporary Tagalog theatrical works and artists on a single stage, and points to Reyes's emerging role as director and impresario. With the *R.I.P.-Ang Kalupi* premiere, Reyes also worked towards the goal of "elevating" Tagalog-language works. Led by the Compania lirico-dramática tagala de Gatchalian é Ilagan, the program also included excerpts from various Tagalog zarzuelas composed by Gavino Carluen and Bellini's opera *La Sonambula* [sic].

With the *R.I.P.-Ang Kalupi* premiere, Reyes achieved his goal of "elevating" the teatro tagalo by juxtaposing his works (and subsequently himself as playwright) with those of the teatro aristocrático repertoire. The satirical work *R.I.P.* became the most controversial of the whole performance wherein Reyes called for the "death" of the comedia. As the protests after the work's premiere suggest, Reyes's diatribe against the theatrical form came at the expense of the real comedia artists themselves. In *R.I.P.*, Reyes depicts the futile attempts of a theater troupe in staging a comedia in Manila. The playwright portrayed scenes of rehearsals that kept going awry, with the comedia director, Colas, scrambling to get his actors ready for a performance for which they could not successfully attract an audience.[32] The characters slowly become aware of the decline of interest in the comedia. At a crucial point of the play, Colas turns to his actors and urges them to think about changing careers, and he suggests that they learn how to sing in order to join a Tagalog zarzuela company. The actors all agree and, at the conclusion of the drama, throw their costumes in a coffin and nail it shut to symbolize the death of the comedia.

[32] Included in the dialogues (some crossed out in the original typescript) are direct references to real-life popular artists of the local Spanish zarzuela stage such as Estanislawa San Miguel, Nemesio Ratia, Titay Molina, and Jose Carvajal, who apparently backed out from performing in the interludes of comedia performances for fear of mocking themselves in the productions.

Both critics and defenders of *R.I.P.* engaged in debates shortly after the work's premiere in April 1902, prompted by the protests during one of the repeat performances at the Teatro Rizal mentioned in the opening of this chapter and persisting in the first months of production and in the years following. These debates played out in the local presses, chiefly in the Spanish-language daily *El Renacimiento* and its Tagalog counterpart *Muling Pagsilang*, where writers and intellectuals differed over favoring zarzuela or comedia productions. Often, commentators from both sides used the terminology of the comedia, with its array of sultans and battling knights in the moro-moro dance-fight scenes, and alluded to their exchanges as a "moro-moro" battle on paper. Although *El Renacimiento* published letters and commentaries from comedia devotees, the newspaper's editors were primarily in support of Reyes and the Tagalog zarzuela. Reporting on the protests at the Teatro Rizal in 1902, the paper commented on Reyes's "well-written criticism of the extravagances and ridiculousness of the *moro-moro*," which they referred to as "those crazy monstrosities" ("esos engendros descabellados"). [33] In a later editorial, the writer lamented that "the 'moro-moro' is anti-artistic, antisocial and antediluvian, and therefore contrary to the progress of art in the Philippines."[34]

Advocates of the comedia, however, made similar calls for progress and modernization of the local theatrical scene. In vocalizing his support for the comedia, folklorist and labor organizer Isabelo de los Reyes argued for the comedia's intrinsic value as an indigenous theatrical genre, which only needed to improve its production value and stage effects in order to successfully modernize the Tagalog theater. In a series of articles published in *El Renacimiento* in 1902, Isabelo de los Reyes elaborated on his defense of the comedia by focusing on the different

[33] "Una Represalia. Lluvias de piedra," *El Renacimiento*, April 22, 1902.

[34] "A un paladin del moro-moro," *El Renacimiento*, April 24, 1902.

elements that critics found most objectionable.[35] He emphasized the use of stage magic as an indispensable apparatus that enhance the theatrical spectacle. Stage magic in the comedia are often, as historian Doreen Fernandez emphasizes, "ingenious 'special effects' [that] enabled flowers to bloom, waterfalls to suddenly spurt, graves to open, birds to fly, [and] enchantresses to appear and disappear."[36] An Augustinian friar who came to the Philippines in the late eighteenth century, for example, comments on the role of enchantment and (stage) magic in the local theatrical form:

> If the so-called comedia or show does not have three or four kings, many princes and princesses and many actors, if it does not have such wonderful feats and artifices as eagles that appear, lions, bears, and other animals that are fierce enough to swallow a man; if there are no apparations and miracles, then that comedia [is]…no good.[37]

De los Reyes, then, argued that the presence of enchantments and other fantastical elements in the comedia were as fashionable ("modang-moda") and as forward-looking as any other opera and theatrical productions in Europe that employ similar devices. De los Reyes mentioned as models the productions he had witnessed abroad such as a performance of *Samson et Delila* and *Méphistophélès* in Madrid, and the "almost nude bodies of women on horseback" in Wagner's mythical work *Die Walküre*, which he saw in Paris.[38] He goes on to commend the works of local

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[35] De los Reyes later self-published a compilation of his articles on the topic in 1904 entitled *Ang Comediang Tagalog*, of which the only existing copies are currently held at the National Library of the Philippines and at the Ateneo de Manila University, Rizal Library.

[36] Fernandez, *Palabas*, 9.

[37] Martinez de Zuñiga, *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas o mis viajes por este pais* vol. 1 (1893), 140. English translation from Fernandez, *Palabas*, 9. Original text: Los naturales llaman á esta escena munting-coloquio, esto es, pequeño coloquio, porque como son apasionados por lo ostentoso y extraordinario, estiman en poco lo que no da un gran de golpe á la vista. Si la comedia no tiene tres ó cuatro reyes, muchos príncipes y princesas, muchos actores que ellos llaman personajes; si no hay tramoyas, como águilas que se aparecen, leones, osos ú otros animales, que quieren devorar á un hombre, y si no hay apariciones ó milagros, tienen por mala la comedia; de modo que más gustan de satisfacer la vista que el oído.

[38] Isabelo de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog* (1904). A copy of this pamphlet is held at the National Library of the Philippines Filipiniana Collection. The pamphlet compiles de los Reyes's published responses on the

production artists Hermogenes Cruz and Eugenio Monico for their creative "stage magic" but then immediately expresses the hope that European stagecraft artists would come to the Philippines to teach them and improve their work.[39]

In response to Isabelo de los Reyes, the regular column called "Sinapismo" published a point by point critique of the idea that the comedia was already an indigenized and therefore legitimate Filipino theatrical form by emphasizing the foreign influences in the Tagalog comedia. The column's writer, a Dr. Bejuco, enumerated several objectionable features of the genre, namely its European plot settings, the unrealistic battle scenes, the manner or tone of speech, and the unpalatable poetry of the dialogues.[40] Dr. Bejuco continued his diatribe against moro-moro in a later article and insisted that the continued performance of moro-moro is a waste of time, which would be better spent on improving the writing and production of other dramas and zarzuelas. The columnist asserted that the comedias are detrimental to society as a whole because of their continued depiction of ghosts ("guni-guni") and other forms of superstition.[41]

In his exhaustive history of the comedia in the Philippines, Nicanor Tiongson situates the staging of *R.I.P.* within what he calls the second period of censure and opposition against the theatrical genre, from 1902 to the 1920s.[42] During this second period, Tiongson asserts that criticisms of the comedia moved from colonial appraisals by Spanish writers and intellectuals of the late nineteenth century toward new criticisms brandished by Filipino writers and

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zarzuela/comedia debates in the *El Renacimiento* from 1902, including the correspondence between the moro-moristas involved in the labor disputes in 1904 and provincial governor Arturo Dancel.

[39] If not, de los Reyes recommends other local artists (even those who are active in zarzuela productions) such as Carvajal, Ratia, Estella, Poblete, S Reyes, Lope K Santos, Paterno, and Modesto Santiago to teach Cruz and Monico.

[40] "Sa acala co, higit sa Moro-moro, ay Malaki ang maihahandog ng mga ganitong sulatin sa icayayaman ñg literatura tagala."

[41] "Sinapismo: (Ang moro-moro)," *Muling Pagsilang*, August 17, 1904.

[42] Nicanor G. Tiongson, *Kasaysayan ng Komedya sa Pilipinas:1766-1982* (Quezon City: Integrated Research Center, De La Salle University, 1982), 77-89.

intellectuals. Among the Tagalog writers, Reyes was a key figure in voicing dissatisfaction with the comedia while looking to other forms of entertainment as model for the new and modern type of Tagalog theater that was compatible with his didacticism and ideas of cultural uplift.

'Uplift' of local artists

The zarzuela-versus-comedia debates also point to the social disparities that divided the intelligentsia and the class of laboring artists to which the comedia artists belonged. In addition to the objective of educating local theater audiences, Reyes also envisioned the zarzuela stage as a new venue for local artists to display their talents and therefore project the image of Filipinos as modern cultural workers. The playwright's explicit reference to comedia artists in *R.I.P.*, however, caused a stir among the actors and fueled several labor disputes. Objections to Reyes's satirical work proved to be more serious as even the actor and company director, Hermogenes Ilagan, asked the playwright to find someone else to portray Colas due to threats the actor received from the protesting comedia artists.[43]

Two years after the *R.I.P.* premiere, Manila's theater-going public again became divided between the comedia and zarzuela supporters. In August 1904, *Muling Pagsilang* (the Tagalog version of the *El Renacimiento* and official organ of the nascent Nacionalista party) reported that key zarzuela artists Idelfonza Alianza, Hilaria Alvarez, Pantaleon Aldana, and Julio Mariano were let go from Reyes's company, the Gran Compania de Zarzuela Tagala, for appearing in a comedia performance.[44] Less than a week later, the Spanish-language organ of Manila's primary

[43] Tiongson, *Kasaysayan ng Komedya*, 84.

[44] "Mga artistang pinaalis: Ang Magsisihalili," *Muling Pagsilang*, August 3, 1904. See also de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog*, 39.

labor organization, *El Defensor de los Obreros*, published a letter in defense of the comedia and its artists by then leading union organizer Isabelo de los Reyes.[45] De los Reyes criticized Reyes for firing the artists on the basis of the playwright's call to end all comedia productions as manifested in his earlier work *R.I.P*. Although two artists, Alianza and Alvarez, regained their position in Reyes's Gran Compania not long after, the debates continued to rage among Manila's more vocal writers and intellectuals.[46]

These exchanges were further complicated when a group of comedia artists from the town of Malabon (a coastal town a few miles north of Manila), through the aid of de los Reyes, wrote a letter addressed to then Governor General Luke Wright and the provincial governor of Rizal, Arturo Dancel, to intervene on their behalf with regards to a dispute with their local officials. In the letter, the comediantes accused the municipality of Malabon for illegally charging them exorbitant licensing fees in order to discourage them from performing more comedias.[47] They complained of the great disparity between the P2.00 licensing fee for zarzuelas versus the P27.50 charged for each comedia performance. The comediantes called the huge fees unjustified and called out local officials' belief that the moro-moro negatively impacts its local audience.[48] Arturo Dancel, the provincial governor of Rizal (of which Manila was a part),

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[45] See also de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog*, 43-44.

[46] On August 11, eight days after the initial news report, *Muling Pagsilang* happily reported that at least two artists, Alianza and Alvarez, were able to return as zarzuela artists and perform with Reyes's Gran Compania after an interview/intervention by staffers of the paper: "…cami'y nacapangahas na lumapit sa dalauang nasabing artista, at …sa canilang magualang bahala na sa mga nagdaang sanhi ng ikinapaglayo nila ng Samahang Reyes at tuloy mangagbalic na sa dating pagsasanib na lubhang kinagigiliwan ng madling nanonood." See "Ang mga artistang Alianza at Alvarez: Pagbalik sa Samahan," *Muling Pagsilang* (August 11, 1904). This shows the "power/role" of *Muling Pagsilang* (albeit self-proclaimed) in moving readers and audience members to a public outcry against the firing of favorite artists. If anything, this only shows the cultural prestige and power already achieved by those who were connected with the Tagalog zarzuela stage.

[47] de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog*, 51.

[48] de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog*, 56-57. Various other newspapers weighed in on the licensing issue, with the exception of *Muling Pagsilang*, and expressed their support of the case of the moro-moristas.

responded in favor of the moro-moristas and declared the licensing scheme in Malabon as "illegal and counter-productive."[49] His response unabashedly supported the comedia literature and named specific works and writers, such as the Tagalog Francisco Baltazar, who were popular before the 1896 Revolution. Dancel highlighted the "phantasmagoria" of moro-moro he found appealing and made similar connections with fantasy-making in Western literature, much like Isabelo de los Reyes did in his own treatise. With Dancel's recommendation, the office of the governor-general deemed the municipality of Malabon's licensing regulation as null and void, essentially putting a halt to the debates in the presses.

Reyes's aesthetics of music and theater

The critique of the comedia in *R.I.P.*, however, must also be understood as Reyes's call to change both the content and form of theatrical performances in the Tagalog language to reflect his goals of moral and artistic uplift. Writing retrospectively in the 1930s, Reyes claimed that he wanted to reform what he had perceived as a formulaic and exhausted style of performance in the teatro tagalo. He outlined five important elements of drama, with zarzuela being the ideal type: 1) *magandang tabing* (beautiful scenery); 2) *mabuting mang-aawit* (good singers); 3)

[49] Translation: "Report: It is desired to obtain the opinion of the undersigned regarding the Moro-Moro in comparison with zarzuelas and Tagalog dramatic works; and in accordance with this petition, I will give my own, not because I am poor, I am not sincere. In my opinion, most of the current Tagalog works, already belonging to the buff or the dramatic genre, are based on old comedies, which are premiered with more or less literary clothing, with more or less personal and with more or less effect, -graphic. Before the revolution of [18]96, all the comedias premiered in the theaters of Manila and Provinces went back only to historical passages of past epochs with pictures of purely moral effects, like that of the Twelve pairs of France, of Bernardo del Carpio by Rodrigo de Vivar of Spain, the Florante by Francisco Baltazar and others. All these works were always received with pleasure by the public, because then it was felt and tasted in her something useful mixed with the fun…The agreement of the Municipal Council of Malabon imposing a license in greater quantity to the entrepreneur of the theater Moromorista de Navotas is also illegal, derisory and counterproductive, since there is no parity or keeping relation with the amounts that...fictions have been levied on entrepreneurs of comedies and tagalas zarzuelas.I do not see, therefore, some reason for the protection of the dramatists and the Tagalog zarzuelistas, who are deeply injurious to the moro-morists. The Civil Governor, however, will agree as appropriate."

magandang tugtugin (beautiful music); 4) *makiyas na tulá* (elegant poetry); and 5) *maliwanag na usapan* (clear dialogues). He also referred to the length of performance, suggesting that a zarzuela should be completely performed in a single night, unlike the moro-moro, which usually takes about seven to fourteen consecutive nights to complete. In addition, Reyes also preferred the use of everyday topics ("karaniwang lakad ng buhay") for the Tagalog zarzuelas' themes over stories of nobiles and the use of aristocratic costumes ("damit kaharian") in the productions of moro-moro.[50]

Reyes aimed to integrate these elements in *R.I.P.*'s tandem work, *Ang Kalupi*. For his "everyday topic," Reyes chose themes of marital conflicts and what were then perceived as social vices that plagued middle- and working-class families in Manila, such as alcoholism and prostitution. In the zarzuela, Remedios and Rosario find themselves in a domestic dilemma with their negligent husbands, Eduardo and Nicolas. Most of the action happens in a single night as the men spend their time carousing at a residence of three Japanese women. The wives finally find their husbands unconscious at the residence, and, with the assistance of Remedios' mother, the men are carted off to their homes. The short comedy concludes when the men wake up to find their wives dressed in Japanese kimonos and all made up ("may colorete") in a last attempt to make them see the error of their ways. Humiliated, the men quickly ask for forgiveness from their wives as they sing in the final chorus:

Kami'y dalang dala na di iiwan ang asawa
sa bahay malalagi na ayaw na sa Japonesa
sa Japonesa sa japonesa sa japonesa ayaw na ayaw…

[50] Severino Reyes, *Ang Dúlang Tagalog* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1938), 15. He also mentioned local writers who attempted to write in the vernacular, such as Roman Reyes, Ambrocio de Guzman, Roman Dimayuga, Pedro Paterno, and Hermogenes Ilagan. But Reyes felt that these authors' works still fell short of effectively superseding the moro-moro.

Translation: We've had it, we will no longer leave our wives/ we will stay at home, we don't want to be with the Japanese anymore…

The zarzuela has features similar to the *genero chicó*, a subgenre of the zarzuela that became popular in Spain in the 1880s. Spanish writers of the genero chicó from this period created one-act works portraying the new urban working classes of Madrid, a parallel feature in Reyes's *Ang Kalupi*. Centering on the character of the gallivanting husband and his eventual reformation in the hands of his clever wife, the zarzuela similarly echoes what Christopher Webber highlights as the genero chicó writers' interest in the topic of "'machismo' with submission to the superior intelligence of women."[51] Comedic scenes and moralizing dialogues are supported by song numbers set in popular dance genres such as the waltz, the bolero, and the operatic aria, which further echo *Ang Kalupi*'s affinity with the genero chicó and appealed to a broader conception of "beautiful music" in the ears of Reyes's multi-class audience.

Reyes's modern vision for the zarzuela was to educate a growing mass audience. Yet his productions also inevitably catered to multiple audiences across the social spectrum of early twentieth-century Manila. As outlined in his treatise on the ideal type of drama mentioned above, "clear dialogues" meant that using everyday conversational language was important for delivering the playwright's intended "lessons." Although his zarzuela librettos are primarily in Tagalog, examples of multilingual dialogues present a compelling case for Reyes's ability to appeal to the Tagalog-speaking lower-class audience as well as to the upper elite audience of Manila. Reyes used Spanish dialogues, for example, in conversations between Filipino *ilustrado* characters and Spanish clerics in scenes that sought to highlight the negative legacies of Spanish

[51] Christopher Webber, *The Zarzuela Companion* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2002), 4.

colonialism.[52] Such dialogues would have resonated among those in the elite circles, regardless of political affiliations, many of whom acknowledged and lamented the abuses of the Spanish clergy.

Scholars have pointed out how the Tagalog zarzuela (along with other regional zarzuela repertoires) bridged the gap between the perceived "high/low" cultural divide on the performing stages of this period.[53] On the one hand, the everyday stories and conversational dialogues Reyes created using the Tagalog language greatly appealed to the Filipino working class. On the other, the playwright continued to draw from the legacies of the Spanish zarzuela as entertainment and public display of social capital for the more affluent patrons of Manila.[54] Whereas Tagalog zarzuelas supplemented the regular elite entertainment of Spanish zarzuelas and operas, the Tagalog language sung in the Italianate, "classical" musical style in the zarzuelas was a strikingly new sound for the native audience and therefore fulfilled Reyes's mission of cultural uplift.

The popularity of Reyes's zarzuelas was further reinforced by its multi-layered musical language. Music's role in making the zarzuela appealing to audiences from all social classes played out in different ways: the sung Tagalog was a novelty for the working-class and primarily Tagalog-speaking audience, while the familiarity of orchestral instruments and Italianate singing became the main draw for the upper echelons of Manila's elite and non-native theatergoers. The

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[52] *Gloria ó Habeas Corpus* (1907), for example, has Spanish dialogues between Don Tasio and Spanish priests debating Spanish clerics' anti-intellectualism as the cause of Filipinos' blind religiosity and superstition.

[53] Ramon Santos, "Musika ng Zarzuela-Sarsuwela," 291-316.

[54] Key literary influences are also important to trace continuities between Spanish zarzuela repertory and Tagalog sarsuela. Reyes's brother Modesto Reyes who traveled to Spain gave him copies of works by Spanish writers. Severino himself mentions (although later in 1938) Spanish writers Echegaray, Galdon, Benavent, Quintero brothers, Linares Rivas as influential figures.

use of the orchestra (*orquesta* as often found in score manuscripts) and the classically sung Tagalog became markers of "respectability" that playwrights like Reyes and other supporters of the zarzuela envisioned for the local theatrical stage.[55] Reyes also placed a high priority on employing Filipino composers to write original music that was closely integrated with the text (see Figure 2).[56] This was entirely new at this point, whereas in previous Tagalog dramas, pre-existing popular songs and music from different sources largely accompanied the spectacle unfolding onstage, particularly in the comedias.[57]

Figure 2. Reyes (seated center) with composers (left to right) Crispino Reyes, Gavino Carluen, Fulgencio Tolentino, and Juan S. Hernandez[58]

[55] The orquestas that accompany zarzuelas typically have around fourteen musicians.

[56] On average, Reyes commissioned two to three works from each composer, which resulted in an interesting collection of diverse compositional styles from the early twentieth century.

[57] Although some zarzuela scores still tended to quote popular songs as intentional commentary on the plot or as diegetic music.

[58] The image is part of the Retrato Collection of the Filipinas Heritage Library.

Local composers who collaborated with Reyes in his first productions embraced his idea of "elevating" the tastes of a mass audience not only through the use of European-influenced music but also in drawing from local popular musical forms as materials for their orchestra-driven scores. José Estella, already a well-known composer by this time, was one of the earliest composers who used local genres. Trained at the Madrid Conservatory, Estella had prior experience in writing music for theater, such as the Spanish-language zarzuela *El Diablo del Mundo*, performed for the opening of the Teatro Zorrilla in 1893.[59] Estella was already a renowned director of the Orquesta Rizal, a leading orchestra in Manila that was frequently engaged to accompany Spanish-language productions staged by another local zarzuela group, the Compañia Fernandez. After *El Diablo del Mundo*, Estella composed the music for the Tagalog zarzuela *Simoy sa Kaparangan*, written by Bernardo Solis in 1903, before collaborating with Reyes on *Filipinas para los Filipinos* (1905) and *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon* (1906). In a 1903 interview for the broadsheet *El Renacimiento*, Estella remarked on his experience in writing for the Tagalog stage and urged other composers to "mold the Tagalog zarzuela with our popular folk songs [*canciones populares*] ...giving them the color required of the scenes."[60] Estella recommended the use of indigenous genres such as the *kundiman*, *balitaw*, and *kutang-kutang* for their potentials in creating new music for the Tagalog zarzuela.

The kundiman, in particular, was one of the local genres that zarzuela composers liked to integrate into their scores in early Tagalog zarzuelas. The kundiman is a type of Tagalog love song and dance form that was practiced during the Spanish colonial period. By the turn of the

[59] Estella also traveled to Hong Kong and India to conduct and perform some of his other orchestral works. The song "Under My Big Umbrella," for example, was published in December 28, 1909, and was supposedly performed at the "Calcotta Royal Theatre." Sheet music held at the Estella Collection at the University of the Philippines College of Music.

[60] "La Musica en el Teatro," *El Renacimiento*, January 10, 1903.

twentieth century, it had become a popular form of serenade music often accompanied by the guitar or a town band of winds and stringed instruments. One of the earliest sources depicting the form is Francisco Lozano's album of paintings from 1847, which featured scene with a dancing couple accompanied by a small string- and wind-ensemble (see Figure 3) followed by transcriptions of two examples of kundiman music.[61]

Figure 3. "El Cundiman" from José Honorato Lozano's *Álbum: Vistas de las Yslas Filipinas y Trages de sus Abitantes 1847*

Both music transcriptions are strophic in form with a one-line refrain inserted between verses. These transcriptions showcase a lilting triple meter and themes of love, courtship, and admiration for a particular woman that have become characteristic of the kundiman as the song genre transformed into a symbol of musical nationalism in the 1920s. The first transcription, labeled as

[61] The album is in the collection of the Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. A digital copy is accessible through the Biblioteca Digital Hispánica's website: http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000105391. The album was commissioned by Gervasio Gironella, who also most likely provided the textual content.

"cundiman viejo" (old kundiman) is set in C-major and annotated as the "original" form "generally sung by the *indios* [a Spanish colonial term for the indigent population]." While the second example, set in A-minor, is marked as "cundiman nuevo" (new kundiman) and noted as an "adulterated version" usually performed by "mestizas or professional singers."[62] Though other examples from the early nineteenth century remain scarce, these two kundimans already point to the existence of different performance types of the genre and its possible transformation into a purely sung form, which existing literature often depicts as having occurred much later. By the end of the nineteenth century, the kundiman had become such a popular song form and a staple in professional singers' repertoire that even the Spanish zarzuela artist Elisea Raguer included it in one of her performance programs in 1892.[63]

As far as I can ascertain, the earliest use of the kundiman in a Tagalog zarzuela score is from 1902 by F. Marin and Leon Ignacio for *Ang Pagcacatiuala o La Confianza* (The Trust), with libretto by P. Natividad and J. Molina.[64] Occurring as the first act's fifth musical number, the song labeled as "Cundiman" portrays the forlorn suitor in two stanzas set in eight-bar phrases of different melodies, which departs from the largely strophic form of the earlier kundiman examples found in the Lozano source. This musical number also shares similar melodic contour and rhythmic patterns with an earlier kundiman, "Jocelynang Baliwag," which circulated around the time of the Philippine revolution against Spain from 1896 to 1898 (see Example 2).

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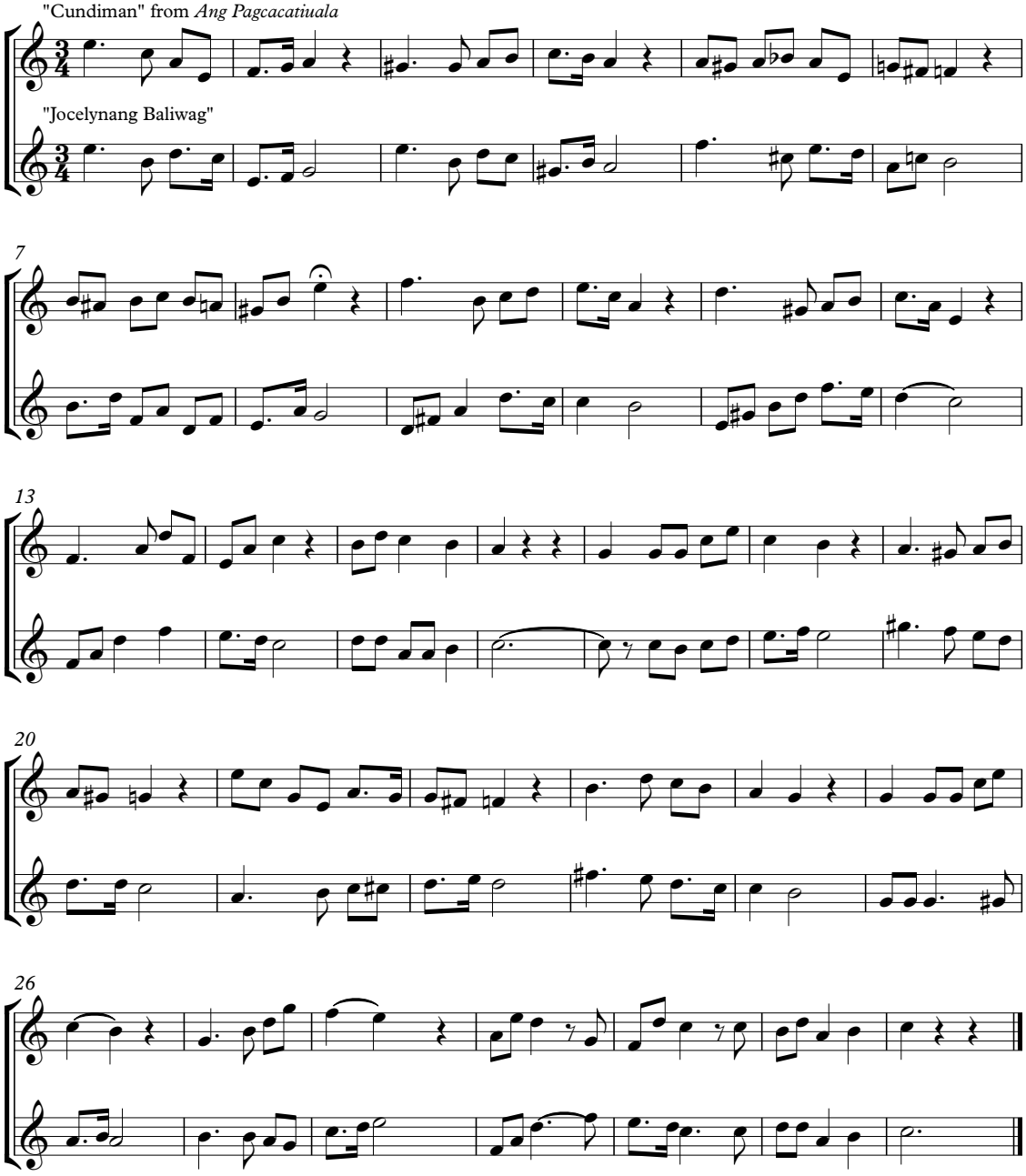
[62] Annotations in the original Spanish found in the Lozano source: "El condiman cantado segun espresa esta nota, es por decirlo asi el original, y segun lo cantan la generalidad de los indios, el que halla en la otra lámina es adulterado y solo lo usan las mestizas ó los cantores de oficio."

[63] See Quijano Axle, "Tonight: Zarzuela at 8 o'clock," 414. See also *La Oceanía Española*, August 11, 1882.

[64] Dated April 27, 1902, from an inscription in the original MS score held at the Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester. The *cundiman* appears as musical no. 5 in the first act. The original manuscript, however, crossed out the entire number in pencil, perhaps indicating an omission in a later performance of the zarzuela.



Example 2. Comparison of the vocal lines of the “Cundiman”
from *Ang Pagcacatiuala* (1902) and “Jocelynang Baliwag” (ca. 1896)

The two song examples compared here also illustrate the contrasting minor-major tonalities and chromatic turns that have become distinguishable formal characteristics of the twentieth century kundiman. The popularity of "Jocelynang Baliwag" during this particular moment in Philippine history associated the song with patriotism, wherein love for a woman (in this case, an actual person named Pepita Tiongson of Baliwag, Bulacan) transcends into love for country. The *kundiman* as symbolic of national fervor, however, does not fully manifest itself until the genre's later development and reception as a type of art song in the 1920s and 30s. As I outline in later chapters, this transformation of the kundiman made the genre of canonic importance in Philippine music history.

When used in the Tagalog zarzuelas, the kundiman employs other themes beyond amorous sentiments and motifs of womanly beauty and virtue. In Reyes's *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, Estella sets the playwright's musings and frustrations on the many languages brought by the Spaniards, the Americans, and now, potentially, the Japanese:

Bagong wika naman ang pag-aaralan
noong arao'y Castila ay di matutuhan
Sumunod na ma'y Yngles na may Cahirapan
Ngayon na may Japon na sa dulo'y may ne sang
Mahirap mabuhay ang sa ating lagay
sa pagsasalita'y ualang uikang tunay
Kung tayo,i, malayo'y at tayo,i, maglakbay
ualang tayon Consul na makapagaka (¡Ay!) pag-akay
Kung tayo,i, dumatal malalayong lupa
alangan na tatoin sa ating kapua
silay may Nacion tayo,i, namay uala
di amerikano di naman Castila
Kundi nga sa Frayle ay laganap ngayon
uika ni Cervantes ng Castilang Nacion
pagaaral nitoy ay baual ng among [prayle]
ito ay utos sa labas at sa loob ng bayan

Translation: We have to learn a new language/before we couldn't learn Castillan (Spanish)/

Then English came next with difficulty/Now it's Japanese with a "ne san" at the end
It's hard to live in our situation/in speaking we don't have a true language of our own/
If we are far and if we travel/we don't have a Consul to take us in
If we arrive in far lands/It is a challenge to interact with others/
they have a Nation while we do not/neither American nor Castillan
If not for the friars it will be more common now/the language of Cervantes and the Castillan
nation/the fathers [friar] forbid learning it/it is a command within and outside of the country

In this example, Estella employs the already familiar lilting triple meter and the contrasting minor and (relative) major sections of the kundiman. The plaintive melody evoked by the chromatic turns and leaps found in the kundimans in example 2 outlined above are also present in Estella's version. Estella's setting maintains the genre's stylistic features of the kundiman within a sectional form (AA^1 or $abab^1$).[65] The solo is striking for its plaintive melodic line shaped by large intervallic leaps contrasting with emphatic half steps. These musical features align with the perception of the kundiman as a melancholic song genre able to capture themes of love and longing in its often brief and shifting harmonic palette, but here the "longing" is for a more stable and autonomous identity. Reyes's texts depart from the more emotive themes of passionate love, lamenting the impending need to learn yet another foreign language after having just recently learned English. In other parts of the score, Estella's setting shows some awkward prosody and phrasing of the Tagalog text, perhaps owing to the fact that the composer's everyday language was actually Spanish. The working vocal score reveals markings of Spanish translations on top of the Tagalog vocal lines used to aid the composer in his text setting. Consequently, the finished product is a striking musical commentary on language proficiency on both metaphysical and aesthetic levels. Other examples of the kundiman that push the thematic boundaries of erotic and patriotic love occur as lullabies and tragic lamentations sung by characters in specific moments

[65] Later examples of kundimans (1920s) shift from minor to its parallel major, as in Nicanor Abelardo's standalone "art-song" pieces.

within the zarzuela. Most of these appear in the later repertoire of the late 1910s through the '30s, which I will outline in further detail in chapter three.

The Tagalog zarzuelas also created new avenues for local musicians to showcase their musicality and competency in a wide array of styles. As Ramon Santos asserts, knowledge of and competencies in European musical practices were already prevalent in the Philippines from the mid-eighteenth century onwards through various means of music-making, including singing in church choirs and instrumental solo and ensemble playing (violin, harp, guitar, rondalla, cornet, flute, piano, organ).[66] Although musicians were primarily trained in church institutions to serve in the calendric rituals of Catholic practice during the Spanish period, they were not limited to performing music in religious settings but were also exposed to other types of European music such as popular opera and Spanish zarzuela repertoire.[67] By the late 1880s, orchestral musicians in the archipelago were already performing in Manila productions of Spanish zarzuelas and Italian operas and were being hired to accompany touring theatrical companies in their engagements across the archipelago. The Orquesta Molina, for example, performed frequently with visiting performing troupes and became a professional training ground for musicians and zarzuela composers such as Fulgencio Tolentino and brothers Alejo and Gavino Carluen to practice their craft.[68]

Singers faced considerably more challenges in finding success on the Tagalog zarzuela stage. Considering the linguistic and musical demands of the new zarzuela genre, the transition from either the comedia or European opera and zarzuela stages proved difficult for some artists.

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[66] Ramon Santos, "Musika ng Zarzuela-Sarsuwela," 292.

[67] The Colegio de Niños Tiples, established in 1737, was one of the most important institutions in Manila that trained local musicians in solfeggio, vocalization, composition, organ and string-playing. See William Summers, "Listening for Historic Manila: Music and Rejoicing in an International City," *Budhi* 1 (1998): 216.

[68] Samson-Lauterwald, *Music in the Zarzuelas of Severino Reyes*, 19; 21.

Those with more "classical" training who had been performing Italian opera and Spanish zarzuelas in Manila were less successful in crossing over to the Tagalog stage, as many of the artists used Spanish as their everyday language. Conversely, those who specialized in the comedia had difficulty performing in the Tagalog zarzuelas without having trained in classical singing. Performers of the comedia such as Hilaria Alvarez and Emiliano Concepcion became one of Gran Compania's earliest members but had some initial difficulty transitioning from the comedia stage as outlined earlier, while soprano Estanislawa San Miguel, who previously performed Spanish zarzuelas, easily transitioned to the Tagalog stage.[69] Nevertheless, a new generation of Tagalog artists, such as Maria Carpena and Victorino Carrion, made their break in Manila's theatrical scene and helped establish Reyes's Gran Compania as the premier Tagalog zarzuela company in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Selling the drama

Lapaña-Bonifacio suggests that the number of theatrical works with political and nationalistic themes decreased between 1903 and 1912.[70] The imprisonment of playwrights like Aurelio Tolentino and Juan Matapang Cruz in 1906 lends credibility to this claim. As historian Michael Cullinane asserts, Filipino elites were already moving away from supporting the "seditious plays" and channeled their energies into the election of the First Philippine Assembly in 1907, which afforded emerging local politicians a more direct avenue to work through their political aspirations.[71] But Reyes was not interested in engaging directly with the question of

[69] Isabelo de los Reyes, *Comediang Tagalog*, 33.

[70] Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights*, 49.

[71] Michael Cullinane, *Ilustrado Politics: Filipino Elite Responses to American Rule, 1898-1908* (Diliman, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2003), 122-123. See also meLê yamomo, *Theatre and Music in Manila and the Asia Pacific, 1896-1956: Sounding Modernities* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 155-156.

independence; rather, he drew on everyday experiences to promote his own ideas about social reform in post-Spanish colonial rule. Despite his initial run-ins with the colonial presses and the *R.I.P.-Ang Kalupi* debacles, Reyes continued to be quite successful as a playwright and manager of the Gran Compania Zarzuela de Tagala, which staged no less than thirteen of his original works between 1902 to 1907. After *Walang Sugat*, works such as *Minda Mora* (1904), *Filipinas para los Filipinos* (1905), and *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon* (1906) grappled with social and political aspects of Filipino-American relations without explicitly vocalizing any anti-US sentiments or calls for Philippine independence. Other works such as *Filotea* (1902), *Lukso ng Dugo* (1906), and *Gloria o Habeas Corpus* (1907) are more insular in their every-day characters and situations. *Gloria o Habeas Corpus*, in particular, continues Reyes's critique of Spanish religious clerics and blind pietism in contemporary society. In these zarzuelas, Reyes emphasizes the role of education and knowledge-building as means for social uplift for the Filipino. Often, this came in the form of musical numbers weighing the advantages of learning the English language as means for Philippine progress (as in *Minda Mora* and *Lukso ng Dugo*).

While local elites gained some power and authority within the colonial bureaucracy, patronage for Reyes's productions also increased. As the Gran Compania rose to prominence in Manila, it started to tour Reyes's works in the off season. The company's performance season revolved around a hectic performance schedule during Manila's summer months, with new productions usually premiering around April and May in different theater venues. The group initially used Teatro Libertad for its earlier works, a common space for Tagalog-language productions, but Reyes soon staged premieres in the more opulent Teatro Zorrilla and the newly built Manila Grand Opera House. Teatro Zorrilla and the Grand Opera House were largely run and managed by foreign nationals and had a variety of entertainment offerings that mostly

showed Spanish-language productions, visiting Italian opera companies, and foreign vaudeville acts and circuses. Reyes was able to capitalize on the appeal of his works among the different audiences in these public venues.

In early 1905, for example, Reyes marketed his zarzuela *Minda Mora* specifically to American audiences at the Zorrilla theater. Responding to a supposed lack of American interest in Filipino music theatrical productions, Reyes arranged a special performance of *Minda Mora* specifically marketed to the American public in Manila and distributed English translations of the zarzuela's libretto.[72] As will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, *Minda Mora* stands out in Reyes's early works not only for its theme of race and religion, but also how it serves as a clear indication of Reyes's desire to market his zarzuelas to both local and foreign audiences alike. The Gran Compania also took to touring their repertoire in towns and provinces outside the confines of Manila, which meant that their reach expanded to include the broader Tagalog-speaking population in the region. A notice in *El Renacimiento* in June 1906, for instance, advertised the Gran Compania's schedule for May to June, with twelve scheduled performances of seven of Reyes's zarzuelas and dramatic works in Manila and elsewhere in Bulacan, Malabon, and Quezon.[73]

Although he managed the Gran Compania, it is doubtful that Reyes shouldered all of the expenses in producing a zarzuela. Ticket sales made up a huge part of the profits and potentially

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[72] Chapter Two gives a more in-depth account of the zarzuela's production and reception history, its connections to contemporary debates about race and religion, as well as an analysis of its text and music.

[73] Works that went on tour were the entire repertoire of Gran Compania save for *Ang Kalupi*: Minda *Mora*, *Ang Mascota*, *Los Martires de la Patria*, *Lukso ng Dugo*, *¡Walang Sugat!*, *Ang Bagong Fausto*, and *Filipinas para los Filipinos*. See "La Gran Zarzuela Tagala: Programa de Funciones," *El Renacimiento*, May 28, 1906. A listing on June 16th is quite possibly a scheduled premiere of *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, with only the following note: "Extreno de la zarzuela cómica en dós actos, letra del señor Severino Reyes y música de los maestros Estella y Ciria." Ciria could be one of the company's resident tenors, Andres Ciria Cruz.

allowed for the continued staging of his productions. In addition, a group of musicians would perform around the vicinity of the theater where a particular production was to be staged to boost ticket sales.[74] Early forms of corporate sponsorship also helped in providing the necessary funds for the stage productions. This is evidenced by the special *telón de anuncios*, the special curtain that acted as a marketing tool during performances. Another similar example of this type of sponsorship is the brief one-act juguete comico-lirico *Minda mindahan*, a spin-off from Reyes's popular three-act zarzuela *Minda Mora*, written as a vehicle for advertising San Miguel beer.[75] The short work depicts a group of actors who obtained a license to rent the script and perform *Minda Mora* in the provinces but is having difficulty in finding artists to take on its lead roles. At the end of the play, the main actors turn to the audience and beg indulgence for any missteps and encourage them to drink San Miguel beer. These early forms of marketing and advertising for zarzuela productions highlight the reality that the Tagalog zarzuela developed outside of any specific institutional support or formal state apparatus throughout the American colonial period.

The inauguration of the Philippine Assembly in 1907 and the heavy loss that the Partido Federalista (later renamed Partido Nacional Progresista) suffered also did not significantly affect Reyes's career. In mid-1907, Reyes took stock of his creative output as a playwright and deposited almost all of his zarzuela works to date at the Division of Patents, Copyrights, and Trademarks.[76] At this stage, his popularity already went beyond the initial scope of elite

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[74] Laconico-Buenaventura, *Theater in Manila*, 108.

[75] The San Miguel brewery is a huge brewery corporation still in existence today and was the first of its kind in Southeast Asia.

[76] Certificates of registration in the Severino Reyes Collection at the CCP Library and Archives indicate that the Spanish Law of 1879 on copyrights was still in effect when Reyes deposited copies of his works. Reyes submitted several works including *Walang Sugat*, *Manga Pinagpala*, *Ang Bagong Fausto*, *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, *Ang Kalupi*, *Minda Mora*, *Filipinas para los Filipinos*, *Filotea ó ang Pag-aasawa ni S. Pedro*, *Ang Opera Italiana*, *Lukso ng Dugo*, and *Gloria ó Habeas Corpus*.

patronage. Seeking copyright for his zarzuelas signaled a desire to protect his works and for recognition of his authorship when versions and spin-offs of his zarzuelas were becoming more popular in smaller venues and amateur circuits. By this time, too, Reyes took the role of company director head-on and made use of an already extensive repertoire to expand the audience base of his theatrical company.

In the 1910s, Reyes wrote fewer works in Tagalog and focused more on writing Spanish plays.[77] Some of these plays were commissioned by local Spanish-Filipino theatrical companies such as the Co. Torrijos-Blay's *El Cablegrama Fatal* from 1916. He also took a turn to the "historic" in thematizing the revolutionary years of the late nineteenth century to remark on current socio-political conditions. In one work, *Sigalot ng mga Pilipino at Americano* ("Conflict of the Filipinos and Americans," 1910), he looks back at the life and works of José Rizal, the ennobled hero and inspiration of the earlier revolution against Spain. Here, Reyes conjures up the spirit of Rizal and urges the Filipino and American characters to reconcile: "Filipinos and Americans, stop the fighting. Love each other like brothers. Fellow countrymen: be strong. The great America will not enslave you. She is the true apostle of freedom of oppressed nations."[78] In the late 1910s, Reyes returned to writing Tagalog zarzuelas and plays and produced his Tagalog works alongside Spanish plays and Spanish translations of popular operettas such as *Konde de*

[77] With the exception of *May Sugat!* (for which, unfortunately, no copy of the libretto or music is known to have survived).

[78] Original Tagalog: "Mga Filipino at mga Americano tigil na iyang pag-aaway kayo'y mag ibigan parang tunay na magcacapatid. Mga kababayan: Ipanatag ang loob. Ang dakilang bayan ng America ay hindi kayo lulupiguin. Siya ang tunay na Apostol ng kalayaan ng mga bayang naaapi..."

Luksemburgo.[79] One of the latest productions was for the four-act zarzuela *Ang Liham ng Ligaya* ("The Letter of Happiness") that was staged sometime in 1927.[80]

In 1921, Reyes wrote an essay in the Tagalog periodical *Taliba* entitled "Ang Buhay at Kamatayan ng Dulaang Tagalog ("The Life and Death of the Tagalog Drama"), which outlined the decline of the zarzuela and attributed it to the rising fees demanded by artists and musicians.[81] Historian E. Arsenio Manuel notes how Reyes stepped down from managing the Gran Compania and instead wrote and edited for the popular Tagalog magazine *Liwayway* in 1922. As a writer and editor for the popular magazine, Reyes continued writing stories with a moralizing bent. He eventually created the fictional character Lola Basyang, a grandmother who weaves stories with moral lessons for children.[82] His legacy nevertheless lies in zarzuelas and his work as company director. Through Reyes's artistic collaborations with emerging Tagalog actors, composers, and musicians, the Gran Compania became the frontrunner in establishing the Tagalog zarzuela as the main form of popular entertainment in colonial Manila. Keenly aware of the potential of a zarzuela-going public, Reyes transformed the inherited Spanish genre into a vernacular practice in order to use the theatrical stage as a type of public school and a socializing medium. These goals of moral and cultural uplift of the Filipinos ran parallel to the US colonial agenda of public education as means to "civilize" their new colonial subjects. This is not to say that Reyes remained uncritical of certain aspects of American colonialism in the Philippines:

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[79] The Gran Compania produced this Spanish version sometime in 1917.

[80] No date found in the only extant libretto; Nov. 19, 1927 date comes from Cecilia M. Descalzo's manuscript "Severino Reyes: Analysis and Criticism of His Works," The National Teacher's College (December 16, 1949). Typescript found among Reyes's personal papers in the CCP Archives.

[81] *Taliba*, June 25, 1921. Also in Esperidion Arsenio Manuel and Magdalena Avenir Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography, vol. 4* (Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1995), 225.

[82] Manuel and Manuel, *Biography vol. 4*, 225.

American caricatures and subtle criticisms of contemporary colonial officials occasionally appeared in his librettos. [83] Nevertheless, Reyes's overall output points to what historian Mojares argues is a type of civic nationalism that flourished in the first decades under US colonial rule, where art and performance practices shifted from a more militant and radical form to one that "looked towards the past and was distinctly conservative…in orientation."[84] As the next chapter explores further, Reyes's zarzuelas continued to entertain and educate while drawing attention to the racial tensions that characterized the colonial encounter. In the years following Reyes's emergence in Manila's theatrical scene, the Tagalog zarzuelas quickly became instrumental in conveying the "'sense and sentiment' of *being Filipino*," even as the Philippines underwent a period of Americanization during the first decades of the twentieth century.[85]

[83] In *Gloria ó Habeas Corpus* (1907), for example, Reyes included a character in a mental asylum who rants about and criticizes the then-Governor-General of the Philippines.

[84] Mojares, "The Formation of Filipino Nationality Under U.S. Colonial Rule," 23.

[85] Mojares, "The Formation of Filipino Nationality Under U.S. Colonial Rule," 12.

Chapter Two

Minda Mora and the Politics of Representation

In the years immediately following Severino Reyes's debut in 1902, the playwright produced works that continued to attract the attention of Manila's theatergoing public despite the controversies surrounding the comedia debates and the accusations of sedition with which he became embroiled. In 1904, Reyes's name circulated once more in major newspaper outlets in the colony with the premiere of his new work, *Minda Mora* ("Minda the Moor"), on April 23rd at the Manila Grand Opera House. The Spanish-language daily *La Democracia* declared the work to be a sign that the Tagalog zarzuela was alive and well because "its author, with astonishing skill, has managed to overcome situations and suspicious accusations."[1] Focusing on *Minda Mora*, this chapter shows how Reyes continued to use the theatrical stage to project Filipinos as modern subjects in an effort to counter the often-denigrating portrayals of the native population created by US colonial rhetoric. As outlined in the preceding chapter, Reyes strongly advocated for the zarzuela as a vehicle for moral and artistic uplift of his primarily Tagalog audience. *Minda Mora* continued to fulfill Reyes's agenda in promoting secular education as an antidote to blind religiosity and superstition inherited from Spanish colonization. The zarzuela also served to showcase Filipino composers and artists, among them the zarzuela's composer Juan de Sahagun Hernandez, whose first collaboration with the playwright quickly brought him recognition as an emerging composer for Manila's theatrical stage.

[1] Original text: "Se trataba da S. Reyes, hombre conocido ya de sobra en trabajos de esta indole, y todos presumiamos que lo anunciado habria de ser de la zarzuelas de vida en cartal, porque su autor, con pasmosa habilidad, ha sabido sortear situaciones y verso libre de suspicacias..." See "El Teatro en Filipinas: Minda," in *La Democracia*, April 25, 1904.

Most importantly, *Minda Mora* stands as a critique of racial prejudice brought about by colonization and remains one of the earliest examples in Philippine history of advocating for including the Muslim population in Mindanao in the emerging Filipino nation. The work served as commentary on the ongoing geo-political issue of whether Mindanao, the southernmost region of the archipelago, was to be considered part of the Philippines under the US colonial administration and whether its Muslim population were also Filipinos. These questions came into play at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition, where different indigenous groups from the Philippines (including several Muslim families) became part of the "Philippine village" at the fairgrounds.

As I discuss further below, the Philippine exhibit created a colonial rhetoric and ethnographic classifications dividing Filipinos between "Christian" and "non-Christian" groups that echo social Darwinist principles common of the period. Early ethnographic accounts of the music by US anthropologist Frances Densmore, for example, elaborate on a colonialist cultural hierarchy that portrayed Muslim peoples in terms akin to the "noble savage" image. Held earlier in the same year as *Minda Mora*'s premiere, the fair further brought the existence of Muslims from Mindanao into the consciousness of Manila's elites, especially as Muslim delegates made appearances in Manila prior to their travels to the US. Families from several Maranao groups from Mindanao, for example, became the main attraction at Simon's Panopticon in Calle Paz, a stone's throw from Manila's leading theater venues.[2] Although there is no direct evidence of Reyes witnessing this particular event, such publicized attractions along with the cycle of news

[2] A *Manila Times* advertisement for the February 29 performance fashions it as a "Moro's War-Dance and their national songs."

about the US colonial incursions in Mindanao likely influenced Reyes's choice of positive Muslim and Christian relations as plot for his latest work.

A closer reading of *Minda Mora*, however, also shows how racialized representations in the Tagalog zarzuelas point to the fraught politics of identity formation and nation-building. Through analyses of the zarzuela's text, music, and reception, I will reveal how *Minda Mora* reflects discourses on race that animated debates about Filipinos as modern colonial subjects. While the work remains a compelling source of early progressive ideals about a multicultural Philippines, Reyes's characterization of the Muslim protagonist Minda nevertheless invoked caricatures and essentializing portrayals in the playwright's attempts to define a modern identity on the Tagalog stage. Central to this reading is the underlying concept of exoticism and Orientalism associated with Western artistic as well as academic representations of non-Western cultures and peoples. Here, I draw from Edward Said's critical work on the process of othering in the creation of a corpus of "objective" knowledge about the "East" through ethnological studies and observations often produced through travel writings at a time of European imperialism. On the one hand Said's conceptualization of Orientalism defines how this body of knowledge greatly informed the world-making found in the literatures and other artistic works, including opera, produced in the nineteenth century.[3] On the other hand, the practice of exoticism that thematizes the foreign and unfamiliar for a European audience presents itself most vividly in musical theater genres. *Minda Mora* can be read alongside other examples in Tagalog theater and literature to trace how Muslim peoples fit within the Tagalog writers' worldview. Often, the

[3] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

representation of Muslims in earlier texts, such as those found in the comedia literature discussed earlier, emphasizes a hierarchy privileging Christians over Muslims.

Musically, Hernandez's score echoes similar techniques employed by European composers to evoke a foreign "other." Musicologists define musical exoticism as a process of codifying a particular musical language for an unfamiliar "other." Their discussions often highlight musical gestures, distinctive melodies, or the use of a particular instrument to index the "foreign" type. But unlike other exoticist works that shaped ideas about the Western "us" versus the Orientalized "them," *Minda Mora* complicates the binary constructions of the "East" and the "West," and powerfully critiques racism as a rationale for white European colonial expansion.

Finally, reviews and commentaries on *Minda Mora* illustrate how audiences may have understood the zarzuela in relation to contemporary debates about Filipino civil progress and how Tagalog audiences filtered the work through their own perceptions about actual Muslim peoples. Key reviews echo the language used in contemporary accounts about Muslims in the Philippines, including the early ethnographic reports produced at the St. Louis World's Fair, and point to the ways in which the "real" and the "imagined" coalesced in the minds of *Minda Mora*'s Manila audience. The representation of the Muslim in both the ethnographic texts from the world's fair and in the theatrical stage exemplifies what musicologist Sindhumathi Revuluri points to as the "interplay between the academic and the imaginative" within Orientalism that drives the particular power of artistic works utilizing different strategies of representation. Read within the particular political and social context of its time, *Minda Mora* underscores the complicated relationship between music and identity and the power of representation that musical theatrical works negotiate.

Colonialism and the politics of race

For much of the colonial period under Spain, the predominantly Muslim region of Western Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago had largely enjoyed autonomy under sultanates and other smaller polities, and resisted Spanish incursions and Catholic baptizing missions. The geo-politics of the region, however, began to change at the beginning of the twentieth century when the new US colonizers moved to consolidate the territory. In 1903, the Moro Province of Mindanao was established by the colonial government in an attempt to move towards a more direct rule in the region and to integrate its Muslim and other indigenous populations through a "civilizing mission." Although politically and linguistically diverse, the Muslim population in the region were grouped together under the name "Moro," which was used by the earlier Spanish missionaries (primarily Jesuits) in reference to the "moors" in Spain.[4] Historian Donna Amoroso outlines how the new American colonists inherited this reference to Moros and relied on writings by Spaniards and other Europeans in their early understanding of the Philippines and its population. The Moro peoples especially were seen as a "problem" by the colonists in their refusal to adopt Christianity and insistence in their "immoral" practices including polygamy and slavery.[5] Local practices of slave raiding and debt-bondage were common among several Muslim groups until the late nineteenth century. The slave raiding often occurred along coastal regions across the Philippine archipelago (often taking people from Christian communities in the central Visayas islands) or from other non-Muslim populations elsewhere in insular southeast Asia, which gave slaves a foreign or outsider status within the Muslim communities.[6] These

[4] Donna Amoroso, "Inheriting the Moro Problem," in *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, eds. Julian Go and Anne L Foster (Durham; London: Duke University Press Books, 2003), 122.

[5] Amoroso, "Inheriting the Moro Problem," 122.

[6] Michael Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery: Controversies over Bondage and Nationalism in the American Colonial Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 62-63.

forms of slavery were regarded by the US colonizers as a stark example of the Filipinos' lack of readiness for self-government.

Historian Michael Salman compellingly illustrates how the issue of slavery in the context of US colonial rule in the Philippines became an important issue for Filipino nationalists in defining their modern identity.[7] While US colonial officials advocated that colonialism would free Filipinos from different types of "uncivilized" bondage practices, local nationalists were using anti-slavery rhetoric as a metaphor for their own political resistance, effectively defining slavery as a type of racism that fueled colonialism in the first place. For the colonial bureaucrats, the continued practice of local forms of servant bondage among minority groups in the archipelago reaffirmed the perceived "backwardness" of the Filipinos. Salman argues that "while the inferiority of the non-Christians highlighted the civility of Catholic Filipinos, it also posed a danger to their claims of fitness for independence."[8] However differently Americans and Filipinos defined slavery, Salman concludes that they understood how allegations of its existence would be a "source of embarrassment" to both. By the time that the Moro province in Mindanao was created, the colonial state was intent on completely abolishing remnants of these local practices, which subsequently fueled violence and conflict between the US Army and the Moro leaders in the area.

As the colonial government sought to have more control of the archipelago, early census reports reinforced categorizations of the Christian and non-Christian native inherited from the Spanish colonial period of the local population. The 1903 census, for example, lumped the local population in larger groupings under the "Christian or civilized tribes" and the "non-Christian or

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[7] Salman, *Embarrasment of Slavery*, 5.

[8] Salman, *Embarrasment of Slavery*, 154.

wild tribes" that drew ethnic and linguistic categories along religious lines.[9] Paul Kramer identifies this categorization as one logic for continued US-control of the Philippines. As Kramer argues, the "Hispanicized Filipinos and those the regime called 'non-Christians' would be disenfranchised for different reasons: the former were condemned for their 'superstition' and 'cacique' politics; the latter for their 'savagery,' technological backwardness, and lack of Christianity."[10]

This division into Christian and non-Christian populations was particularly evident in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, which coincided with *Minda Mora*'s premiere in 1904. At the St. Louis World's Fair, the Muslim delegation along with other groups were put in "living exhibits" in the 47-acre Philippine village at the fairgrounds to showcase the newly acquired US territory in the Pacific. Much of the American political rhetoric that accompanied the Philippine exhibition argued for the necessity of US presence in the Philippines to educate and civilize the "primitive" Filipinos as presented by the fair organizers. The official report of the Philippine Exposition Board to the St. Louis Fair stated, for example, how the Philippine exhibit was "an honest one" and that

> [w]hile all of the seventy or more groups of people in the archipelago could not be represented we had the least civilized in the Negritos and the Igorots, the semi-civilized in the Bagobos and the Moros and the civilized and cultured in the Visayans, as well as in the constabulary and scout organizations. In all respects, commercially, industrially and socially, the exhibit was a faithful portrayal.[11]

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[9] See the *Census of the Philippine Islands: Geography, History, and Population Volume 1* (United States Bureau of the Census, Washington: 1905).

[10] Paul Kramer, *Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 161.

[11] Report of the Philippine Exposition Board to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and official list of awards granted by the Philippine International Jury at the Philippine Government Exposition World's Fair, St. Louis, MO.

The fair organizers, including scholars and ethnologists, used the lens of social Darwinist thought in framing the Filipinos as new colonial subjects. In this Darwinian framework, the Moro peoples were seen as "semi-civilized" in relation to other groups that were represented. Often described as "violent and blood-thirsty" in various newspaper accounts and publicity materials for the fair, the Moros, nevertheless, were also singled out for the more complex political structures within their communities when compared to the Negritos and Igorots of Northern Luzon.

This "semi-civilized" status accorded to Moros is referenced in Frances Densmore's ethnographic account of the music she observed at the Philippine exhibit. Known for her ethnographic work on Native Americans in the early twentieth century, Densmore recounted her visit to one of two Moro villages (the Samal Moros of Lanao) in the Philippine exhibition and employed the language of "savagery" and "progress."[12] Revisiting her observations on the music of the Moros provides context for *Minda Mora*'s creation. In an article she published in 1906, Densmore related how she collected "observational data from which [she] formed certain hypotheses concerning the origin and development of music."[13] This concern with music's "origin" framed her musical analyses in an attempt to trace the progression of "primitive" cultures to those of more developed societies.

During her visit, Densmore observed and documented the music-making activities of the Negritos, Igorots, Samal Moros, and Lanao Moros and placed them within a hierarchical

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[12] Densmore writes: "The village was not open to the public, as the only man who could control these wild people had been called east by a death in his family. Dr Jenks took me into the village. We were the only white people there, but were perfectly safe, as the sultans are devoted to Dr Jenks; he told me, however, that they had tried twice to kill their keeper since leaving the Islands and that in the whole world there is probably no tribe more wicked and barbarous than these people." See Frances Densmore, "The Music of the Filipinos," *American Anthropologist* 8, no. 4 (October 1, 1906): 630.

[13] Frances Densmore, "The Music of the Filipinos," *American Anthropologist* 8, no. 4 (1906): 612.

structure. For example, her description of the music of the Moros presupposes that they are further along in their musical development by virtue of having more complex rhythmic components in their songs:

> The music of the Moros presents another step in musical development, for they have conceived the desire to hear several rhythms at the same time, elaborating the rhythmic idea beyond the accomplishment of the Igorot which consists simply in combining subdivisions of even rhythmic beats.[14]

Densmore's perception of the Moro's "semi-civilized" status was reinforced by lessons she took from a Samal Moro musician: "Imagine my astonishment when she taught me to play in four grades of difficulty! Here was another instance of music as an intelligibly taught, practised, and cultivated art before there was the ability to compose and remember a melody."[15]

In contrast, Densmore lamented the music of the Visayans (part of the "Hispanicized Filipinos" from the central regions) and the symphonic music of the Philippine Constabulary band as examples of music with strong foreign influences. The Constabulary Band's performances were used by those seeking to legitimize the colonial project as prime examples of the level of musical sophistication that the Filipinos had achieved in just a couple of years under American tutelage and McKinley's project of "benevolent assimilation."[16] This kind of musical rhetoric completely sidesteps the longer history of symphonic band music and other forms of European musical traditions already prevalent and even indigenized in the Philippines.[17] Densmore, however, saw the music of the "Christian" groups as signs of how the "native music

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[14] Densmore, "The Music of the Filipinos," 625.

[15] Densmore, "The Music of the Filipinos," 628.

[16] Kramer, *Blood of Government*, 109-110.

[17] See Mary Talusan, "Music, Race, and Imperialism: The Philippine Constabulary Band at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair" *Philippine Studies* 52, no. 4 (2004): 499-526.

of the Filipinos will soon pass away" and regretfully declares how "all the [sic] Filipino music shall be merged at last in the Star-Spangled Banner."[18]

These cultural hierarchies that framed the Philippine exhibit constructed an "us" and "them" rhetoric among the Filipinos themselves. Filipino students or *pensionados* in the US, for example, protested against the exhibition for fear that the presence of the "non-Christian" groups in the Philippine village only reinforced the idea of Filipinos as "savages" and sought to distance themselves from the other indigenous groups in the exhibit. Similar reactions and debates reverberated back to the colonial capital, where Manila's elites confronted the question of Muslims as Filipinos and grappled with the idea of their cultural differences. These debates strongly echo historian Salman's assessment that within colonialism, "*ilustrado* nationalism posed a series of cultural problems revolving around perceptions of the uncivilized within its midst and at its borders."[19] By April 1904, the stage was set for a music-theatrical rendering of the racial and cultural tensions brought about by the representation of Moros in the exhibit. Echoing the racial framings of the "semi-civilized" Moro, *Minda Mora* casts the Muslim "other" within the imagined world of a modern Filipino society.

Reyes's Minda and the Moro figure in Tagalog literature

Set in three acts, the zarzuela's story revolves around Minda, a young Muslim woman from Mindanao. Minda goes to Manila in search of her childhood friend Felix, whose Christian family took her in when she was orphaned at a young age. Minda finds Felix, a young student on his way to becoming a lawyer and engaged to be married to Loling, a local Tagalog girl. With

[18] Densmore, "The Music of the Filipinos," 632.

[19] Salman, *The Embarrassment of Slavery*, 11.

nowhere else to go, Minda becomes a servant in Felix's household, falls in love with him, and ends up pregnant with his child. Torn between his love for both women, Felix nevertheless tries to convince Minda to return to Mindanao on her own and live off all the inheritance left to him by his mother. Felix's plan fails when Loling eventually finds out what is happening. The zarzuela draws to a close when Loling, in a sacrificial gesture, breaks off her engagement with Felix so that he can take responsibility for Minda and their child.

Reyes's choice of a plot with Christian and Muslim characters was already a familiar device in earlier Tagalog theater and literature. In the local Tagalog theater, the *comedia*, discussed in the previous chapter, is a primary example. Typical plots echo similar stories of the *Reconquista* in Spain, which lasted from the eighth through the twelth century. These plots re-enact with much pageantry the Christian recapturing of territories in Spain and Portugal from Muslim control and reaffirming ideas about the inherent virtue and triumph of Christianity over Islam. In Tagalog literature, local poetic genres such as the metrical romances *corrido* and *awit* also convey similar stories with stock characters. Nineteenth-century poet Francisco Balagtas's canonic *awit*, *Florante at Laura*, for example, casts Muslim characters as secondary heroes standing in stark contrast to the main protagonists, Florante and Laura of the troubled Kingdom of Albania.[20] For Severino Reyes's generation, *Florante at Laura* was quite popular and was being read for its potential anti-colonial sentiments, re-interpreting the tyranny that befell the kingdom of Albania as code for the abuses of the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines.[21]

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[20] *Florante at Laura* was first published in 1861, but literary scholars say it could have been written as early as 1838. See Bienvenido Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry, 1570–1898: Tradition and Influences in Its Development* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2001), 253.

[21] Lumbera further argues that Balagtas never really meant *Florante at Laura* to be interpreted as anti-Spanish, but wereitwaswere nevertheless re-read as such in the late nineteenth century. Later scholars, Lumbera argues,

The stereotypes constructed in Balagtas's Christian and Muslim characters reappear in subsequent literature and influenced how Reyes portrayed his characters in *Minda Mora*. In separate scenes, for example, Florante and Laura are saved by their Muslim counterparts, Aladin and Flerida of Persia. Although on the surface, the Christian protagonists are characterized as "weak" to be in need of rescue, literary historian Bienvenido Lumbera notes too how such weakness can also be read as a Christian virtue. Meanwhile, the "strength" of the Sultan, Aladin's father and one of the antagonists in the story, is perceived as a form of aggressiveness and a "rudeness induced by a culture untouched by the blessings of the Christian religion."[22] Balagtas's female characters similarly display the intersection of gendered characterizations with racial stereotypes: Flerida is depicted as more masculine and "Amazon-like" as she rescues the "all-feminine" Laura.[23] While Lumbera argues that, beneath the surface, Balagtas ultimately subcribes to the notion that all men are "essentially brothers," a complete assimilation comes at the end of the story when the Muslim characters are baptized into the Christian religion.

Importantly, unlike earlier literary and theatrical precedents, Reyes does not focus on Christian conversion and instead proposes that the Moros can be part of an imagined Philippine nation. While the Muslim figures in earlier Tagalog literature were often depicted as characters from faraway Persia, Reyes's Minda is from neighboring Mindanao, and the work depicts Muslim and Christian relations in contemporary society. As a commentary on the changing social and cultural dynamics within colonial Philippines, *Minda Mora* illustrates Reyes's liberal ideas about the possibilities for a multi-religious society. Here, religious affiliations become

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subsequently misinterpreted Balagtas and commonly cited *Florante at Laura* as an anti-Spanish/anti-colonial work from the outset. See Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 140.

[22] Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 124.

[23] Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 121.

subsumed under a higher sense of "righteousness" in the character of Loling, whose Christian virtue Reyes substitutes as a form of Filipino trait defined by sacrifice for the greater good. Minda, on the other hand, does not serve as a direct contrast to Loling's character but rather parallels Loling's refinement and virtue in their shared mastery of the (feminized) arts, particularly singing and speaking in multiple languages. By positioning Minda as an educated ("ilustrada") Mora, one who is multilingual (knows Tagalog and Castillan) and musically competent ("marunong kumanta"), Reyes was also using her to represent the modern Filipino to counteract the negative perceptions of the US colonizers. In Reyes's triangulation, this positive portrayal of Minda projects the playwright's ideals of the educated and model citizen, which then facilitates the Moros' inclusion in his imagined Filipino nation.

However, the status of Minda as a servant in Felix's household also points to the issue of slavery as part of the "Moro problem" that accompanied contemporary discourses on race within Philippine colonial politics. A short review of the zarzuela in the *Manila Times* focused solely on the subject of Minda as a "bond-servant" in Felix's household. Labeling the zarzuela as a "problem play," the review briefly mentions how *Minda Mora* deals with the peonage system still existing "in a covert way among the Filipinos to a considerable extent."[24] The US press in Manila also saw the work as criticizing the practice of slavery among the Moros, which would have been the biggest draw for the US-American audience. Reyes's libretto, however, says little about the actual practice of slavery among the Moro communities in the south. Minda's status as a servant in Catholic Manila also reverses the actual slave-raiding practices mentioned earlier,

[24] "'Minda' a Filipino Lyric Drama, Deals with the Peonage System," *The Manila Times*, April 23, 1904. The subtitle for the article reads: "About the Life of a Beautiful Slave-Girl, Is Woven a Story of Devotion and Ruin Which Depicts Serfdom in the Islands" (sic).

where slaves in the Moro communities were often coming from the Christian communities in coastal regions in central Philippines.

The zarzuela, instead, uses slavery as a metaphor for racism and race relations in early twentieth-century colonial Philippines and serves as Reyes's moralizing commentary on how racial prejudice exists even amongst Filipinos themselves. In the third act's scene two, for example, Felix's friends discover that Minda is pregnant with his child. Juan and Antonio react with great dismay and insist that their friend could never marry a "negra" and a Moro slave, a socially unacceptable act that will "lower the[ir] race."[25] Julio then castigates his friends for belittling Minda as a "mora" and for likening her to a "negra" in a derogatory manner. In his lengthy diatribe against racism, Julio states

> *[T]antoin nyo mga katoto na ang pag-libak sa mga maitim kay sa atin, ay isang pangit na kaugalian na dapat na natin lisanin, pagka't kung tayo din ang siyang magpapakilala sa madla ng pagsasamaputi at pag alipusta sa maitim ay hindi natin maaapula ang hiduang palagay sa atin ng mga taga Europang mapuputing lahi na di umano'y ang atin ay mababang uri ó raza inferior.*
>
> Realize, my dear friends, that to ridicule those who are darker than us is an inappropriate behavior that should be done away with; if we project ourselves as being white and insult those black [skinned], then we cannot curb the wrong perception of white Europeans that we are of an inferior kind or race.

Julio goes on to point out that the damaging effects of such prejudice should not be lost among Filipinos, themselves subject to the racism of both the Spanish and American colonization of the Philippines. The dialogues excerpted above drive home Reyes's moralizing objective and, again, echo the playwright's aim of uplift for the Filipinos.

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[25] Original text: "[Antonio] Ano ang sasabihin sa iyo ng mga tao, mga kaguinoohan, ng tinatawag natin sociedad? Pag sumabok ang balitang ikaw'y nag asawa sa isang alipin, sa isang negra, sa isang mora… Hindi maaari ang makasal ka sa isang negra… [Juan] ¡A Casarse con una negra! ¡Con una esclava! Es el horror de los horrors el acabase: vaya iyan ang magpapaba ng lahi."

Moreover, the zarzuela points to the ways that Filipinos drew upon examples from contemporary US race politics. In the third act, Julio refers to the fairly recent event where President Roosevelt invited African American spokesman Booker T. Washington for dinner at the White House as a symbol of racial equality. Julio emphasizes how "we should emulate the great President of North America [sic]…he knows that black or white both eat, both see, both hear…both have minds, hearts, therefore, both are from the hand of God; in this world, dear friends, there is no higher or lower race."[26] Contemporary Manila audiences recognized these lines as a critique of the racial prejudice suffered by Filipinos under white colonizers. A review published in the *El Grito del Pueblo*, for example, caught Julio's moralizing monologue and with much sarcasm commented on how

> the races of color who are described as savages would come out triumphant; [but] not to be blamed for arriving later than the other races in learning that ambition, selfishness, the use of force, and nepotism are the most splendid manifestations of cultivated minds...[27]

The *El Grito*'s scathing commentary reflects its critical stance and that of its nationalist editor Pascual Poblete toward the colonial regime under then Governor-General Luke Wright.

While *Minda Mora* certainly emboldened critics of racial discrimination in Manila, it also revealed the contradictions of a nationalist ideology at work as it came to terms with a diverse and multicultural society. The same *El Grito* commentator reinforced the belief in cultural

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[26] Original text: "[Julio] …ang maputi at maitim ay isa rin sa katauhan; atin tularan ang dakilang Presidente ng America Del Norte, na isinalo niya sa mesa ng pagkain ang isang negro, isang negro na makalilibong maitim kaysa isang baluga palibhasa'y nalalaman ni Mr. Roosevelt na iisa ang pinagbuhatan ng lahat ng tao sa Sansinukuban, nalalaman niyang maitim at maputi ay kapua kumakain, kapua nakakakita, kapua nakaririnig, kapua gumagalao, kapua may pag-iisip, kapua may puso, sa makatuid ay kapua buhat sa kamay ni Bathala dito sa mundo mga kaibigan walang mataas at mababang lahi." It is also interesting to note here the use of the term "baluga" to refer to the Negrito peoples indigent in different provinces of Luzon, namely Zambales and in Quezon (Mauban being one of the areas where "baluga" is used). See William Reed et. al, *Negritos of Zambales* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1904), 18. The term, however, has acquired in later years its own derogatory connotation referring to anyone who is darker skinned, has curly hair, and is usually of unkempt manner.

[27] "Minda: De Colaboracion," *El Grito del Pueblo*, May 4, 1904.

hierarchies by pointing out what he thought were inaccuracies in the playwright's depiction of real Moros. The writer claims that Reyes was mistaken in portraying a Moro from Mindanao as darker skinned and belonging to a race separate from that of the Tagalogs. The anonymous reviewer argues that the Malay Muslims of the southern Mindanao region are of the same racial group as that of the Malay Tagalogs and Visayans but

> differing only from us [Tagalogs or Manileños] in their beliefs and in **their culture, which is significantly inferior to ours**. Otherwise, we have seen in the Southern regions people with fairly light-colored skin and women whose beauty have nothing to envy from the most beautiful women in other regions. We do not believe, however, that Reyes has fallen into such an unfortunate error. It is most likely that [a darker skinned] Minda is a conventionalism intentionally brought over [by the playwright] to securely deliver a blow to the malicious jingoists that abound in this world. (Emphasis mine.)[28]

The commentator here also problematically falls back into a kind of colorism in rejecting the idea of darker-skinned Moros while privileging the "light-colored skin" as a standard of beauty for Filipino women. Such a commentary underscores how artistic works that traffic in some kind of cultural representation often invite expectations of authenticity as perceptions of the "real" and the "imagined" fuse together in the viewer's interpretation. Moreover, such a reception posits an understanding of the work wherein Minda stands in for the Moro as part of "us" but not altogether like "us." The musical score echoes this ideological dissonance in the portrayal of Minda, employing gestures from European works that center on the representation of racial difference that I discuss further below.

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[28] "Minda: De Colaboracion," *El Grito del Pueblo*, May 4, 1904. Original text: "Hay sin embargo una equivocación en la obra de Reyes, y es la de creer que la raza mora de Mindanao es una raza que tiene color más prieto que la nuestra, pues el malayo mahometano de filipinas pertenece a la misma raza que el malayo tagalog y bisaya solo se diferencian de nosotros por sus creencias y porque su grado de cultura es bastante inferior a la nuestra. Por lo demás, hemos visto en las regiones del Sur personas de color bastante claro y mujeres cuya belleza nada tiene que envidiar a las mujeres más hermosas que existen en otras regiones. No creemos sin embargo que Reyes haya caído en tan lamentable error, y es más que probable, que Minda sea un convencionalismo traído intencionalmente para dar con más seguridad la estocada a fondo a los mal intencionadas jingoístas que pululan por estos mundos." Translation by Roseanne Eugenie Torre.

Music and identities

By the time the playwright set to work on *Minda Mora*, Reyes had already produced several zarzuelas, previously working with composers Fulgencio Tolentino and Gavino Carluen. *Minda Mora* marked Reyes's first collaboration with composer Juan de Sahagun Hernandez (1881-1945). Hernandez received much of his musical training from an older generation of local musicians and composers such as Cayetano Jacobe, Rosalio Solis, and José Estella, most of whom began their musical paths as choir members or church musicians.[29] He also learned composition from Santino Loppa, whose Italian stylistic influence came through in *Minda Mora*'s score. In 1904, the year of *Minda Mora*'s premiere, Hernandez had just recently returned from a two-year stint in French Indochina as an orchestra director at the popular Cafe de la Musique located in old Saigon, and his score for *Minda Mora* represents his first attempt at writing music for the theatrical stage.[30]

Hernandez's score consists of twenty musical numbers, including an orchestral prelude and *entreactos* that segue into the songs that open both acts two and three.[31] The sung numbers include solo, duet, and ensemble sections that trace the narrative and emotional trajectory of Reyes's libretto. Three solo arias sung by Minda, Loling, and Felix serve as emotional linchpins in the plot and bestow gravitas on the main characters as they reflect on their respective fates and love entanglements. Hernandez also included several recitative-like sections at crucial points in

[29] Estella, in particular, was also known as a zarzuela composer who was trained at the Madrid Conservatory.

[30] In 1902, Hernandez was invited by a French ambassador to work at the Cafe de la Musique in old Saigon near the French colonial theater district. In the account of his granddaughter, Millie Gonzalez Martelino, Hernandez was quite successful in French Indochina but came back to the Philippines in February 1904 to marry Rosario Lozada. See Millie Gonzalez Martelino, *The Forgotten Maestro: Juan de Sahagun Hernandez* (Mind and Heart Books, Virginia: 2010), 9.

[31] The original manuscript contains several cuts and modifications, which varies the total number of musical numbers for the entire zarzuela.

the plot to underscore the characters' internal reflections. In contrast, the use of dance forms like the gavotte, mazurka, habanera, and cakewalk highlights the lighter and sometimes comedic scenes and mirrors the common practice of incorporating popular music genres in zarzuelas from Spain as well as in the Mexican and Cuban iterations of the genre.[32]

Reviews of Hernandez's score observe the incorporation of popular genres while claiming a sense of originality in the music. The *El Grito del Pueblo* writer, again, remarks how

> Hernandez has given his dance music a flavor that, according to some who claim to be knowledgeable in the art of Rossini, has some Wagnerian in it. We can only say that the music is pleasant, lives up to the complexities of the libretto, and has very original numbers.[33]

Defending Hernandez's musical setting, the review further claims that the audience "should not be very demanding" and requests for understanding that "our art is in its nascent stages," needing the inspiration and ideas of the "good masters" without resorting to "foolish and cynical plagiarism."[34] Indeed, the collaboration between Reyes and Hernandez allowed artists and musicians to exhibit fluency in a broad range of musical styles and genres as an example of Filipino modernity through music-making. Reyes banked on this musical fluency and the familiarity of non-Tagalog theatergoers with European music-theatrical genres in advertising the zarzuela to the broader public. On February 25, 1905, Reyes arranged a special performance of the zarzuela for American audiences at the Teatro Zorrilla in response to the supposed lack of

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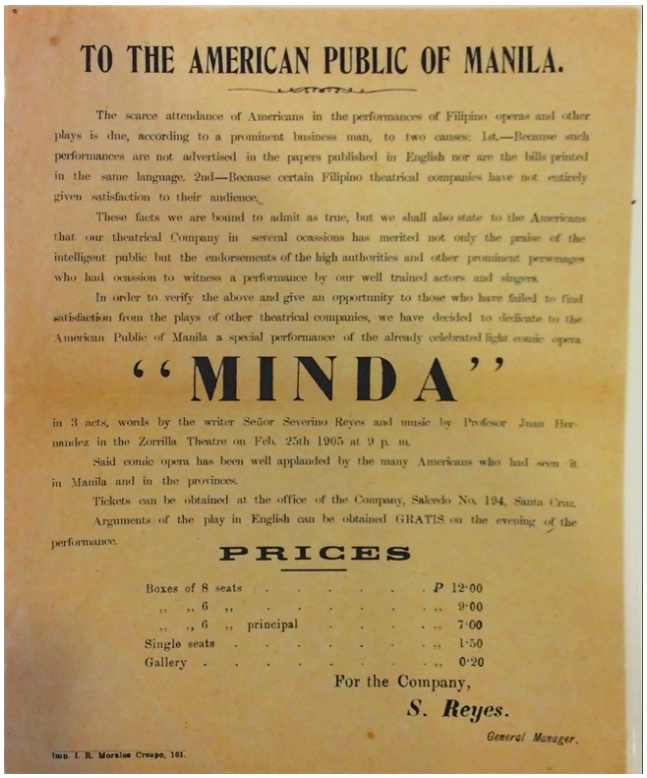
[32] The cake walk, for example, made its way to the Mexican zarzuela *Chin Chun Chan*, which premiered in the same year as *Minda Mora* on April 4, 1904 in Mexico City. See Jacqueline Avila, "*Chin Chun Chan*: The Zarzuela as an Ethnic and Technological Farce" *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History* (February 2018), accessed January 5, 2020, https://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.013.514.

[33] Original text: "Hernandez, ha dado a sus bailables un sabor que, segun algunos que pretenden ser inteligentes en el arte de Rosini, tiene algo de wagnerismo; nosotros solo podemos decir que la música es agradable y que está a la altura de las dificultades del libreto, tiene números muy originales. En esto de originalidad, no debemos ser muy exigentes, debemos comprender que nuestro arte es naciente como tal tiene que servirse algo de las grandes ideas de los buenos maestros. Mientras no se vean plagios bardos y cinicos hay que contemporizar, ya iremos saboreando paulatinamente mayor originalidad a medida que todo se vaya perfeccionado."

[34] "Minda: De Colaboracion," *El Grito del Pueblo*, May 4, 1904.

interest in Filipino music theatrical productions. Dedicating the performance to the "American Public of Manila," Reyes's strategy for marketing the zarzuela was to highlight the performance of "well trained actors and singers" as testimony to the artistry of Filipino theatrical companies (see Figure 4).



TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC OF MANILA.

The scarce attendance of Americans in the performances of Filipino operas and other plays is due, according to a prominent business man, to two causes: 1st.—Because such performances are not advertised in the papers published in English nor are the bills printed in the same language. 2nd—Because certain Filipino theatrical companies have not entirely given satisfaction to their audience.

These facts we are bound to admit as true, but we shall also state to the Americans that our theatrical Company in several ocassions has merited not only the praise of the intelligent public but the endorsements of the high authorities and other prominent personages who had ocassion to witness a performance by our well trained actors and singers.

In order to verify the above and give an opportunity to those who have failed to find satisfaction from the plays of other theatrical companies, we have decided to dedicate to the American Public of Manila a special performance of the already celebrated light comic opera

"MINDA"

in 3 acts, words by the writer Señor Severino Reyes and music by Professor Juan Hernandez in the Zorrilla Theatre on Feb. 25th 1905 at 9 p. m.

Said comic opera has been well applauded by the many Americans who had seen it in Manila and in the provinces.

Tickets can be obtained at the office of the Company, Salcedo No. 194, Santa Cruz.

Arguments of the play in English can be obtained GRATIS on the evening of the performance.

PRICES

Boxes of 8 seats	P 12·00
,, ,, 6 ,,	,, 9·00
,, ,, 6 ,, principal	,, 7·00
Single seats	,, 1·50
Gallery	,, 0·20

For the Company,

S. Reyes.

General Manager.

Imp. I. R. Morales Crespo, 101.

Figure 4. *Minda Mora* playbill[35]

Other reviews were also generally favorable and generous toward the zarzuela's performers. The same *El Grito* article quoted above, for example, commented on the

[35] The playbill is in the Ayer Collection of the Newberry Library, Chicago. The English libretto was translated by P. Reyes (possibly a relative of Severino Reyes) with corrections by a William Barrett and was published around 1905; probably for a performance on February 25, 1905 at the Zorrilla Theater that was promoted especially to the American public. Playbill entitled "To the American Public in Manila" has Severino Reyes, as general manager of the Gran Compañia, encouraging more people to watch *Minda*.

performance of Maria Carpena, who played Minda, and remarked on her voice gaining "more power and sweetness in all the registers" and on how her acting was much improved after her debut in *Walang Sugat*.[36] Other members of the cast include Victor Carrion, who played Felix, Estanislawa San Miguel as Loling, Idelfonsa Alianza as the old maid Tia Tuding, and Nicasio Reyes as the black American character Kempis. Idelfonsa Alianza and Nicasio Reyes, in particular, were singled out as the "true stars of the zarzuela" by the *El Grito* reviewer for their cakewalk performance that delighted the Manila public and occasioned a repeat performance during one production

While the positive reviews of the music and cast highlight Reyes's aim to promote Filipino artistry, a closer reading of the interplay between music and text reveals the complex construction of identities in the zarzuela. In the light and comedic first act, songs that seem trivial or unrelated to the main plot serve to establish the urban and diverse Manila of Reyes's time. The drawing room or *sala* scenes set in the boarding house of Loling's mother, Doña Concha, for example, do not really advance the action on stage but instead provide space for a glimpse into the everyday lives of young men and women, particularly university-age students. These opening scenes also subtly project the Catholic world that Reyes's characters inhabit and where the protagonist Minda negotiates her Muslim identity. In the first act's second scene, Loling is having a music lesson with the Italian character, Señor Capadocia, whose Spanish lines sprinkled with Italian expressions portray him as a caricature of the maestro. Shortly after the music

[36]Maria Carpena was once again paired with the tenor Victorino Carrion, with whom she made her first appearance in *Walang Sugat*. The critic also mentioned how Carpena less-satisfactorily donned the traditional wrap-around skirt ("patadiong"), an everyday wear for the women of the central Visayas region. The term itself had been used interchangeably with similar skirts used by Muslim women (often called *malong*) in the southern Mindanao. Whether Carpena donned the Visayan *patadiong* or a Muslim *malong* is less relevant here (and also hard to determine definitively) but suffice it to say that the presence of a *patadiong* onstage was novel enough that the *El Grito* critic commented on it and, again, points to this search for cultural authenticity I mentioned earlier.

lesson, Felix's fellow university students Juan, Julio, and Andres chant a Latin hymn along with Loling and the religious busybody Tia Tuding. The text is "Veni sancte spiritus/Et emigte (sic) Celitus/Lucis tu erat Deum," a well-known Gregorian mass sequence for Pentecost sung in the first mode.[37] Hernandez re-composed the hymn in D minor set in triple meter and mirrors the opening melodic contour of the original chant.

Another song number from the first act, the "Coro de Mujeres Estudiantes," portrays everyday urban life and the important role of education that constantly recurs in Reyes's oeuvre. The song also reflects the multilingual nature of the zarzuela and mirrors cosmopolitan Manila, whose residents made up the bulk of *Minda Mora*'s audience.[38] Set in the habanera rhythm, the song outlines the advantages of learning the language of the new colonizers as means to furthering local knowledge:

Mabuti'y mag aral
Ng ingles na wika
ng ating matalos
Kanilang salita...

Ating pag aralan
ng ating maalaman
madlang karunungan
Americang bayan

yamang America
ay nag susumikap
tayo'y maga tuto
ng karunungan lahat.

Translation: It is good to learn the English language so that we will understand what they are saying...Let us learn so that we may know [the] collective knowledge [of the] American

[37] The inclusion of this chant is particularly timely given the premiere of the zarzuela during the season leading up to Pentecost in 1904.

[38] Reyes takes up this interest in learning foreign languages in a later zarzuela from 1906, *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, where one of the characters sings of the possibility of needing to learn another language in the event that the Japanese acquires the Philippine islands shortly after having just learned English with the arrival of the Americans.

nation...for America is striving to make all learn and gain knowledge.

Songs that deal explicitly with language learning reappear in Reyes later works, most notably in the 1906 work *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon* mentioned in the preceding chapter. The themes of religion and education are also constant threads in Reyes's zarzuelas and map onto the perceived contrast between the anti-intellectualism under Catholic Spain and the possibilities of social reform Filipino elites envisioned under US colonialism.

The English dialogues preceding this song are intriguing in the way the lines are phonetically spelled out to affect a native Tagalog's way of speaking the new language with some traces of Spanish colloquialisms.[39] Closing the first act is a similar play on language and comedy, when a secret meeting between Felix and Loling set up by Julio has gone awry. Overhearing plans of an intended balcony rendezvous, Doña Concha immediately alerts Tia Tuding and decides to thwart the young men's plans by lowering the tied blankets themselves over the balcony instead of Loling. But instead of Felix, the ladies find the interloper to be Mr. Kempis Nubbian, the lone American character in the zarzuela. Kempis is revealed to be a black American who owns a nearby bar and who had become Tia Tuding's suitor.[40] In the scene, Kempis is accused of being a thief and sings in Spanish with the occasional addition of (Tagalized) English words: "Mi no ladrón, no pega mi/ llama mi señorita/pasa mi strit/bambay mi subi. [I am not a thief, don't hit me...the señorita called me as I was passing by the street...and I climbed up here.]" The chorus then joins Kempis in this lilting act one finale that anticipates the cake walk that Kempis sings with Tuding in the second act.

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[39] For example: "Haló yang guerls? ¿Students of inglish? Yes Mister. In huat Scul du yu stady? Wi ar piupils of di normal scul en wi stey at dormitory Scul. Very well, wi no dat yu ar perfectly well trited der. Yes, certinly wi jev nozing to complein of. Ay am very glad to sey dat yu jev e gud noledch of inglish---Well, gud bay. Gud bay."

[40] The original manuscript of the vocal score marks Kempis's part with "Negro."

While the cake walk (marked "kek wok" in the libretto) in the second act's party scene serves as an example of the practice of incorporating contemporary popular forms in the zarzuela, the song-dance number also establishes Kempis's identity as a black character. In the scene celebrating Loling's birthday, the newly wedded Kempis and Tuding were asked to "sing an American song and dance their dance." What came next was a parody of the cake walk executed by actors Nicasio Reyes and Idelfonsa Alianza. Although the music is missing from the original manuscript, the deliberate use of the cake walk becomes a musical marker for Kempis's blackness. Although there is no clear evidence that the Kempis character was performed in blackface in *Minda Mora*, minstrel shows performed by American soldiers were quite popular in Manila around this time and would have facilitated the circulation of the music-dance genre in the colony. In the duet, Tuding sings how Kempis "knows how to sing, he knows how to dance…a lot of good this Kempis, although his complexion is black." The parody extends to the characterization of Kempis who, along with Tia Tuding, stands in as the comic relief character in the entire zarzuela.

One of the more musically and dramatically rich numbers in the whole zarzuela that acutely underlines the complexity of musical and theatrical representation is Minda's solo in act two, "Ang Dalit ni Minda," when she first meets Felix's friends and sings for them. The "dalit" in the song's title offers different possibilities of meaning. As a local musico-poetic genre, *dalit* was observed as early as the eighteenth century as a form "more solemn and sententious, in the style of what the Greeks and Latins called dithyrambic epic."[41] Although no standard metric structure clearly defines the literary *dalit*, some examples are comprised of mono-rhyming

[41] Lumbera draws from Gaspar de San Agustin's *Compendio del Arte de la Lengua Tagala* (1703). See Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 32, footnote 25.

octosyllabic quatrains that are often associated with Catholic meditative verses and catechisms.[42] Similarly, musicologist D.R.M. Irving traces the origins and practice of dalit to indigenous poetic genres and early vocal performance in the eighteenth century, while Filipino composer Lucrecia Kasilag classifies the dalit as a "mournful plaint" sung in honor of the Virgin Mary.[43]

But the use of the term dalit in the zarzuela is a bit of an anomaly.[44] In the case of Minda's solo, the text does not conform to any particular poetic meter, nor can it be read for any specifically religious connotations. Perhaps dalit, in this particular context, speaks to the affective quality of the song and points to the gravity of Minda's status as a servant in Felix's household while nostalgically looks back to her life in Mindanao. The musical setting enhances this emotionally-charged piece: quick modal shifts and abrupt changes of pace reflect Minda's personal narrative and her account of Muslim life as imagined by Reyes. A closer reading of Minda's solo underlines musical strategies of representation and its exoticizing tendencies. The text of "And Dalit ni Minda" is full of stereotypes of the Moro figure, echoing a familiar image in Western depictions of the "noble savage" (full lyrics in Appendix B). The opening parallel arpeggiations on the piano introduction and the first section refrain signal a nostalgic tone as the heroine sings of her roots in Mindanao (see Example 3).[45]

The graphic description of the Moro "running amok" dominates the following stanza and casts an unsettling mood when Minda's plaintive opening turns violent, reaching its climax musically in the second verse:

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[42] Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 32.

[43] See D.R.M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint*, 142.

[44] Besides Hernandez, the only other instance of *dalit* that I have found in the zarzuela repertoire is in composer Gavino Carluen's work *Ang Larawan ni Doray*. *Dalit* is the composer's labeling and not found in Reyes's scripts.

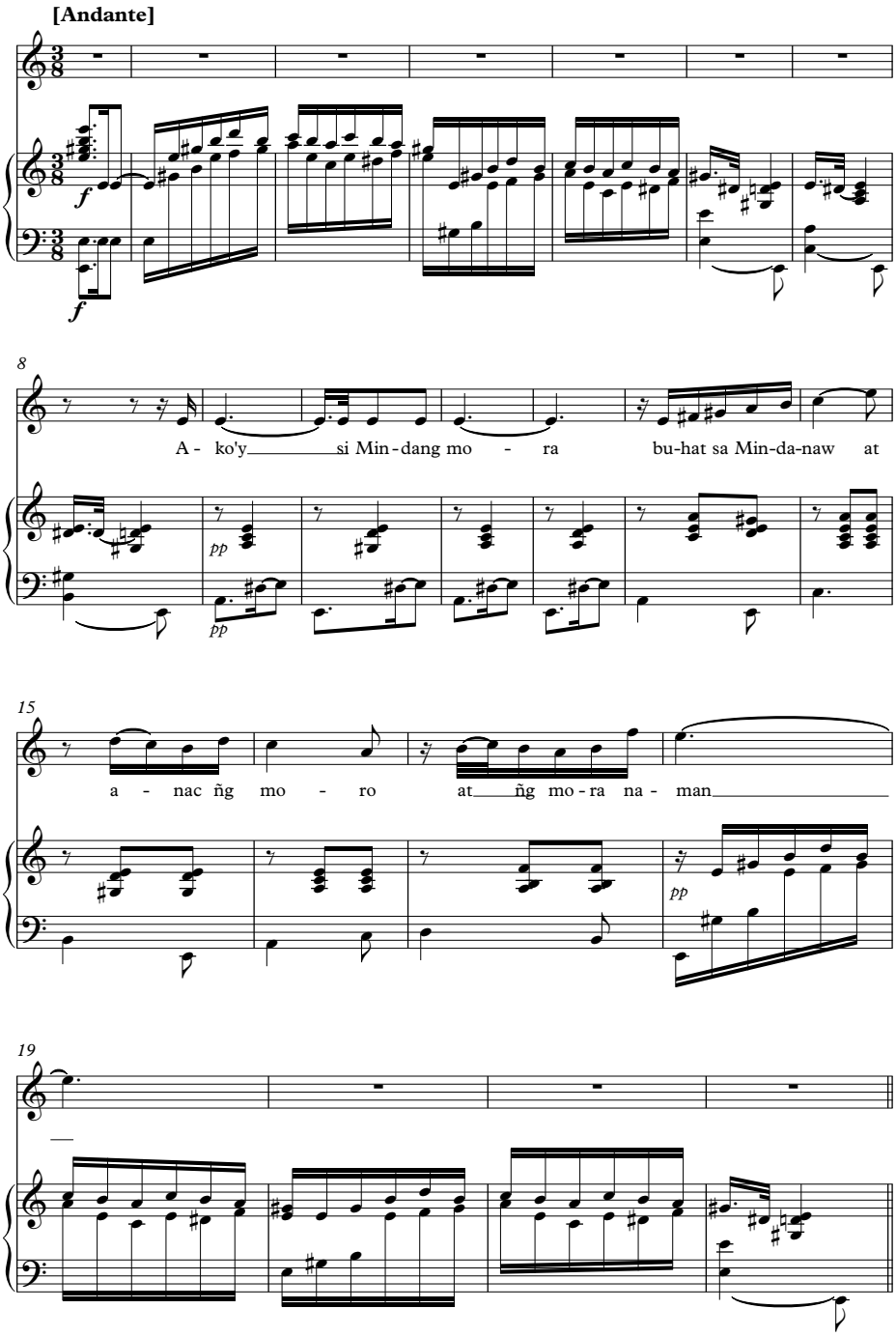
[45] Original music score manuscripts and librettos are held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives' Severino Reyes Collection.

Kaming mga moro kung nanga tutua
kinakagat namin ang aming kapua
at kung nagagalit aming hinihiwa
sa may dakong batok o sa tian kaya

Translation: We moros, when we are happy/We bite our fellow/And when we are angry we cut them/in the back of their neck or in the stomach.

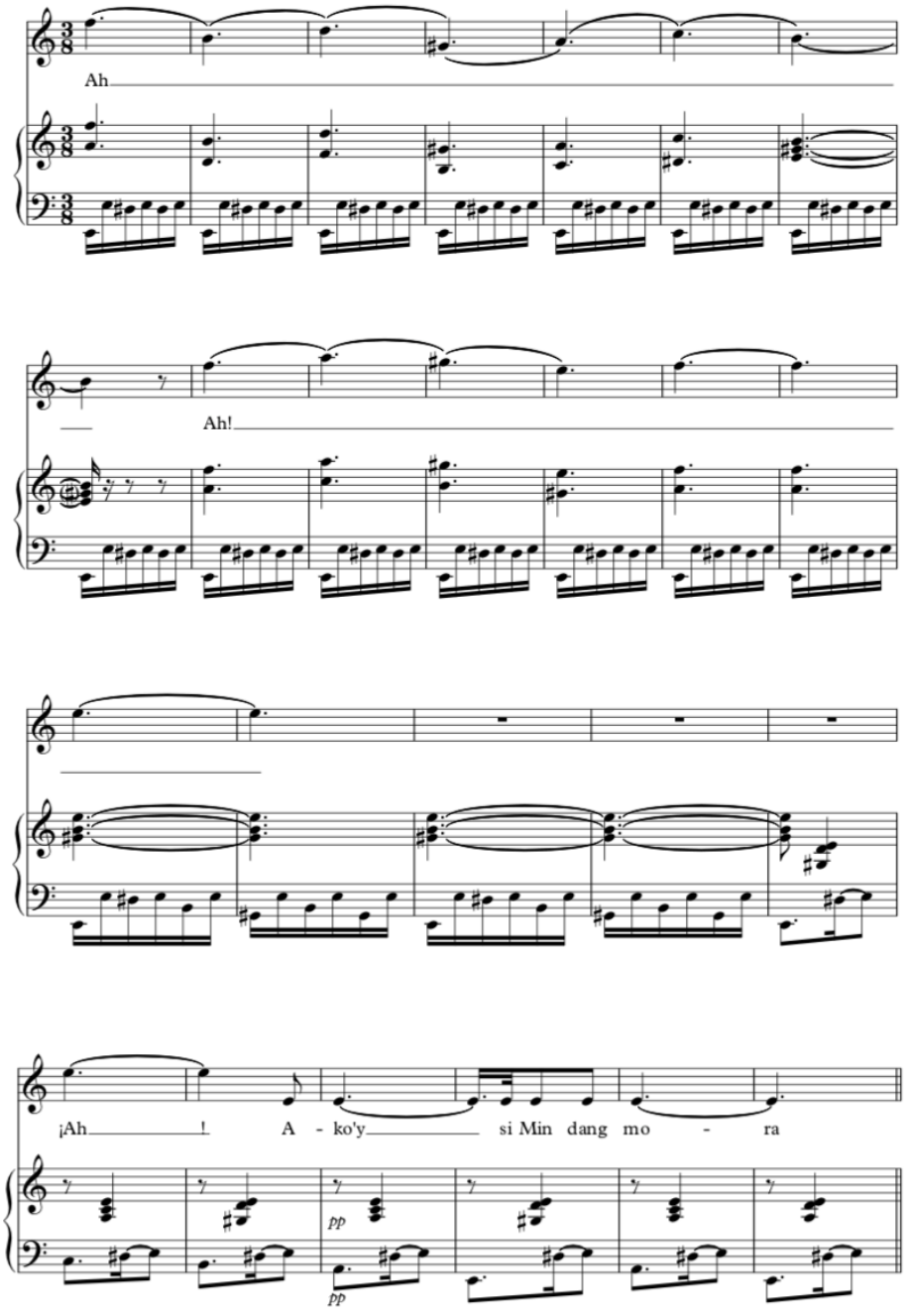
A quick transition to the parallel major brings in the song's second section, where Minda sings of a fictional version of Islamic polyandry. Reyes's reference to polyandry here alludes to the stereotype of the promiscuous feminine or exotic temptress often contrasted with the respectable lady or the domestic sweetheart found in Western operas.[46] As mentioned earlier, however, the characters of Loling and Minda are not necessarily contrasted. Minda's solo, then, could be read as subverting the notion of polygamy as something reserved only for men and seeing the possibility of a polyamorous relationship for women as an acceptable and desirable practice. This interpretation also contrasts strongly with Felix's own internal conflict and in the predicament of being caught between his promised marriage to Loling and fathering a child with Minda. Towards the end of the song's middle section, a soaring transitionary section cycles through and anticipates the modal return of the opening minor refrain as Minda once more sings her state of servitude in Felix's household (see Example 4).

[46] See, for example, Susan McClary, "Structures of Identity and Difference in *Carmen*," in *The Work of Opera: Genre, Nationhood, and Sexual Difference,* eds. Richard Dellamora and Daniel Fischlin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 115-130.



Translation of the opening verse:
I am Minda, the mora/ From Mindanao/Daughter of a moro and a mora…

Example 3. "Dalit ni Minda," measures 1-22



Example 4. “Dalit ni Minda,” measures 82-106

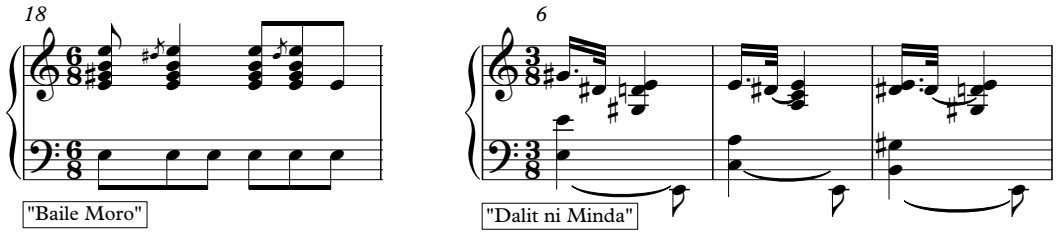
Minda's solo features several key characteristics that musicologists who explore the phenomenon of musical exoticism in Western art music have tagged as signifiers of an Orientalized, often Arabic, "other": 1) ostinato rhythms; 2) sliding chromaticisms; 3) harmonic minor inflections; and 4) melismas on the "ah!" syllable.[47] With this set of musical vocabulary, Hernandez's score does not incorporate any discernable sounds that echo the music of the Moro peoples of Mindanao. Rather, these musical devices generically mark Minda as someone different from the other characters in her fictional sound world and add a sense of mystery to her portrayal. Along with the caricatured and heavily stereotyped Moro figure in the song's text, these compositional devices would have registered Minda's "foreignness" to contemporary audiences, especially those already familiar with Western operatic and zarzuela repertoire that uses similar techniques.

Other examples show how Hernandez's musical language evokes the mysterious and the fantastic, especially in characterizing Reyes's women protagonists. Two instrumental dance numbers are performed as Felix's dreams depicting Loling and Minda. Labeled as "Baile Fantastico de la Sultana del Pasig" ("Baile de ninfas del Pasig" in Reyes's libretto), Loling's dance-dream sequence shows hints of pentatonicism, casting Loling farther "east" and into the sound world of an ambiguous Asia. The dance's title also suggests the transformation of Loling into a "sultana" in Felix's imagination and alludes to an amalgamation of the two women brought about by Felix's desire for both. This transformation is effectively set-up by the scene that immediately precedes the dance sequence, where Minda lulls Felix to sleep. Moreover, the title's reference in the libretto to the nymphs of Pasig river adds to the exoticized imagery as

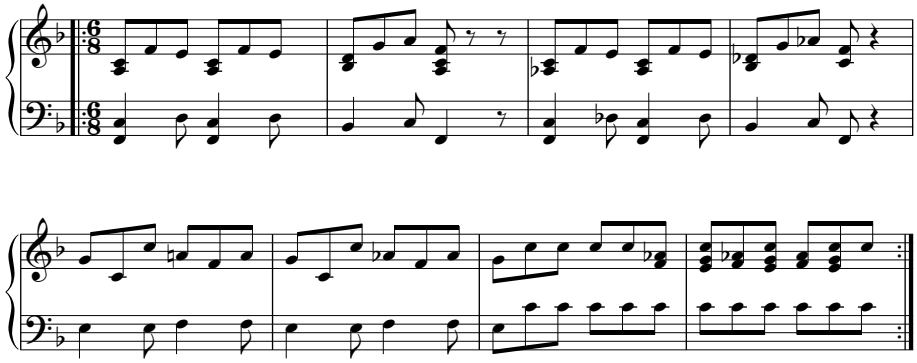
[47] Derek Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," *The Music Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (1998): 327. See also Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Reyes evokes the river locale within the vicinity of Manila that had been a source of legends in early twentieth century Tagalog folklore and literature.

The "Baile Moro" from act three, on the other hand, serves as Felix's dream sequence portraying Minda. Harmonic dissonances offset the lilting 6/8 rhythmic pattern of the dance, which is reminiscent of the *tarantella* with its faster presto section towards the end. The dance is structured as a rounded binary, with the first section in A minor abruptly switching to F major in the B part. The minor key in the A section also echoes the tone and mood of "Dalit ni Minda" from act two, which is further referenced in a short motif at measure 18 (see Example 5a). In the B part, quick changes between major and minor create a jarring effect that leads up to the fast and frenzied final presto section (see Example 5b). In the libretto, Minda's dance sequence is labeled as "El gran baile fantastic de la Sultana de Mindanao y hadas moras" and indicates the hurried exit of the "moro fairies" attending the Sultana Minda in Felix's dream. These musical devices further enhance the process of othering already apparent in the text and the staging of the drama, and point to the musical exoticism potentially heard by its contemporary audience.



Example 5a. Motivic quotation in "Baile Moro"



Example 5b. B section of "Baile Moro"

Strategies of representation

The use of exoticist musical language in *Minda Mora* echoes what musicologist Leonora Saavedra identifies as "strategies of representation." In her study, Saavedra points to Latin American composers such as Ernesto Elorduy, who utilized compositional strategies that echo European techniques in creating stereotyped characters. She identifies Elorduy's "Arabism" as possibly influenced by the French Orientalism of composers such as Hector Berlioz, Felicien David, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel, as well as the *alhambrismo* of Spanish composers like Isaac Albéniz, who exoticized Spain's "internal others" (i.e. gypsies and Moors). Saavedra argues how composers like Elorduy, who, as a white Mexican in a formerly colonized society, worked through exoticist representations to "establish a particular national, personal, and artistic identity…both in themselves and as historical agents."[48] Although it is difficult to determine if Hernandez had any direct access to scores of European exoticist works (or if he did, which specific ones), the composer's training under the Italian Santino Loppa would have exposed him to works by composers such as Verdi and Puccini, whose operas *Aida* and *Madama Butterfly*

[48] Leonora Saavedra, "Spanish Moors and Turkish Captives in Fin de Siècle Mexico: Exoticism as Strategy," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 4 (2012): 261.

were already familiar to Manila audiences at that time. Furthermore, the zarzuela *La reina mora* by José Serrano (premiered in 1903) also features a Muslim heroine and echoes musical devices of *alhambrismo*. Hernandez also continued using similar compositional strategies in later songs, including "Amad-ha" (subtitled "Cancion Morisca") from Hermoneges Ilagan's zarzuela *Mutya ng Silanganan* (*Muse of the East*) and the Spanish song "Bella Mora" (subtitled as "Foxtrot Oriental") set to a text written by Manuel X. Burgos Jr.[49]

Another comparable example of a theatrical representation of Moros comes from the US musical stage—George Ade and Alfred Wathall's satire *Sultan of Sulu* from 1902, which satirizes the US colonial government's civilizing mission in the Philippines. The operetta is replete with Ade's biting criticisms of President McKinley's ideology of "benevolent assimilation." Musical numbers such as the soldiers' chorus "Hike" and the American schoolteachers' "From the Land of the Cerebellum" are sung by caricatures of colonial agents tasked to subjugate Filipino bodies and minds. In "Hike," the chorus of soldiers sings about their desire to assimilate while shooting at their "brown brother." "From the Land of the Cerebellum" is subtler in its portrayal of the prim but not altogether proper "schoolmarm," whose main mission in the islands is to teach "[a]ll that's known to a girl of twenty…" and to flirt "for a little while." Ade extends the satire by comically portraying the transformation of the Sultan Ki-ram, a direct reference to the real-life Sultan Kiram of Sulu, into a US colonial agent. After being convinced to become a salaried governor, Ki-ram begins to enjoy various colonial imports, not the least of which are the cocktail drinks he consumes liberally after learning that he must give

[49] Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any libretto or music scores for the zarzuela *Mutya ng Silangan*. Manuel X. Burgos Jr. was also the son of Reyes's compatriot, Manuel Xerex Burgos, discussed in the previous chapter.

up his eight wives in order to keep his position. Near the beginning of the second act, the hung-over sultan sings "R-E-M-O-R-S-E," lamenting the after-effects of his over-indulgence:

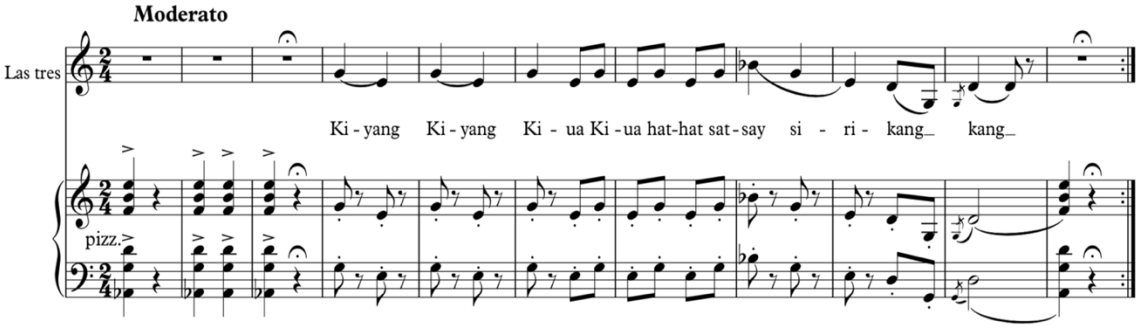
But now I'm feeling mighty blue—
Three cheers for the W.C.T.U!
R-E-M-O-R-S-E!
Those dry Martinis did the work for me

The mocking salute towards the Women's Christian Temperance Union is barely decipherable but inventive nonetheless, as it injects the topicality of civic and social reform movements that were sweeping the US at this point. At the conclusion of the song, Ki-ram remarks on how "…the constitution, the cocktail, and the katzenjammer follow the flag," a witty allusion to what Ade believed to be the twisted logic of US imperialism. Nevertheless, the satire inevitably reverted to caricaturing the Moro figure, reinforcing the negative opinions about the Muslims in southern Philippines among the American public and undermining Ade's critique of US colonialism in the Philippines.

Similar strategies of musical "othering" can be found in other Tagalog works by Reyes, most notably in *Ang Kalupi* (1902) and *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon* (1906) discussed in the preceding chapter.[50] In both examples, the stage representation of the Japanese reinforce stereotypes that ran parallel to similar works with Japanese characters. In *Ang Kalupi*, Reyes portrayed Japanese women working as entertainers in the suburbs of Manila. In the zarzuela, as the men visit the Japanese women, their Filipina spouses discover them after a night of carousing. The musical numbers marked as "Canto Chino" and "Gran baile chino/japones" from scene five in the original typescript reflect the racial caricaturing and exoticism inherent in the

[50] The Philippines was sold by Spain to the US at the end of Spanish-American War in late 1898 to the tune of $20 million.

work. The reference to Chinese also underlines the racializing dialogues of the men, one of whom attempts to speak to the Japanese women in Chinese, commenting that "they are the same."[51] Fulgencio Tolentino's score, although making no confused reference to the Chinese, parallels this racial caricaturing with pentatonicisms and staccato ostinatos paired with gibberish lyrics in the "Canto y baile Japonés" (see Example 6).



Example 6. Canto y baile Japonés, mm. 1-11

Samson-Lauterwald comments on how one would expect further "ethnic identification" aside from its slight pentatonicisms in a song entitled "Canto y Baile Japonés." This analysis points to listeners' insistent expectation of some form of "authenticity" in interpreting works that ultimately function as imagined racial representations iterated earlier.[52]

With *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, Reyes was tapping into a recent hot-button issue circulating among the local presses on the possibility of the US turning over its colony to the Japanese government, whose recent victory in the Russo-Japanese war strengthened its position as a global power in the Pacific region. A series of articles in the April to June 1906 issues of *El*

[51] In the original Tagalog, the character Antonio says: "Katulad lang eh" ("That's the same").

[52]See Samson-Lauterwald, *Music in the Zarzuelas of Severino Reyes* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2016), 28. Samson-Lauterwald also makes the slight error of mistaking the succeeding waltz duet by the characters Remedios and Rosario (No. 6 in the score) as the "canto" section of Canto y baile Japonés.

Renacimiento was dedicated to the question of "La venta de Filipinas," giving Reyes the subject matter for his new music-theatrical commentary. To Reyes's credit, the zarzuela's theme indeed so piqued the interest of the theatergoing public of Manila that the Teatro Zorrilla, according to *The Manila Times*, was a "bumper house" where "[s]tanding room was at a premium."[53] The perceived strongman position of Japan, however, is sidestepped by *La venta*'s caricatures of geishas and Japanese women.

Composed by José Estella, the score uses musical exoticism to portray the image of the Japanese geisha. The "Canto geisha" from the first act, for example, reverts to pentatonicisms as the geisha character sings gibberish text. The second act's comic love duet, "Duo Ynong y Auang," is another example where the geisha Auang and the Tagalog Ynong describe each other's "distinctive" physical features. Ynong remarks on Auang's "slanted eyes" ("pinkit ng mata") and her red and narrow lips. The song then turns to Auang's observations on how Ynong's short frame befits his penchant for dancing. Similarly, the succeeding "Aria de Concha" is a pensive reflection of the life of a Japanese woman, as Concha sings of the great freedom she experiences in her romantic relationships. The rest of the song shifts into a waltz, a genre for which Estella was known, and the text begins to describe how Japanese women "jump unceasingly when happy, and how they walk about and sway their hips in the streets whenever they are not at ease."[54] At this point, any reference to imagined Japanese colonizers are channeled through images of Japanese women working as prostitutes in Manila.

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[53] "Venta de Filipinas al Japon," *The Manila Times*, July 9, 1906.

[54] Original text: "¡Ah! Pag kami ay nalugod/at cusang nagagalac/kami nalungdag/hangan sa mapagod
ah, ah/kami di malagay/at pasuray suray/at kendeng ng kendeng/tauagin ingkang ingkang
sa manga langsangan/sa langsangan."

Racial characterizations of the Japanese in musical theater stages have received much attention in recent scholarship and are seen as part of the larger *Japonisme* craze that affected Europe and its consumer culture in the latter half of the nineteenth century. David George Jr., for example, traces the influence of *Japonisme* on the zarzuela stages of Spain at the hands of artists and writers who traveled between cosmopolitan centers like Madrid, Barcelona, and Paris, and through the collection of Japanese arts and products featured at the 1888 Barcelona Universal Exposition.[55] Reyes's portrayal of Japanese characters, on the other hand, was influenced by the changing demographics of Manila brought by emerging commercial industries that transformed the port city into an attractive destination for laborers from across Asia. At the turn of the twentieth century, a large influx of Japanese nationals (mostly male) came to fill the need for skilled and unskilled labors in the new American colony. As Terami-Wada points out, the arrival of businessmen and human-traffickers around 1900 brought with it Japanese women, who worked in some thirty-five brothels in Manila alone.[56] The stigma of prostitution, however, loomed heavy over the Japanese population at large in the Philippines, where even "housewives of those in the 'legitimate businesses' were often also regarded as prostitutes by the Filipinos and Chinese whenever they ventured out of their residences."[57] Such stereotypes were further reinforced in *Ang Kalupi* and in *La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*, although Reyes, in another one of his moralizing moments, also defends the presence of the Japanese in Manila through one of the Filipina characters, Juana, who insists that the Japanese dancers are like many other traders

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[55] David George Jr., "'Playing Japanese' in Fin-de-siècle Zarzuela," in *Intersections of Race, Class, Gender, and Nation in Fin-de-siècle Spanish Literature and Culture*, eds. Jennifer Smith and Lisan Nalbone (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 124.

[56] Terami-Wada, "Karayuki San of Manila: 1890-1920," *Philippine Studies* 34, no. 3 (1986), 294.

[57] Terami-Wada, "Karayuki San of Manila: 1890-1920," 308.

and laborers trying to earn a living wherever they can.[58] At the close of the zarzuela, the women disguise themselves as Japanese entertainers and eventually cure the men of their vices.

It is crucial to note, however, how the examples from *Ang Kalupi* and *La Venta* differ from those found in *Minda Mora* in that the characterization of the "foreignness" of the Japanese is comedic compared to the portrayal of Minda as a serious character. The characterization of Minda as learned and virtuous brings home Reyes's formulation of a modern Filipino identity to which both Christians and Muslims could aspire. But, as outlined above, such idealizations were also coupled with familiar tropes of primitivism and cultural inferiority that subtly reinforce constructions of racial difference as an alienating and exoticizing force. As Saavedra carefully outlines, musical exoticism in colonial contexts are trickier to disentangle than those in Western contexts, especially as nationalist movements relied more on cultural practices in responding to outside influence. In this reconfiguration, Saavedra posits how composers belonging to colonized societies

> appropriated a European strategy of representation that helped them establish a symbolic asymmetry of power, allowing them to manipulate, to dress and undress, to speak for and to decide the fate of those represented: We represent because we can, and if we can represent, we can control, at least symbolically.[59]

This capacity to represent can be found at work in *Minda Mora* and served as an opportunity for its playwright and composer to project their own ideas about modern Filipino society, albeit sometimes at the expense of minority groups within the colonial borders of the Philippines.

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[58] Original Tagalog text: "…hindi natin maiaalis na sila'y mangagsiparito, sila'y gaya rin naman ng mga lakong kalakal, na ang kanilang tinda ay inihahanap ng mabuting tiange, upang ding mabili, ng mainam na halaga, na sa kanilang baya'y wala ng makitungo…dito sa ibabaw ng lupa ay sari-sari ang ikinabubuhay ng mga tao, may sa lalamunan may sa bibig, may sa kamay…may sa paa…dahil mainam sumayaw."

[59] Saavedra, "Spanish Moors and Turkish Captives," 261.

In reading *Minda Mora* alongside realities of the time, it is difficult not to see the parallel "othering" at work in the form of physical violence in colonial Philippines. As the civilian government led by US colonial officials and Filipino elites laid its foundations in the north and central regions, militarization and violent campaigns in the south forced Mindanao's inclusion within the national yet colonized borders of the Philippine archipelago. The Bud Dajo and Bud Bagsak massacres of 1906 and 1913, in particular, remain among the most brutal casualties of the colonial encounter with the Moro peoples, partially stemming from the abolition of slave raiding practices imposed by the US colonial state. Such discriminatory labels as the "suicidal Mohammedan" and the use of the language of "savagery" and "barbarism" were the type of rhetoric that justified such colonial violence.[60] Moreover, it is hard not to see the objectification of the Muslim "other," one that sits closer to "home," by a Tagalog subjective self that is increasingly becoming more dominant within the landscape of Filipino nationalist rhetoric of the time. The forceful subjugation of Muslims in the south, therefore, worked towards the consolidation of the colonial state at the same time as it aligned with aspirations for a unifying Filipino national and cultural identity as imagined in the zarzuela.

Reread as such, *Minda Mora* serves as a striking example of how Tagalog zarzuelas demonstrate the relationship between music and identity, and how they defy neat and tidy definitions of cultural nationalism that have long been associated with the repertoire. By examining both the possibilities and limitations of the zarzuela as a localized form of cultural expression, what emerges is the duality of this genre to critique notions of racial supremacy at

[60] See Joshua Gedacht, "Mohammedan Religion Made It Necessary to Fire: Massacres on the American Imperial Frontier from South Dakota to the Southern Philippines," in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy, et al. (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 398.

the same time as it constructs new social hierarchies through musical and theatrical representation.

Chapter Three

The Samahang Gabriel and the Myth of the "Decline" of the Tagalog Zarzuelas

In March 1932, an article in Manila's Spanish-language newspaper *La Vanguardia* announced the decline of the zarzuela and waxed nostalgic about the "golden age" of Tagalog theater, when coliseums were filled to capacity "as in 1902 and in 1904."[1] Proclaiming Severino Reyes as the "main 'hero' of the glorious past of the Tagalog theater," the article took stock of the playwright's popular works alongside famous artists of the first decades of the twentieth century.[2] The author argued further that the decreasing popularity of the zarzuela was due to factors including the lack of professionalism and diminished competency of the artists, authors, and composers. More tellingly, the article pointed to the general lack of interest in zarzuelas among the local Tagalog audience. The author claimed that former patrons of the zarzuela had diverted their attention to newer forms of entertainment like the cinema and the "profane" and "good for nothing" vaudeville.[3] The narrative of the decline of the Tagalog zarzuelas in Manila and other urban centers, however, obscures the fact that outside the bigger theaters and venues in Manila, zarzuelas continued to be performed and were instrumental in the formation of a local popular entertainment industry in the later decades of the US colonial period.

Contrary to the account of zarzuela's decline, this chapter examines how the Tagalog zarzuela from the late 1920s and through the '30s continued to be vibrant amidst changes in the

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[1] "El Declinar del Teatro Nativo," *La Vanguardia*, March 5, 1932.

[2] The article also mentioned contemporary authors Preciosa Palma, Julian Balmaseda, Jose Ma. Rivera, Servando de los Angeles, Patricio Mariano, Florentino Ballecer, and Hermogenes Ilagan.

[3] "mequetrefe vodavi" in the original Spanish text.

country's social and cultural landscape. Through a survey of the repertoire of the Malaking Samahan Sarsuela at Opereta Gabriel (Grand Company of Zarzuela and Operetta Gabriel), or Samahang Gabriel, this chapter revises the oft-repeated account that zarzuelas were displaced by the advent of vaudeville (local variants: *vodavil*, *bodabil*) and film as popular mass entertainment. This may have been partially true in the urban and commercial center of Manila, but the activities and rich repertoire of the Samahang Gabriel attest to the continued performance of the Tagalog zarzuela despite claims of its decline.

The bulk of the Samahang Gabriel's repertoire can be found in the Manlapaz Collection of zarzuela librettos and scores, an archive of works housed at the Pardo de Tavera Special Collections at the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. Consisting of about seventy titles, the Manlapaz Collection is a rich resource of Tagalog zarzuelas, operettas, plays, and comedias from 1890 to about 1941. The majority of the works in the collection are zarzuelas (alternatively labeled as *operetas*), and about twenty-six titles can be attributed to the Samahang Gabriel. It is important to note here how playwrights and companies began to use the Tagalog "sarsuwela" or "sarsuela" alongside the term "opereta" (Tagalog variant of operetta). The operetas in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire are somewhat similar to the Western operetta repertoire of the early twentieth century but with more melodramatic content alongside comic elements. In the case of the Samahang Gabriel, there seems to be no clear distinction between zarzuela and *opereta*, and both terms are used interchangeably to denote the same musical theater practice. The company, which was active from around the mid-1920s up until the onset of the Second World War in the Pacific, was one of the most prolific Tagalog zarzuela companies in the history of the genre in the Philippines, yet its history remains marginal in existing literature. The collection's materials associated with the Samahang Gabriel represent a

substantial body of work that has never been studied previously and fill an important gap in the literature on zarzuela repertoire after Reyes.

A closer study of how the zarzuelas of the 1920s and '30s reflected the various social and cultural changes in the later years of US colonization in the Philippines is also long overdue. These changes are evident in the textual and musical content of the Tagalog zarzuelas in the collection and point to a shift in the makeup of the audience for the new repertoire. The Samahang Gabriel (along with other existing companies of this period) produced and performed zarzuelas that cater more exclusively to the working classes of Manila and even moreso to the lower classes of the rural provincial regions. The later repertoire, therefore, highlights the transformation of the Tagalog zarzuela from an "elevated" genre as envisioned by its early proponents—mostly Filipino elites—to a popular form of entertainment created by a laboring class of artists for a more local and class-specific audience.

Pushing against the simplistic account of Americanization of the Filipinos through English language and education, this chapter elaborates on these latter decades as a pivotal moment in the history of the zarzuela's role in the formation of a Tagalog (and later Filipino) popular entertainment in the Philippines. During this period, new genres in Tagalog literature and poetry not only grew exponentially but also influenced the librettos of the later zarzuela repertoire. The thematic content of the new repertoire of zarzuelas overwhelmingly revolves around the connections and tensions between urban and rural life reflected through inter-class relations. Whereas the zarzuela repertoire of the first decade of the twentieth century focused on Manila and its urban and cosmopolitan modernity, the zarzuelas of the latter decades became more focused on family dramas that explore socio-economic difference and domestic hardships alongside aspirational stories of upward mobility through education and migrant labor. In these

stories, the rural and provincial landscape outside of Manila provides a nostalgic contrast to images of the bustling and industrializing city while exposing the current anxieties over perceived encroachments of the foreign and the modern onto traditional Filipino values. This shift in content is particularly significant given that the zarzuela companies of the latter decades, including the Samahang Gabriel, spread out to the surrounding Tagalog provinces to find new audiences outside of the Manila's theatrical scene.

Sonically, the upsurge of global popular dance music in the Philippines (particularly ragtime and other related genres often referred to in contemporary rhetoric as "jazz") played a significant role in the scores of the new zarzuelas, which often contradicted contemporary notions of musical nationalism that focused on the creation of academic or art music utilizing materials borrowed from pre-existing local music and perceived folk song traditions. Although the use of globally circulating genres in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (i.e. waltzes, tangos, and operatic arias, to name a few) was nothing new for the Tagalog zarzuela, the circulation of Tin Pan Alley repertoire and its reception as a specifically US cultural import was a source of contention among contemporary critics, who found this type of popular music aesthetically lacking and formulaic. The integration of popular genres in the zarzuela scores, however, provides a striking contrast to these criticisms. Through a closer study of key Samahang Gabriel repertoire and its music, I argue that the zarzuelas of the later decades not only represent a crucial stage in the standardization of writing music for the Tagalog theatrical stage, but they also illustrate how the use of jazz and other popular genres paralleled an often-ambivalent and playful reflection on modernity and foreign cultural influences similarly found in the zarzuelas' texts.

The narrative of "decline"

The account of the Tagalog zarzuela's decline often focused on the rising popularity of vaudeville and film in the 1920s and through the '30s.[4] Cultural historian Doreen Fernandez points to this decline and cites the "new entertainment" of vaudeville and films as part of a larger history of Americanization among Filipinos.[5] Arguing that these new forms of entertainment created a significant deterrent to the production of new theatrical works in the Tagalog language, Fernandez writes how "the coming artists, the future intellectuals, the writers who could have propelled the sarswela towards contemporary ideas and issues, were writing in English, and not in the vernaculars, not in the language of the sarswela."[6] Fernandez asserts that the Americanization of the Philippines through the rise of the English language among the educated elite and the influx of US popular music became the main contributors to the zarzuela's decline. The Samahang Gabriel's repertoire, however, challenges this view. As will be elaborated further below, the new repertoire benefited from an astounding rise of popular fiction serialized in Tagalog newspapers and magazines in the 1920s and '30s.[7] The Samahang Gabriel used this literature and adapted it for the zarzuela stage. Alongside the surge in popularity of Tagalog fiction came the reemergence of poetry in Tagalog, which had found its way into various spoken and performative forms, including in zarzuela scripts. A more nuanced history of the later development of the zarzuela takes into account its connections to other genres of popular

[4] See Nicanor Tiongson, "A Short History of the Philippine Sarsuwela," 149–86; Doreen Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 320–43.

[5] On the rise of Filipino vaudeville artists, Fernandez asserts how the "…Filipino versions of Fred Astaire (Bayani Casimiro), Charlie Chaplin (Canuplin), Sophie Tucker (Katy de la Cruz), and later Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, etc., was fully as responsible for the Americanization of the Filipino as were the English language and the educational system." See Doreen G. Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 335.

[6] Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 337.

[7] See Patricia May B. Jurilla, *Bibliography of Filipino Novels, 1901-2000* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2010), 8.

entertainment in the Philippines and further contradicts the simplistic narrative of the zarzuela's early decline.

The vaudeville stage, particularly in Manila, became popular in the 1920s but had a longer history in the colonial archipelago. Its beginnings as a foreign import and its early ties to US military entertainment at the turn of the twentieth century fueled vaudeville's reputation as a primarily US cultural practice that rarely reflected contemporary Philippine society.[8] For Manila's moralists and staunch nationalists, vaudeville's reputation as peddling in vulgarity also likely fueled the devaluation of any new Tagalog zarzuelas for their affinity to popular music and culture of this period, thus lumping together all forms of popular entertainment. Though by the 1920s, Filipino performers and foreign-born entertainers together offered an eclectic program of song and dance numbers not restricted to US popular music and 1920s jazz. Peter Keppy cites, for example, Cebu-born Luis Borromeo (also known as Borromeo Lou), who referred to his early shows not so much as a vaudeville but rather as a "Review of the classical Jazz Music, Operatic and Classical Song," which also included songs in Tagalog and other Philippine languages.[9]

Similarly, the popular dance genres and US novelty songs were not only heard on the vaudeville stages of Manila but also populated the zarzuela scores of the later decades. As the music examples later in this chapter illustrate, early jazz became a kind of musical currency in the zarzuela stages as much as it did in the vaudeville circuit. The "eclecticism" found in the vaudeville programming of Borromeo Lou also paralleled that of the new zarzuela composers'

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[8] Tiongson, ed., "American Colonial and Contemporary Tradition," in *CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art: Philippine Theater Philippine Theater* volume 7 (Manila: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1994), 26.

[9] Peter Keppy, "Southeast Asia in the Age of Jazz: Locating Popular Culture in the Colonial Philippines and Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 3 (October 2013): 450-451. See also Frederick J. Schenker, "Empire of Syncopation: Music, Race, and Labor in Colonial Asia's Jazz Age" (PhD diss., The University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2016), 211-212.

use of by now standard light opera/operetta fare such as arias, waltzes, and tangos alongside Hispano-Filipino dance genres such as the jota, habanera, and the kundiman in their zarzuela scores. In other words, the vaudeville and zarzuela stages' soundscapes could not have greatly differed from each other; rather, it is more accurate to characterize both as echoing the contemporary listening practices of a variety of audiences that cut across race, nationality, and class. This trajectory in the Tagalog zarzuela's later development has not been acknowledged fully in histories of the genre, and the historiography could have very well contributed to the persistent narrative of the zarzuela's early decline. Moreover, the zarzuelas continued to produce musical talent and material for the emerging local recording industry. Examples of early recordings done by local artists reveal how certain songs have become popular beyond the zarzuela scores. This connection between the theatrical stage and sound recordings also argues for the Tagalog zarzuela's centrality in the broader landscape of popular culture of the period.

The popularity of film is another oft-cited reason for the zarzuela's decline in the Philippines.[10] The introduction of sound film to local theaters and the building of new cinema houses were seen as a competing threat to Tagalog zarzuelas.[11] Film scholar Nick Deocampo argues for early cinema's closer intersection with the longer history of zarzuela in the Philippines. In particular, Deocampo points to how early film productions relied heavily on existing zarzuela companies for content and personnel in the 1910s and early '20s. The Molina-Benito Zarzuela Company, for example, collaborated with producers Edward Meyer Gross

[10] See Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 320–43; 336.

[11] Dan Doeppers points to the increase of theaters in the Philippines operating sound film projectors from sixty theaters in the end of 1930 to about 140 movie theaters by 1936. The first locally produced sound films were *Ang Aswang* (The Monster) and *Punyal na Ginto* (Gold Dagger) shown in 1933. See Daniel F. Doeppers, "Metropolitan Manila in the Great Depression: Crisis for Whom?," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50, no. 3 (1991): 518.

(husband of the local zarzuela actor Titay Molina) and Harry Brown on a film depicting the life and heroism of Jose Rizal. Reyes's Gran Compañia, furthermore, re-performed *Walang Sugat* for Albert Yearsley's 1912 film, becoming one of the first zarzuela productions adapted for the screen in its entirety.[12] The Spanish zarzuela companies in Manila also provided support for the fledgling film industry as early cinematographs were presented in between programs that featured performances of Spanish zarzuelas.[13] Later on, film also relied on the star power of experienced stage actors to attract cinema audiences already familiar with the artists.

A variety of other causes have been cited as evidence for the zarzuela's decline. Historians E. Arsenio and Magdalena Manuel point to a drop in zarzuela productions in the early part of the 1920s, when writers observed the increasing cost of mounting productions and questioned the profitability of continued performances.[14] An article published in the serial *Taliba* in 1921, for example, enumerates in detail the sharp rise in zarzuela production costs, including rental for theater venues, orchestra fees, rates for touring productions in the provinces, and the rise in fees "demanded" by the artists.[15] Written by a Jose A. del Prado (possibly an impresario for zarzuela productions), the article comments on the struggling business of the zarzuelas and how some authors have become bankrupt or are now drowning in debt. Similarly, Severino Reyes's decision to switch to writing for and editing the *Liwayway* magazine in 1922 was largely due to his inability to produce zarzuelas.[16]

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[12] Nick Deocampo, *Cine: Spanish Influences on Early Cinema in the Philippines* (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Anvil Publishing, 2017), 235.

[13] Decoampo, *Cine: Spanish Influences on Early Cinema in the Philippines*, 128-131.

[14] Esperidion Arsenio Manuel and Magdalena Avenir Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography, vol. 4*, 225.

[15] Quoted in Manuel and Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography vol. 4*, 225.

[16] Manuel and Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography*, 225.

The decade of the 1920s, however, proved to be a productive time for the creation of new works in Tagalog and the emergence of younger artists and musicians. The debut of the artist Atang de la Rama in the zarzuela and the film version of *Dalagang Bukid* (Country Maiden, 1919) was a pivotal moment in the renewal of the Tagalog stage in the late 1910s and accounts for the new momentum that the genre enjoyed in the following decades. As will be discussed in more detail in the succeeding chapter, de la Rama's performance in *Dalagang Bukid* also launched a long career for the artist, which spanned across different performing stages and media platforms, including vaudeville, film, and radio alongside her career as an author and theater producer. Her zarzuelas, done in collaboration with longtime playwrights and company directors Hermogenes Ilagan and Florentino Ballecer and with the younger writer Servando de los Angeles, remain among the most memorable productions of the 1920s.[17]

How, then, do we account for this continued performance of the Tagalog zarzuela amidst the gaining popularity of other forms of entertainment? Perhaps it is more accurate to represent the zarzuela's later development not so much as a decline but rather a shift in terms of its main contributors, the spaces where zarzuelas were performed, and the audiences for the new repertoire. As detailed in the first chapter, the Tagalog zarzuela's first advocates such as Severino Reyes envisioned it as a vehicle for moral and cultural uplift of the working-class audiences and for Manila's educated elite to craft a modern Filipino identity.[18] The playwrights of Reyes's ilk were, in effect, the very wealthy patrons who bankrolled the stage productions in the larger theater venues in Manila or, at the very least, had the social capital and networks to

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[17] Titles by Servando de los Angeles include *Alamat ng Nayon*, *Ararong Guinto*, and *Ang Kiri*; while Florentino Ballecer's are *Sundalong Mantika*, *Katubusan ng Puso*, and *Akibat*. Chapter four will discuss in further detail de la Rama's rise as a popular zarzuela artist in the 1920s.

[18] Doreen Fernandez defines popular culture as something created by wealthy patrons in a kind of patron-client relationship with a mass audience. See Doreen Fernandez, "Mass Culture and Cultural Policy: The Philippine Experience," *Philippine Studies* 37, no. 4 (1989): 489.

rally financial support to fund the performances. While this may be true for the first two decades of the twentieth century, the creation and production of zarzuelas in the later decades fell into the hands of less affluent directors and writers who mined the growing body of Tagalog literature of the 1920s and '30s that was widely circulated in magazines. As literary historian Patricia May Jurilla notes, novels written in the vernacular were commonly published first as serialized stories in popular magazines throughout the twentieth century, such as *Ang Mithi, Taliba*, *Liwayway*, and *Sampaguita* in the 1910s to the 1930s.[19] Cultural elites dismissed these popular publications in Tagalog as inferior to Philippine literature written in English, which subsequently led to the notion of a bifurcated "high and low culture" among contemporary critics and reinforced the narrative of the Tagalog zarzuela's decline. [20]

The "Manila bias" in the histories of the zarzuela in the Philippines adds to this narrative of decline in which film and bodabil have been characterized as dominating cultural phenomena, especially in the colonial capital. This undermines accounts of zarzuela companies touring outside of Manila and in neighboring provinces, performing in non-traditional venues within the capital, and how they relied more on other performance opportunities such as town festivals and local community events. Companies in the 1920s and '30s also looked for other means of funding productions. The long-running Samahang Ilagan, for example, began a partnership with the cigar and cigarette factory La Dicha. The factory provided Ilagan and his company stable salaried employment to perform in largely Tagalog-speaking provinces outside of Manila, including Bulakan, Pampanga, Bataan, Laguna, Rizal, Cavite, and Batangas. [21] The emphasis on

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[19] Patricia May B. Jurilla, *Bibliography of Filipino Novels, 1901-2000* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2010), 15.

[20] Meg Wesling, *Empire's Proxy: American Literature and U.S. Imperialism in the Philippines* (New York, NY: NYU Press, 2011), 167.

[21] Manuel and Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography, vol. 4*, 226.

Severino Reyes and his Gran Compañia in historical accounts overlooks and marginalizes the less popular but still active companies of later decades. In addition, contemporary writers and later historians linked Reyes's switch to journalism and print media to the end of the Tagalog zarzuelas.

The Samahang Gabriel: personnel and repertoire

The Malaking Samahan Sarsuela at Opereta Gabriel (Grand Zarzuela and Operetta Company Gabriel) was active for about twenty years prior to the outbreak of the Second World War and was based in Santa Cruz, Manila.[22] An examination of the company's activities, its key personalities, and its core repertoire show how zarzuela productions continued alongside other popular forms of entertainment. The new repertoire of Samahang Gabriel also showcases typical textual and musical characteristics that differed from the zarzuelas of the earlier decades.

Artists who had a long history of performing in zarzuelas in other groups formed the Samahang Gabriel. Managed by Eusebio Gabriel (who also served as an actor), the company included family members Feliza Buenaventura Gabriel, Danding Gabriel, Rading Gabriel, and Nenita Gabriel. Eusebio and Feliza (possibly married to each other) previously had ties to Severino Reyes's Gran Compañia de Zarzuela Tagala, including top-billing in the 1918 production of *¡Cinematógrafo!* (written by José Maria Rivera and with music by Gavino Carluen) and *Ang Liham ng Ligaya* ("The Letter of Joy," probably 1927) where they were joined

[22] From the existing librettos of the Samahang Gabriel, we know that the company was active sometime in 1920 up to about 1941. One of the earliest works in the collection is *Babaing Banal*, which Bernardino Buenaventura finished in October 17, 1920 and later revised. The existing libretto with the Gabriel cast is the fifth version dated April 14, 1925

by Bernardino Buenaventura, who became the main playwright for Samahang Gabriel.[23] Danding Gabriel, the music arranger and transcriber for the company in the 1930s, had been active in the vaudeville circuit in the 1920s (see Figure 5). Danding was cast mostly in minor roles, but he did have a major role in *Malambot na Bato* ("Soft Stone," 1937) where he portrayed a struggling musician caught in a marriage of convenience.

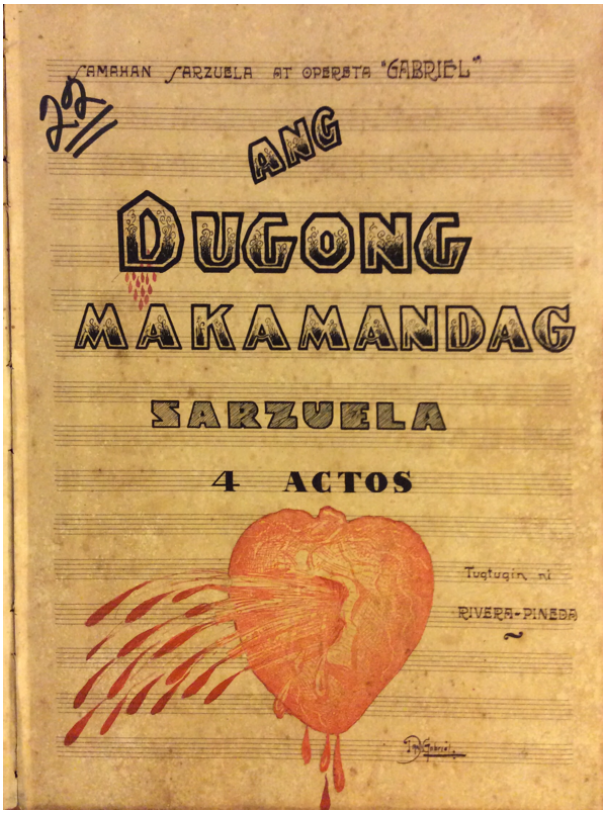

Figure 5. Title cover for *Dugong Makamandag* (The Venomous Blood) showcased Danding Gabriel's decorative flair for covers and title pages

[23] See the libretto by Jose Maria Rivera, *!!Cinematografo...!!: Dulang Tagalog Na May Isang Yugto at Dalawang Kuwadro / Katha Ni Jose Maria Rivera ; Tugtugin Ni Gavino Carluen.*, http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ATK5538.0001.001 (Accessed February 12, 2019).

Other seasoned performers who occasionally joined the roster of actors for the Samahang Gabriel included Germana Cortey, Tomas Esteban, and Joaquin Gavino. Esteban previously performed for Florentino Ballecer's zarzuela company while Cortey, along with Danding Gabriel, also performed in bodabil productions.[24] Joaquin Gavino was also part of Ilagan's Samahan, first as a line director, and then as a comic tenor in the zarzuelas *Mutya ng Silangan, Lucha Electoral, Krus na Pula,* and the popular *Dalagang Bukid*. He then became one of the sought-after comedic actors in the Tagalog stage as well as in bodabil and movie productions.[25]

Many artists continued to perform in zarzuelas while working in films and making audio recordings. This network of actors and musicians shows how the different forms of popular entertainment like the bodabil, cinema, and popular music were more closely linked to the Tagalog zarzuela stage and provided a wider range of livelihood options for performing artists.

A few of the Samahang Gabriel artists recorded in the late 1920s and early '30s when the Victor, Columbia, and Brunswick recording companies began distribution in Manila. These recordings often featured songs and excerpts from the zarzuela repertoire. Feliza Buenaventura, for example, recorded excerpts of dialogues from Severino Reyes's works with Eusebio Gabriel, Joaquin Gavino, and Juanita Angeles (another prominent zarzuelista from Reyes's Gran Compania).[26] Gavino also recorded solo songs and spoken dialogues from Reyes's repertoire as well as Francisco Santiago's compositions for both the Brunswick and Victor labels. Germana

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[24] A Columbia recording of an excerpt entitled "Karung-kungan" from the opereta *Tala ng Universidad* composed by Nicanor Abelardo lists Vicente Ocampo (tenor), Danding Gabriel (baritone) and Germana Cortey (soprano) as artists.

[25] Gavino joined film productions by the Parlatone Hispano-Filipino company, Sampaguita, and Excelsior outfits from 1933-41.

[26] See Richard K. Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893-1942. Vol. 4: Spanish, Portuguese, Philippines, Basque* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 2416.

Cortey rendered songs written by Francisco Santiago and Nicanor Abelardo, which were then arranged by Danding Gabriel (also named "Jerry" in the record labels). Danding was also one of the musicians for Santiago's orchestra, which accompanied Germana Cortey's recordings. It is difficult to determine the extent to which these recordings were circulated in Manila and elsewhere, but it is entirely possible that the Samahang Gabriel benefitted from the publicity that its artists garnered through these recordings.

Like Eusebio Gabriel, Bernardino Buenaventura took on other roles in the production aspects of the Samahan. As the principal playwright for the company, Buenaventura penned four original works, namely, *Pinaglupitan ng Tadhana o Diwata* ("Oppressed by Destiny or the Goddess," year), *Babaing Banal* ("Righteous Woman," 1920), *Mapait na Tagumpay* ("Bitter Triumph," year), and *Ang Takas* ("The Fugitive," 1941). He also adapted no less than twenty additional titles for the zarzuela stage.[27] These adaptations echo very different worldviews and sensibilities from the zarzuela repertoire of the earlier decades. Buenaventura's adaptations mostly focus on family relations woven into otherwise formulaic love stories. Often, clashes between married couples and in-laws stem from class tensions and differences in economic backgrounds. Other related themes and plotlines deal with issues of social dignity and morality, marital infidelity, secret identities and hidden parentage, gambling and sexual immodesty, and the polarized but still interconnected values that represent urban and rural life.

The new works represented in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire increasingly reflected the working class and emerging middle-class experiences of families in the neighboring Tagalog provinces. In these zarzuelas, images associated with the urban (often Manila) and the rural

[27] Buenaventura also collaborated with Leon Ignacio and Atang de la Rama in the productions of *Pamang ng Pulubi, Lihim ng Bilanggo* (1939)*, Pitong Susi*, possibly as part of the short-lived Samahang de la Rama in the late 1930s. He also worked with Florentino Ballecer in re-arranging the script for subsequent versions of *Dalagang Bukid*.

began to animate the class tensions that drive the zarzuelas' plots. This urban/rural divide manifests itself in conflicts between the city's educated elite and the largely agrarian laborers. Stereotypes of the *probinsyano/a* (provincial or "country bumpkin") usually portray them as victims and protagonists, while the *matapobre* (haughty) elite are often presented as the villains. Zarzuelas like *Deo* (1928), *Ang Mangingisda* (The Fisherman, 1927), and *Makiling* are set outside of Manila and portray the difficult life of farmers, fishermen, and the rural working class. In these stories, the narrative of "kahirapan" (suffering) shapes the lives of the poor and those experiencing direct persecution from the snobbery or indifference of the well-to-do. The rural/urban and low/high class divides are further complicated in the formulaic love plots: poor son/daughter in love with the "anak mayaman" (rich son/daughter). The antagonists typically realize the injustice of their actions, ask forgiveness from their once-victims, and redeem themselves by the end of the zarzuela. Alongside these contrasting character types, the zarzuelas also portray the emerging educated class, characters who hail from the provinces and adopt the Manileño/city appearance and attitude as they make their way back home. It is important to note that this later repertoire does not go so far as to call for social action beyond critique of elitism. There are no commentaries on class struggle or calls to social action. In these rags-to-riches stories, the rural continues to be an idealized place, and its inhabitants serve as the moral compass and upholders of virtue.

The themes outlined above remain consistent throughout Samahang Gabriel's repertoire, the bulk of which are Buenaventura's adaptations of serialized stories appearing in weekly magazines in the 1920s and '30s. The wide circulation of these stories meant that audiences would already be familiar with the plots, which would then give the zarzuela company a better chance of drawing bigger crowds. Most prominent of these popular Tagalog publications was the

Liwayway magazine. Out of about twenty-six titles in the Samahang Gabriel's repertoire found in the Manlapaz Collection, eight stories first appeared as a series in *Liwayway*, while a few others were printed in *Taliba* and *Sampaguita*. These stories were penned by writers Gregorio Coching, Fausto Galauran, Nieves Baens (later del Rosario), and Teodoro Virrey. Other titles were adapted by Buenaventura from novels written by the more established authors Remigio Mat. Castro and Lazaro Francisco, such as Castro's *Makiling* ("Mt. Makiling") and Francisco's *Ama* ("Father") and *Pamana ng Pulubi* ("Beggar's Inheritance").

At first glance, the adaptations may seem to support what Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio had observed as the decline of the role of the playwright in the Tagalog zarzuela. But Buenaventura's adaptations demonstrate a mastery in translating for the stage and make a strong case for considering theatrical adaptations as complete works in themselves. Unlike Severino Reyes's librettos written in the earlier decades, Buenaventura's scripts use the Tagalog language exclusively throughout, including much more descriptive stage directions and settings (the bulk of Reyes's scripts, particularly the earlier ones, use Spanish for stage directions). In some instances, the script is more direct in giving additional cues for line deliveries and deliberate pauses to heighten moments of suspense and emotionally intense scenes, highlighting Buenaventura's dual role as playwright and director. Another noticeable feature is the sharp contrast between steady, conversational dialogues and the abrupt versified lines that emphasize a particular character's emotional and psychological state or address moral faults. Where characters of the earlier zarzuelas of Reyes had the tendency to be oratorical and long-winded in their monologues in key moralizing moments, the zarzuelas of the later repertoire revert to short spoken verses. Although spoken verses are not entirely absent in the older Reyes repertoire, the metered verses in Buenaventura's scripts occur more frequently and are not limited to lines used

in dramatic love scenes. Instead, these dodecasyllabic verses often extol a particular virtue or act as the moralizing monologue for the main characters.[28] This spoken poetry acts as expository monologue on a particular topic; some include thoughts on money and wealth, love and dignity, and honoring one's parents.

In the zarzuela *Isang Regalo de Boda* ("A Wedding Gift," 1927), for example, the protagonist Dolores poetically expresses her objection to the oppression she suffers at home. Unbeknownst to her, Dolores was taken by her family as an infant when her mother died in front of her adoptive family's house. Her adoptive parents and older sibling often treat her as an outsider and belittle her, to which Dolores responds by confidently pointing to the futility of arrogance:

...Dami ng mayabang sa lupa'y lumagpak
dami ng naapi [*ng*] *mapagmataas;*
ang buhay ng tao ay palipat lipat
ang dukha sa ngayon, dakila na bukas.[29]

Translation: Many of those arrogant fell on this earth/many are those oppressed by haughtiness; the life of mankind is ever changing/the lowly now, tomorrow is exalted.

These rhyming verses often occur in quatrains of either single or two stanzas. The brevity of the poetic lines effectively conveys the emotional weight that characters experience and underlines specific topics connected to the larger theme of the particular zarzuela. In rare instances, as in the zarzuela *Birheng Walang Dambana* ("Virgin Without an Altar," 1936), Buenaventura wrote longer verses to add depth to a specific character. In the work, the recurring verses further enhance the zarzuela's protagonist, Tony, who is a radio singer and poet. In a particularly intense

[28] The verses are usually one or two stanzas of four lines each.

[29] *Isang Regalo de Boda*, 15. Original libretto held at the Manlapaz Collection, Pardo de Tavera Special Collections, Ateneo de Manila University.

scene where Tony asks for Mercedita's hand in marriage, the spoken verses underscore his predicament of having to choose between his love for Mercedita and for his mother Consuelo, whose reputation as an unwed mother was unacceptable to Mercedita's family. The scene, witnessed by many of the couple's friends, became more emotionally driven as Tony's longer verse-monologue quietly captures his internal turmoil and the bitter realization that Mercedita and her family is asking him to turn his back on his beloved mother. Concluding a three-stanza verse, Tony resolutely defends his mother's dignity and declares

Ang talagang puti sabihin mang itim
hindi mababago sa matang natiñgin
sabuyan ñg lusak, hugasa't nagtining
ang puti ay puti ano man ang gawin.

Translation: What is truly white even when called black/will not change in the eyes of the beholder/drenched in mire, washed and made dirty/white is white no matter what is done with it.

Seen through these examples, the metered and rhyming scheme of the spoken verses act as interruptions to the flow of the conversational dialogues, a remarkable feature given that the Tagalog zarzuela's pioneers and staunch advocates like Reyes were keen on moving away from the strict poetry of pre-existing Tagalog theater like the comedia. The spoken verses, however, assume an explicit role as the voice of reason and truth-telling within the confines of the plot of the later repertoire.

Moreover, the overwhelming recurrence of spoken verses in Buenaventura's scripts reflects the renaissance of Tagalog poetry in the mid-1920s. As the Samahang Gabriel repertoire bore witness to the rise of the Tagalog language in serialized fiction, Tagalog poetry similarly reemerged in this period and was incorporated into the zarzuela librettos. This overwhelming presence of poetic spoken verses in the zarzuelas' texts can be read as symptomatic of the popularity of *balagtasan*, a local form of debating in Tagalog verse. The balagtasan was first

introduced in 1924 as part of the activities initiated by the Kapulungang Balagtas, a literary group named after the canonic nineteenth-century Tagalog poet Francisco Balagtas. Loosely derived from an earlier form of the poetic game *duplo*, the balagtasan consists of two poets debating over a topic in verse.[30] The typical themes and topics for the balagtasan included debating the merits of traditional practices versus modern ones. In the end, a panel of judges deliberates and declares a winner, or "hari ng balagtasan" ("king of balagtasan").[31] Although the balagtasan began among the smaller circle of Manila's literati, it attracted the general public and was later held in large theaters and venues. One such contest was witnessed by thousands of people, including local politicians and government officials, at the Olympic Stadium in late 1925 when poets Jose Corazon de Jesus and Francisco Collantes debated the virtues of the young Filipino woman or the "dalagang Filipina" of yesterday.[32] The practice of balagtasan also rapidly spread among the working classes of Manila and to the different provinces where it was adapted in other regional languages.

By 1928, balagtasan was so widespread that the zarzuela *Deo* included one in its opening party scene. As part of the program prepared by the young people of the town, a balagtasan is performed as two characters debate the virtues of the youth versus those of the elderly ("Ang kabataan at katandaan"). On one side of the debate, the older character Ba-Nano launches his criticism against new fashion, youthful indecencies, and harmful foreign influences on behavior.

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[30] Philippine literature historian Galileo Zafra clarifies that although the poets do pre-write scripts, the delivery or actual performance can still carry a degree of extemporaneity. See Galileo S. Zafra, *Balagtasan: Kasaysayan at Antolohiya* (Ateneo University Press, 1999).

[31] In later balagtasan spectacles, the audience members vote for their favored poet, which help determine the winner. In addition, there were instances of women poets who participated in the balagtasan, although it was still largely dominated by men. See Zafra, *Balagtasan*, 24.

[32] Zafra estimates around 8,000-15,000 people attended this particular balagtasan where de Jesus won defending the "dalagang Filipino" of yesterday. Zafra, *Balagtasan*, 17-18.

The younger Danding counters by claiming that the older generation were the ones who were blind to the racial subjugation they experienced, and that it was youthful courage and aspiration that brought change to the country. Other instances of balagtasan in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire contain similar strains of patriotic fervor. In *Makiling*, the trope of the old versus the new translated into a debate over which form of transportation is most advantageous: the horse-drawn carriage, the *kalesa*, or the automobile. Countering the argument of the practicality in long-distance travel by automobile, the *kalesa* defender appeals to the sense of patriotism in boycotting cars that use foreign exports such as gas and oil and points to how this negatively impacts the livelihood of local coachmen. Issuing his rebuttal, the character Augusto frustratedly questions how the debate has now turned into an issue of patriotism while Inggo continues his argument and nostalgically draws the imagery of Filipino ancestors riding in horse-drawn carriages. In the end, the judges declare a tie with the reasoning that both debaters became too personal and hot-headed in their exchanges.

The recurring trope of old and new is symptomatic of the changes that affected the lived experience of the Tagalog audience. As a form of cultural commentary, the scripts in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire were invested in portraying the tensions between older practices perceived as inherently Filipino and of modern ones tagged as foreign and "Western." In *Calvario* (1933), the older character Don Jesus reprimands a group of young men and women playing with yoyos and launches into a diatribe against the youth unquestioningly copying everything that comes to the Philippines. In his disapproval, Don Jesus lumps the yoyo together with the wide-legged pants that young people have seen in American movies (especially gangster

movies like the original *Scarface* of 1932).[33] He continues to talk about how people clamor about the current economic crisis in the country, yet, somehow, foreign-owned establishments such as the Japanese and German bazaars, Pansiterias (eateries), and restaurants still seem to be getting good business. The young men, at first, feign agreement and vow to burn their yoyos; then, they laughingly proceed to enumerate all the other things that they would need to give up because of "foreignness," including automobiles, going to the movie houses, and buying clothes made of silk or wool. This commentary ran parallel to scenes comparing the "siyudad" (urban cities like Manila) with the "lalawigan" (rural provinces).

Another example from the zarzuela *X-3-X*, written in 1928, reflects the divisive issue on new trends in fashion, including men who shave their eyebrows and wear the wide-legged "London-style" pants. While the commentaries on men's current fashion trends tend to appear in comedic scenes in *X-3-X* and elsewhere, debates over socially acceptable modes of dress and behavior targeting young Filipino women, in comparison, were often deployed with more severity in tone and strongly associate women's fashion choices with their sexual modesty and virtue. One of the characters in *X-3-X*, Alicia, extols the practice of women keeping their hair long as a commendable virtue while complaining about those having bobbed hair as a foreign trend that runs contrary to Filipino traditions.[34] In *Baliya* (1927), a lengthy monologue extols the merits of the zarzuela over cinema as the character Gavino defends the sexual modesty of women in the zarzuelas. Gavino claims how no one will be able to see any kissing scenes in the zarzuelas, and that not a single Filipina artist would allow herself to act in such a way because of

[33] This is quite ironic considering that it was the Filipino immigrant and businessman Pedro Flores who is credited for popularizing yo-yo in the US.

[34] Original text: *Kung dito sa atin laging managumpay/ang ugaling hiram sa mga dayuhan,/tayo sa sarili ang siyang bumitay/sa ating ugaling, ating atin lamang*.

her inherent modesty and gentleness.[35] Yet, as I further elaborate in the following chapter, such feminine ideals inscribed by playwrights in the zarzuelas also ran up against the shifting gender dynamics in the 1920s when female artists such as Atang de la Rama challenged the image of the demure Filipina.

Music and melodrama

The roster of composers who collaborated with Samahang Gabriel includes Jose Z. Rivera, Pablo Navarro, Alejo Carluen, Liberato Samala, Atong Pineda, and Leon Ignacio, whose scores reveal changes in setting music for the theatrical stage during the later decades of the US colonial period. While claims of the Tagalog zarzuela's decline posit the scarcity of competent composers and quality music, a survey of the collection actually points to a more standardized practice in scoring for the Tagalog stage, such as the total number of songs (about twenty numbers on average spread over the three or sometimes four acts of the zarzuela) and the more clear-cut separation between the song numbers and incidental music. These instrumental sections became more prominent in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire and were used for scene changes. Often marked as *kwadro*, *melodia*, and *musica fuerte* in the scores, these instrumental sections perform a narrative function in driving the dramatic unfolding of the plot. The *kwadro*, sometimes labeled as "intermezzo" in the scores and scripts, is most common; it varies in length and often comes after the opening curtain (*telong pambungad*) and during a change of scene.

A comparison between the Samahang Gabriel scores and those from Severino Reyes's earlier repertoire shows an increase in instrumental sections corresponding to the increase in

[35] Original text: "…ang ikinagiging tangi nating mga Pilipino sa ibang Bansa, ay ang pagkamayumi at pagkamahinhin ng ating mga babae..." Although the first kissing scene in a Tagalog film was between Elizabeth "Dimples" Cooper and Luis Tuazon in the 1926 film *Tatlong Hambog*.

scene changes and variety in settings. The *melodia* and *musica fuerte* are also used for scene changes and to set the mood or heighten the dramatic intensity. The *melodia* often features a solo violin or cello and is used in night scenes, in quiet but intensely dramatic moments, and in scenes when a family member's death (usually a parent) brings about a tragic resolution. At other times, the *melodia* accompanies particularly intense dialogues and serves as necessary background music to pivotal denouement scenes. The *musica fuerte*, on the other hand, is often short and accompanies a tense or violent action, or functions as a coda-like section at the end of a cliffhanger scene as the curtain comes down (*telon rapido*).

The ocurrence of incidental music in the later zarzuela repertoire strongly resembles Western musical melodrama in which dramatic action is facilitated by music played in between spoken texts as well as an accompaniment to actors' dialogues.[36] Although the practice of melodrama in stage plays varies in practice since the eighteenth century and across different European and, later, American traditions, the use of short musical passages to carry out specific situational and emotional content of plots remains a common feature. As a theatrical term, melodrama also denotes a type of drama that became popular in the nineteenth century, particularly among the urban working class and bourgeoisie. Japanese film scholar Maureen Turim defines melodrama as characterized by "elements of stage production tending toward expressive excess, the repetitive casting of character types in moral dilemmas and physical dangers, the circumstantial convergence of events, and the blending and juxtaposition of

[36] Peter Branscombe, "Melodrama," *Grove Music Online* (2001), accessed 15 Sep. 2019. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000018355. Banscombe also notes how the orchestral passages separating the dialogues "are clearly related to, and presumably in a sense derived from, those in accompanied operatic recitative…"

conflicting tones."[37] Such characteristics were carried over in cinema, especially in typifying domestic melodrama as a distinctive genre in postwar film studies.[38] This is particularly true for postcolonial Philippine cinema and in the proliferation of Tagalog domestic melodramas in contemporary television, which further hints at the interdependent relationship between Tagalog zarzuelas and film.

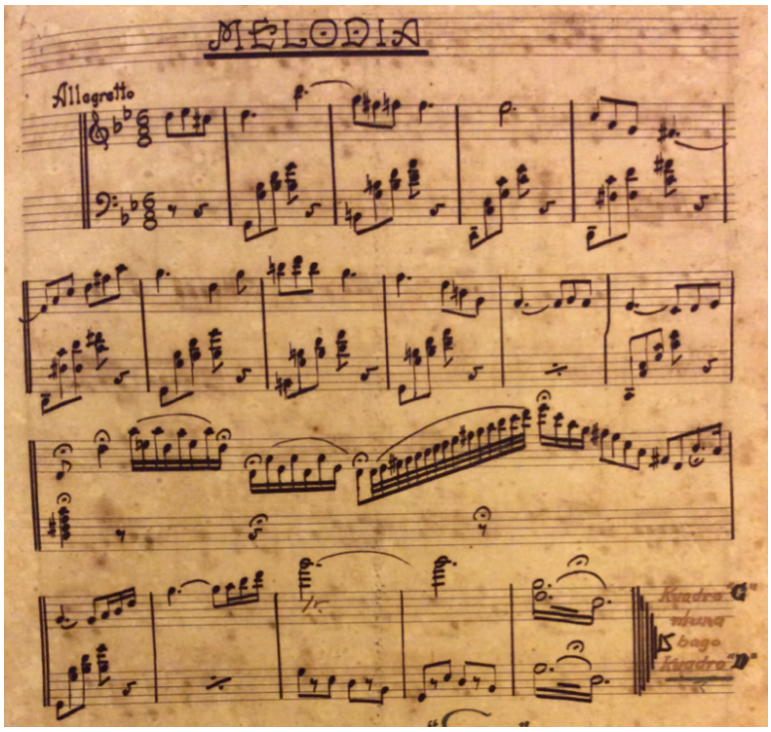
Both the musical and theatrical/filmic instances of melodrama provide a helpful comparison to the interplay of music and text in the predominantly domestic dramas of the Samahang Gabriel repertoire. Several examples highlight how incidental music functions in the later zarzuelas and how the *melodia* and the *musica fuerte* aid in enhancing the emotional effect of particular scenes. In the score for *Sañga-Sañgang Dila* ("The Gossip," 1937), a short *musica fuerta* section accompanies a scene early in the first act where the protagonist Mauro, a lieutenant in the Philippine Constabulary, challenges Alfredo to a duel after finding the latter in the arms of his wife, Meding.[39] The short but frantic music heightens the on-stage brawl and the moment when Mauro shoots Alfredo in the arm. Later in the zarzuela, Alfredo, who is also a surgeon, finds himself in a predicament when a critically wounded Mauro is brought to him in a military outpost in Mindanao. After Alfredo talks through his internal turmoil and resolutely decides to save Mauro's life, a short *melodia* section (see Example 7) fills an empty stage as the theater curtains fall on the surgical operation that ensues. Set in a faster tempo, this *melodia* from *Sañga-Sañgang Dila* creates the busy atmosphere of Mauro's surgery and parallels Alfredo's

[37] Maureen Turim, "Psyches, ideologies, and melodrama: The United States and Japan," in *Melodrama and Asian Cinema*, ed. Wimal Dissanayake (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 156.

[38] Turim, "Psyches, ideologies, and melodrama," 156.

[39] The score is attributed to three composers in the original manuscript: Jose Z. Rivera, Pablo Navarro, and Atong Pineda. Danding Gabriel is listed as the arranger.

internal turmoil, while its brief cadenza-like section builds suspense around what is happening behind the curtain.



Example 7. *Melodia* from Act Two of *Sañga-Sañgang Dila*, mm. 1-17

Leon Ignacio's *Makiling* offers another striking example of the mood-making characteristics of the *melodia*. In the zarzuela's fourth and final act, *probinsyana* Ines is married to Toñing, but his *matapobre* (haughty) family from Manila separates the couple and sends Toñing to take care of their family business in a distant province. Toñing's family also deprives Ines of the ability to care for her newborn daughter. One particular night scene is replete with *melodia* sections, which set the mood of the scene and frame a tender aria by Ines. The first

melodia accompanies the sound of a clock striking time.[40] In this scene, Ines finds the servant Flora rocking Ines's daughter to sleep. The servant inadvertently falls asleep, and Ines quickly leaps at the chance to hold her child. Ines's aria is a lament to her daughter as she sings of the bitter life she now finds herself in and forlornly warns her daughter against the same fate. At the end of the scene, another *melodia* appears as Ines, who can no longer tolerate the suffering she experiences, slowly leaves the house to return to her family in the province.

A similar type of incidental music appears in Severino Reyes's work *Lukso ng Dugo* (1906), which is an earlier example of how music functioned as a crucial narrative layer in the Tagalog theatrical stage. In the libretto, Reyes refers to the instrumental music accompanying a nighttime scene in the first act as "musica descriptiva" in which the music—what the playwright calls "mabagang tugtugin" (emphatic or "smouldering" music)—signifies the passing of time and is further marked by a clock striking midnight.[41] In Juan Hernandez's score, the brass-heavy opening frames what the composer titled as "crepusculo vespertino" (evening twilight). The music then continues to foreground a tense bedroom scene where the unwanted suitor Cario intrudes on the protagonist Tinang, who is soon to be married to Cario's best friend, Luis. Although this early example of *musica descriptiva* seems to be an isolated case, other instances of un-texted orchestral music serving as narration do occur, though they are not highlighted as separate musical sections in Reyes's repertoire. What differentiates the later Samahang Gabriel scores in this case is the consistent and regular use of the *kwadro*, *melodia*, and *musica fuerte* in further integrating the music into the narrative and emotional arch of the drama.

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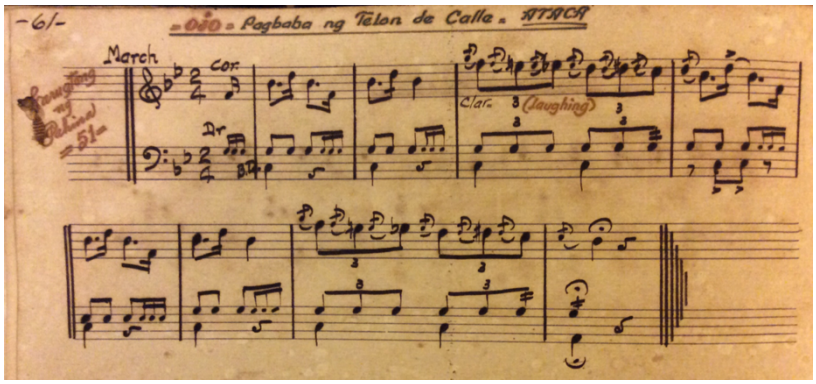
[40] A similar *melodia* appears in *Baliya* (1927), with stage instructions "dididim kaunti ang tanyagan" (slight dimming of the stage) as the clock strikes midnight (from act two).

[41] Tagalog instructions in the script: "Una'y tutugtugin ng Orquestra ang isang magabang tugtugin na tinatawag na 'musica descriptive,' bilang baga pagpapakilalang ang oras ay lumawic (?), at naroc na sa gabing malalim; mariringig ang tugtog ng isang orasan na tumutugtog ng ika 12 ng gabi. Tatahimic na lubha pagkatapos ng musica, at saca lalabas si Cario na naniniin ang mabanayad na paglacad."

Other types of incidental music occur alongside the *kwadro*, *melodia*, and *musica fuerte* sections that advance the storyline and enhance action scenes in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire. In *Ang Mangingisda* ("The Fisherman," 1927), an instrumental section labeled as "Tempestad" accompanies a sea storm that devastates the livelihood of a fishing community. Jose Z. Rivera's piano score represents a deadly tempest with continuous tremolos in the bass line and repetitive scalar sequences in the upper parts, simulating sounds of thunder. The music abruptly slows down and segues into the ensemble number closing the first act. The chorus sings of the calamity that befell them as the protagonist Luisa desperately cries for the safety of her husband Sencio who was last seen braving the turbulent waters. There are also examples where band music appears in scenes that portray military encampments and drills, as in the "musica cornetin at drums" from act three of *Sañga-sañgang Dila*.[42] Here, the music sets the stage for the scene where the military training of minor characters turns into a slapstick drill. The short instrumental section not only anticipates the military setting of the coming scene but also foregrounds its comedic effect signaled by the "laughing" clarinet line in the original score (see Example 8).



Example 8. "March" from the third act of *Sañga-Sañgang Dila*

[42] The score copy in the collection lists Jose Z. Rivera, Pablo Navarro, and Atong Pineda as composers, and Danding Gabriel as arranger.

Another example of military band music comes from Pablo Navarro's score for *Puso ng Dios* ("Heart of God," 1934), written by Gregorio Coching. Bugle calls and marches amplify the scenes in a US army barracks by the Pasig river. The work is also a striking example of how the zarzuelas of the later decades came to terms with the continued US presence in the Philippines. In *Puso ng Dios,* the main protagonist is the white soldier William Dorsay, who falls in love with the Tagalog woman Virginia. William struggles with the objections of his family and peers and moralizes against racial prejudice in several song numbers and through poetic monologues. But upon the urging of his father, William reluctantly goes back to the US and leaves Virgina behind. The deserted Virginia is then wooed by the Chinese Vicente and the black soldier Tom, who are both caricatured in contrast to William's white hero character.[43] After some time has passed, William finally realizes his mistake and goes back to the Philippines. He finds Virginia working as a *bailarina* (dancer) at a local cabaret and fends off her other suitors. At the conclusion of the drama, William announces their plans to go to the US after they get married.

Jazz versus kundiman

The subject of US colonialism and influence continues to appear in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire and informs the traditional/modern and rural/urban tropes that accompanied a new iteration of Filipino cultural nationalism in the 1920s and '30s. A common view of the decline of the zarzuelas maintains that the influx of American popular music led to its demise. Theater historian Nicanor Tiongson argues how "*bodabil* attracted a younger generation of Americanized

[43] There is some sense of racial hierarchies here, still, with Vicente being the most caricatured and poked fun at character. Tom's character is a little bit more complex as he and William are childhood friends (and their relationship is a striking characterization of racial relations in the US but transported to the Philippines.

Filipinos who preferred the brassy songs (American jazz, blues, ballads) and risqué dances (Charleston, tango, samba)."[44] But a closer look at the scores reveals that zarzuelas also made liberal use of popular genres that had circulated globally, including rags, foxtrots, blues, the aforementioned Charleston (spelled *tsarleston* in the scripts), and even the Hawaiian hula. These genres appear as newly created songs and as insertions of pre-existing American songs that had become popular in the US colony. This is not surprising given that the incorporation of contemporary dance genres (like the waltz and tango of the earlier decades) had been a consistent practice since the zarzuela's early development in the Philippines at the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, new genres often lumped together by contemporary critics as "jazz" became prominent in the later repertoire of the 1920s and '30s. As a Tagalog commentary from 1929 published in the popular magazine *Pagkakaisa* underscores, the emergence of jazz is seen especially in the local theater, quickly replacing the erstwhile popular tangos and waltzes:

> And this is why in this age, even here in the Philippines where the entertainment [is] the native theater, 'jazz' has become dominant over other music, however gentle and affectionate…'Jazz' has won over and set aside the 'tango.' For every ten Hawaiian 'foxtrots' there is only two Argentinian music that are included. And the 'waltz' hides as if shying away from any form of enjoyment, worried of annoyance with the shouts and rasps of 'jazz.'[45]

It is important to note, however, that older genres (i.e. waltzes and tangos) continued to be used in the zarzuela scores of the later repertoire alongside newer forms of popular music. This integration of jazz ran up against critiques of global popular genres as a corrupting influence in

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[44] Tiongson, "A Short History of the Philippine Sarsuwela," 176.

[45] P. Noble, "Ang Tagumpay ng Isang 'Venus' Na 'Itim," in *Pagkakaisa*, April 13, 1929. Original text: "At iyan ang dahilan kung bakit sa panahong ito, maging dito sa Pilipinas na nagging 'libangan' na yata ng katutubong 'arte escenico', o ng tinatawag nating 'dulaan, ang 'jazz' ay namamaibabaw sa ibang mga tugtugin, kahit sanggaano kalambing…Ang 'jazz' ay siyang tumalo at nagpatabi sa 'tango'. Sa bawa't sampung 'fox-trots' na hawayano, ay dalawa lamang tugtuging arhentino ang napapasalit. At ang 'valse' ay parang nahihiyang nagtatago sa alin mang alituntunin ng kasayahan, sapag-aalaalang mainis sa mga sigaw at garalgal ng 'jazz.'" It is interesting to note here how foxtrots have gained a reputation as "Hawaiian" music in the Philippines.

the creative process of musicians in the Philippines. American Robert Schofield, dean of the University of Philippines' Conservatory of Music from 1920 to 1924, for example, asserted in 1922 that jazz was a sickness in the music of the Philippines, much like in the US, and posed a danger to the integrity of Filipino musicians.[46] Schofield's critique reflected the racialization of popular music and how the aversion to jazz was fueled by the racism happening in the US, which was also making its way into the colony. Such critiques of contemporary popular music also became entangled with the rhetoric on musical nationalism circulated by leading Filipino intellectuals, including the prominent composer Francisco Santiago, who decried the influx of US popular music and dance in the 1920s.[47] In writing about the development of music in the Philippines, Santiago criticized the "cheap dance music" flooding the local music scene and the native composers' adoption of "American airs, […] old cakewalk, the noisy march of Sousa, and the deafening and somewhat distorted jazz."[48] These commentaries underline the debates between "high and low" art that preoccupied composers and intellectuals of the period and their anxieties about the influx of foreign music in the form of jazz and English novelty songs. Yet in the same breath, Santiago praised zarzuela composers such as Juan Hernandez, Carluen, Nicanor Abelardo, and Francisco Buencamino, all of whom had actually incorporated popular dance genres in their zarzuela scores.[49] Santiago's criticism of popular music becomes even more ironic given his earlier sound recording collaborations with vaudeville artists such as Germana Cortey and Danding Gabriel mentioned earlier.

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[46] "Ang Wika at mga Tugtugin," *Bagong Lipang Kalabaw*, October 7, 1922.

[47] See Francisco Santiago, *The Development of Music in the Philippine Islands* (Philippine Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1931; University of the Philippines, 1957), 16.

[48] Santiago, *The Development of Music in the Philippine Islands*, 16.

[49] Santiago, *The Development of Music in the Philippine Islands*, 5-16.

These popular genres are often found in scenes and references to dancing and the *kabaret* (cabaret) and in moments where new modes of practice (e.g. fashion and beauty trends) are contrasted with the old. The following examples, however, seem more to reflect contemporary society than to critique it. The juxtaposition of contemporary dance genres and older forms create a playful tension between the "modern" and the "traditional" constantly highlighted by the zarzuelas' playwrights. A short dance number labeled "foxtrot or blues," for example, opens the cabaret scene in the third act of *Deo*. In the same act, a solo by the bailarina character Adela is marked as a song with "tsarleston" dancing. Remarkably, the song is set in the local *balitaw*, a dance form in ¾ time that conflicts with the fast-duple meter of the charleston.

Dance genres were also used in scenes performed by minor characters for comic relief, highlighting the tensions between the modern and the traditional and the more ambiguous responses to foreign influences and vices. A dance sequence, for example, appears in the zarzuela *Ang Dugong Makamandag* (song #20) where a trio of minor characters (plus the chorus) sing about the delights of whisky. The song begins with a waltz as the verses are sung and then shifts into a slow section marked as "blues" and labeled as a "tap dance." In Jose Z. Rivera's *Ang Mangingisda* (1927), comic characters Kileto and Kileta launch into a lengthy duo that shifts from one stylistic dance to another. The whole song moves in multiple sections of slow fox trot, one-step, blues, hula, and waltz marked throughout the score manuscript. In *Krus na Bulaklak*, comedic couple Teban and Idang sing a duo about imported fashion trends in the form of a "bestidang Amerikana" (song #11). At the beginning of the song, Idang shows off her "very smart" (the English is used in the lyrics) form-fitting dress for dancing.[50] The song switches to

[50] Unfortunately, only the score manuscript exists for this title, and the lyrics do not give any other particular descriptions of Idang's *bestida*. Chorus: "Ito'y modang sakdal inam/na sa ati'y nababagay/hatid ng dayuhan sagisag ng kabihasnan/maging bata't matanda man/sa bestida'y umiinam/kahit hindi nababagay/ sa moda ay sumusunod lamang."

the distinctive Hispano-Filipino *jota* when Teban objects to Idang's choice of clothing and fears that she might leave him for another man attracted by her new dress. A final section marked "medium swing" ends the song as the couple sing together in reprise:

Ito'y modang sakdal inam
na sa ati'y nababagay
hatid ng dayuhan sagisag ng kabihasnan
maging bata't matanda man
sa bestida'y umiinam
kahit hindi nababagay
sa moda ay sumusunod lamang.

Translation: This fashion style is really good and becomes us/brought by foreigners as symbols of civilization/those young and old will look nice in this dress/even though it does not suit them they just keep following what is fashionable.

Another example of the use of contemporary social dance genres in the Tagalog zarzuelas comes from *Mga Bilanggao ng Pag-ibig* ("Prisoners of Love," 1927). A cake walk appears early in the opening act where Minong introduces himself as "lalaking pangkasalukuyan" (man of today) with his wide-legged pants and shaved hair and eyebrows, like "Rudolph Valentino." Minong boldly claims that if the Americans could only see all Filipinos dressed as he is, then the Philippines would quickly be given independence.[51] Another minor character, Tikio, laughs in response and retorts that if given the power, he would create a law that would sentence anyone wearing the same look as Minong to thirty years in prison. The pairing of dance genres and fashion trends recurs frequently in the zarzuelas and is often used to portray caricatures of the

[51] Original text: "Kung makikita ng mga Amerikano, na ang lahat ng pilipino'y kaparis ko ang bikas, hoy walang maraming kuskos balungos, na-ibibigay sa atin ang Independensiya."

dandy-like figure.[52] Such a character would later become a popular icon in Filipino comics in the form of Kenkoy (see Figure 6), who made his debut in *Liwayway* magazine in 1929.[53]

Figure 6. Cover from the *Album nang mga Kabalbalan ni Kenkoy* ("Album of the Antics of Kenkoy") published in 1934[54]

Written by Romualdo Ramos and illustrated by Antonio Velasquez, the world of Kenkoy echoes the contrasting character types of the rich city-dwellers and the rural-folk embodied in the Tagalog zarzuela repertoire. As literary critic Soledad Reyes remarks, Kenkoy demarcates the "line between 'modern' and traditional Filipinos, between the trendy and the conservative, [and] between the new and the old."[55] Yet, as Soledad Reyes further argues, the stories and imageries in *Kenkoy* point to the more ambiguous responses to the constant fascination with things US American, which captured the inherent "tensions and contradictions of colonial society."[56] This analysis can similarly be applied to the zarzuelas of the 1920s and '30s where critiques of new

[52] As mentioned earlier in this chapter, *X-3-X* (1928) and *Calvario* (1933) specifically refer to the same fashion trends.

[53] *Kenkoy* was written by Romualdo Ramos and illustrated by Antonio Velasquez.

[54] Image taken from http://pilipinokomiks.blogspot.com/2005/11/album-ng-kabalbalan-ni-kenkoy-1934.html

[55] Soledad S. Reyes, *A Dark Tinge to the World: Selected Essays, 1987-2005* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2005), 13.

[56] Reyes, *A Dark Tinge to the World*, 13.

and “foreign” trends coexist with the very markers of such newness and foreignness enjoyed by zarzuela audiences.

Another key element that appears in the zarzuela scores is the local kundiman, a type of song and dance form that was practiced during the Spanish colonial period discussed in the first chapter. Examples of kundiman written later at the turn of the twentieth century convey a strong melancholic sentiment couched in contrasting themes of unrequited love and hopeful yearning. By the 1920s, the kundiman transformed into a more formalized song genre in the hands of older composers like Bonifacio Abdon and conservatory-trained composers Francisco Santiago and Nicanor Abelardo. Such standardization of form includes a binary or tertiary (rounded binary) structure set to minor-parallel major tonalities and a slow triple meter. Music historians have remarked on the continued fascination with romantic love in the new repertoire of kundiman but also note the characteristic patriotism and love for country embedded in its later iterations. This thematic transformation, in turn, made the song genre symbolic of nationalism in the canon of Filipino music. The oft-cited example is the popular kundiman “Bayan Ko” (My Country), which was written sometime in the mid-1920s and is known for its explicit criticism of colonial rule in the Philippines. The song’s later inclusion in the 1971 revival of Severino Reyes’s *Walang Sugat* as well as later performances associated with the anti-Marcos movements of the 1980s further solidified the perception of the kundiman as an essentially nationalist genre.

According to scholarship on the kundiman, composers with formal music training like Francisco Santiago and Nicanor Abelardo transformed it into an “elevated form” and standardized it with its more recognizable characteristics: a binary or tertiary structure set to minor-parallel major tonalities and a slow triple meter with marked rubato or “bitin” on the third beat of certain verse endings. Musicologist and composer Ramon Santos also points to the

relationship between text and music in the kundiman as an integral part of the genre in its capacity to evoke "tone painting and other symbolic compositional devices."[57] These conventions pegged the kundiman as an elevated art form akin to the German *Lied* or the French *melodie*. Santiago, in particular, is credited as pivotal in its transformation into a type of a formally composed "art song."

A careful look at the kundimans in the later zarzuela repertoire, however, reveals that the genre expresses a wider range of themes and narratives beyond nationalist sentiments. As Christi-Anne Castro has noted, the affective qualities of the genre lend itself well to other types of songs including love songs, lullabies, and laments.[58] There are rare examples of the patriotic type that exist in the Samahang Gabriel repertoire, and one striking example appears right after the balagtasan from *Deo* mentioned above. After the poets debated the merits of the older generation versus the youth of today, the song competition that followed the balagtasan continued with a kundiman song performed by the older Nana Busiyang and a blues duo by the younger Adela and Elvira. In the kundiman, an individual story of hardship and suffering transforms into the collective aspiration for freedom and the elusive redemption for the "bayan" (country) in the following verses:

Laging nangangarap ng isang PAGASA
hinihintay hintay ang isang ligaya,
paglayang inasam, wala rin at wala
sa Sumpa't Pangako ako'y natitira.

Iyan ang bayan ko laging hinihintay
na pinapangarap niyang kalayaan,
hanga't nalalapit ang sikat ng araw
lumalayo naman iyong KATUBUSAN.

[57] Ramon Pagayon Santos, *Tunugan: Four Essays on Filipino Music* (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2005), 16.

[58] Christi-Anne Castro, *Musical Renderings*, 183.

Translation: Always dreaming of that one HOPE/waiting for that one happiness/yearned for freedom, has come to nothing/I am left with vows and promises/This is my country that always waits/for the dreamt of freedom/the nearer the sun rises/the farther REDEMPTION comes.

The blues, on the other hand, echoes the young poet's celebration of youth culture in the *balagtasan* as the duo sings of the modern virtues and delights of dancing the "Wan Estep," "blus," and "tsarleston."

The above example points to how the kundiman does not conveniently fit into strict characterizations of Filipino identity as either modern or traditional, and how songs labeled as such found in the later Samahang Gabriel scores are less explicit in portraying anti-colonial nationalist sentiment. Rather, the kundimans are simple love songs or laments sung in moments of overwhelming grief and suffering as part of the narrative of "kahirapan" portrayed in the zarzuelas. These songs are often sung by women and tell stories of hardship and the fate of deserted wives, forgotten mothers, and detested sisters. In Alejo Carluen's *Babaing Banal* ("Righteous Woman"), a kundiman is sung by Dely and her daughter as they beg for food after Dely was blinded by poison and later abandoned by her husband, Dario. Ines's aria from *Makiling* outlined earlier is another kundiman sung as a lullaby as the young mother yearns for the child forcibly taken from her. Many more kundiman examples highlight the emotional struggles of protagonists—often women—and point to the tensions between the fictional representation of women in the Tagalog zarzuelas and the lived experiences of women, especially performers, in the 1920s and '30s. As the following chapter further explores, the gendering of the kundiman is made more explicit in the act of performance, as seen in the work and celebrity of Atang de la Rama.

Taken as a whole, the variety of musical examples and crucial dramatic moments within the Samahang Gabriel repertoire tell a much richer story of how the Tagalog zarzuelas evolved in the later decades of the 1920s and '30s. To understand this development comprehensively, the careers of artists and the content of later repertoire must be read alongside the beginnings of a popular entertainment industry that emerged in this period. The rise in film and commercial recordings not only bolstered the zarzuela stage but created an interdependent environment wherein playwrights, theater artists, and musicians depended on these various performing platforms for new opportunities and new material. In the same vein, a simplistic view that 1920s popular music and culture can only be defined as either US American or Filipino completely fails to recognize the ways in which music theater and other forms of artistic practice are part of larger networks of circulation and consumption. The Samahang Gabriel repertoire, with its distinctive set of themes that tackle socio-economic disparities and its playful and strategic use of popular music, demonstrates the zarzuela's continued relevance in Filipino colonial society.

Chapter Four

Breaking the Glass: Creative Labor and the Tagalog Diva Atang de la Rama

On December 7, 1919, the Compañia Ilagan staged the zarzuela *Dalagang Bukid* ("Country Maiden") for the benefit of its main artist, Atang de la Rama, whose public entreaty can be found in the production's playbill:

> Beloved public: your dalagang bukid [country maiden] gives her benefit Sunday night...If you come to see me I will cry with joy and delight; but if you do not honor me with your presence, I will truly mourn much like how Angelita cries when she is disappointed with her beloved Cipriano. But how can you remain relaxed at home on that night, knowing that "Atang" celebrates her gala of honor? I refuse to believe it, because you were, you are, and will always be my good protector and affectionate friend…I'll wait for you, then. De la Rama[1]

Shortly after her leading role debut in *Dalagang Bukid,* de la Rama gained a reputation that quickly spread among the theater-going public of Manila. Her distinctive voice, stage presence, and memorable portrayal of the "country maiden" inspired the creation of a new repertoire of Tagalog zarzuelas and gave new momentum to the Tagalog stage, which experienced a momentary downturn in popularity in the 1910s. In these later works, the representation of women reflected the different attitudes and responses toward modernization in the Philippines and the thematic tensions between urban Manila and the rural provinces as introduced in the previous chapter. At first glance, these representations seem to project the stereotypical and dichotomous roles portrayed by women, such as those of the innocent country maiden and the flirtatious and often morally suspect cabaret dancer, or *bailarina*, as conceived by the zarzuelas'

[1] Original Spanish: "Público Querido: Tu dalagang bukid, dá su beneficio en la noche del Domingo, 7 de Diciembre. Si vas a verme, lloraré de gozo y de alegr'ia; pero si no me honras con tu presencia, lloraré de veras como llora Angelita cuando está disgustada de su amado Cipriano. Pero ¿podrás acaso estar tranquilo en tu casa en esa noche, sabiendo que "Atang" celebra su *serata de honore*? No lo puedo creer, porque sé que fuistes, eres y serás siempre mi buen protector y cariñoso amigo. Te esperaré, pues. De la Rama" Angelita and Cipriano are the main protagonists in the zarzuela. Copy of the program in the online digital photo collection of adailara: https://www.flickr.com/photos/9307819@N05/2544474500/in/photostream/ (accessed October 3, 2019).

predominantly male authors. Closer readings of de la Rama's performances, however, reveal multifaceted characters that navigate the changing gender dynamics of the 1920s and '30s. Meanwhile, her overall career and celebrity points to the central yet often overlooked influence of women in the emerging popular entertainment industry in the Philippines.

This chapter focuses on the representations of gender in theatrical performance and in the artist as an indispensable contributor to the development of the Tagalog zarzuelas by looking at the career of Honorata "Atang" de la Rama (1902-1991). In the following, I argue how representations of women—though often created by male authors—are also given meaning by a particular artist in performance. While studies of gender in historical musicology are widespread now, Philippine musicological scholarship has only recently touched upon this issue and the role of performers in music-making as the field remains composer- and work-centric in its interests. In a recent work on gender and performance in Asia, music scholars remarked on the conditions of colonialism in the region that moved female performers to find creative ways to combine foreign musical elements with the vernacular and how "the ascendancy of women as performers paralleled, and in some cases generated, developments in wider society such as suffrage, social and sexual liberation, and women as business entrepreneurs and independent income earners and as models for new lifestyles."[2] Ric Trimillos's essay in the collection, in particular, traces how popular Filipina singers were instrumental in the creation of a Philippine modernity from 1913 to 1972.[3]

[2]Andrew N. Weintraub and Bart Barendregt, eds., *Vamping the Stage: Female Voices of Asian Modernities* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 2.
[3] See Ric Trimillos, "Enacting Modernity through Voice, Body, and Gender: Filipina Singers from the Close of the Philippine-American War to the Onset of Martial Law (1913-1972)," in *Vamping the Stage*, 261.

Placing the performer and her creative labor front and center, I draw from Carolyn Abbate and Mary Ann Smart's exploration of the female voice as authorial and performance of artists as musical text.[4] Smart, in particular, insists on the historian's task to recover a "vivid sense of other past experiences of making and hearing opera; and, equally important, to displace attention from the composer's text to a broad fabric of collaborative voices."[5] While both comment largely on European opera history and performance, Abbate and Smart's theorizations of the voice are particularly helpful in teasing out the ways in which de la Rama's vocality and stage presence position her, the performer, as co-creator of the zarzuela alongside that of playwrights and composers. De la Rama's work serves as a critical example of an artist's negotiation of gendered identities embedded in the zarzuelas' texts. Whereas she is commonly associated with her famous role as the demure "dalagang bukid," her versatility as an actor and her dynamic voice actually allowed for a more nuanced performance that pushed against stereotypical notions of the virtuous and modest Filipina. As the quote above already suggests, de la Rama's ability to connect with her audience went beyond her characterization of the bashful country maiden but had, in a short span of time, allowed for a playful and almost coy familiarity with her growing fan base. Her direct address to potential audiences, whether crafted by her or for her, carried a bold and confident voice that knew how and when to play the crowd. From de la Rama's nuanced characterizations of the "virginal" and idealized "dalagang bukid" to the urbanized and flirtatious *bailarina*, her onstage presence and vocal command revamped the Tagalog theatrical scene in Manila in the 1920s and through the prewar years.

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[4] Carolyn Abbate, "Opera; or, the Envoicing of Women," in *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, ed. Ruth A. Solie (Milton Keynes UK: Lightning Source UK Ltd., 2011), 225-258; Mary Ann Smart ed., *Siren Songs*, *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[5] Mary Ann Smart, *Siren Songs*, 11.

In addition, de la Rama's career and celebrity in the 1920s contribute to what historian Genevieve Clutario defines as Filipina nationalism in the early twentieth century when "Filipino women were at the front lines of Philippine and United States cultural, political, and economic encounters."[6] In her work, Clutario draws attention to the ways that Filipino women used fashion and beauty regimens in constructing identities that did not necessarily align with those imposed by the US colonial regime.[7] In the case of Atang de la Rama, her celebrity status did not rely solely on her vocal ability but also on the visual aspects of her performances on and off stage. In particular, her consistent use of the Filipino dress (called the *terno*) paired with global beauty trends in makeup and hairstyles carefully cultivated an image that was both modern and traditional, Filipino and cosmopolitan. This cosmopolitan self-fashioning became as much a part of her celebrity as her distinctive voice and was instrumental in her success not only within the local entertainment industry but also as her popularity extended abroad. She was a force to be reckoned with, and hers was an indefatigable presence that persisted in the distinct (but still loosely connected) networks of the zarzuela stage, vaudeville, film, and radio. A careful look at the life and career of Atang de la Rama fills a huge gap in the history of the Tagalog zarzuela that has placed much emphasis on male playwrights and composers and their representations of the Filipina.

As a preface to my reconstruction of de la Rama's performing career, I first lay out the ways in which women were portrayed in the zarzuelas of the earlier decades preceding de la Rama's breakthrough on the theatrical scene in Manila. Works by Severino Reyes from the 1910s, in particular, illustrate the ways in which playwrights viewed and portrayed Filipino

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[6] Genevieve A. Clutario, "The Appearance of Filipina Nationalism: Body, Nation, Empire" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014), 2.

[7] Clutario, "The Appearance of Filipina Nationalism," 2.

women within the confines of home and family life. This sets us up to think through how de la Rama's performance both on and off the zarzuela stage revised these conceptions of femininity in society. Alongside a careful study of de la Rama as a singular voice within Philippine popular music and culture, this chapter also looks at her work as a prolific author. De la Rama left a rich and resonant archive of her original drafts of short stories, scripts, comedic sketches, songs, personal essays, and zarzuela librettos, evidence of a thriving intellectual life that accompanied her career as a performing artist. Through zarzuela librettos and scores, rare recordings, newspaper reviews, published interviews, publicity photos, and her own writings, I amplify Atang de la Rama's musical and metaphorical voice to address the important role of women in the performance and production of Tagalog zarzuelas beyond their written characterizations for the stage.

On representing women

Much scholarship on gender and the role of women in Philippine art and society of the early twentieth century tends to focus on the image of the Filipina in literature.[8] On her assessment of Tagalog novels from 1905 to 1921, literary historian and critic Soledad Reyes comments on the recurring portrayal of the "obedient, faithful and self-sacrificing wife who suffers in silence even when confronted with her husband's infidelities."[9] On the image of the Filipina in the Tagalog zarzuela, Patricia Marion Lopez asserts that the "...representation of [women's] bodies through a

[8] On literature see Soledad S. Reyes, "Representations of Filipino Women, in Selected Tagalog Novels (1905-1921)," in *Feasts and Feats: Festschrift for Doreen G. Fernandez*, eds. Doreen Fernandez and Jonathan Chua (Manila: Published and exclusively distributed by the Office of Research and Publications, Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University, 2000), 207-221.

[9] Reyes, "Representations of Filipino Women," 212.

theatre form is always a discursive practice, contributing to the establishment and maintenance of a particular colonial, patriarchal, social order."[10] As outlined in the previous chapters, playwrights of the earlier decades sought to create a world that mirrored that of working-class urbanites while also educating local audiences and preserving the largely patriarchal social order of early twentieth-century Manila. Zarzuelas written during the 1910s and throughout the twenties reflected the steady urbanization of Manila and the different reactions to modernizing changes in and around the capital city. Often, these stories express anxiety over the increasing presence of women in the public sphere, especially in their capacity as workers and professionals in rapidly industrializing Manila, and over the emerging women's movement that gained momentum during the first decades of the US colonial period.

Severino Reyes's didactic zarzuelas from the 1910s, for example, reinforced the primary role of women in the home and in family-building, projecting an idealized and patriotic image of the self-sacrificing Filipina. In his 1914 zarzuela *Ang Tatlong Babae* ("The Three Women"), which was set to music by Ramon Corpuz, Reyes historicizes the Filipino woman in three acts of the zarzuela, each representing a different epoch of Philippine colonial society. The first act is Reyes's ode to the women who valiantly fought against Spanish colonial rule in the Philippine Revolution (reminiscent of his 1902 *Walang Sugat* work) while in the second, the Filipina is more modern and educated. And although she ends up marrying an American and becoming *sajonizado* (Americanized), Reyes concludes that she is still Filipino at the core.[11] The final act is set in the future where gender roles are reversed and women occupy top government positions.

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[10] Patricia Marion Lopez, "Imaging Women in the Zarzuela," *Philippine Humanities Review: Sarsuwela* 11, no. 2 (2010): 359-388.

[11] This is really interesting given that his earlier work *Filipinas para los Filipinos* (1905) criticized the anti-miscegenation laws in the early colonial period. Original text in *Ang Tatlong Babae*: "Ang babae ngayo'y inyo ng nakita, matalinong tunay bihasa at viva, walang gulat, tapat at sajonizado. Datapuwa't Filipina rin ang kaluluwa."

In this imaginary world (labeled "epoca imaginaria" in Reyes's libretto), the men stay at home and perform domestic duties such as cooking, sewing, and even being wooed by the women. Although this role reversal seemed quite progressive at that time, the conclusion of the zarzuela reveals the playwright's more conservative views on women and civic participation. The action centers around a band of revolutionaries led by a woman, Heneral Emilia, an unmistakable reference to Emilio Aguinaldo, a real-life general during the Philippine Revolution against Spain. Heneral Emilia plots to overthrow the current woman-led government and, at one point, claims that the country has moved backwards since women took power. She cites as evidence a recent census reflecting a rapidly decreasing population and high infant mortality rate caused by women's involvement in politics that keeps them from breastfeeding their babies.[12] At the very end of the zarzuela, the revolutionaries successfully overthrow the government. As the chorus urges Heneral Emilia to take over as president, she graciously declines and proclaims that women like her should go back to their "true duties" in rebuilding the home and the Filipino population.[13]

A later work by Reyes, entitled *Puso ng Isang Pilipina* ("Heart of a Filipina," 1919), similarly projects an image of the idealized Filipina as selfless and patriotic. The protagonist Felisa is betrothed to Felipe but is constantly pursued and harassed by the thug-like Alipio, who initially fails to take Felisa by force. Although cast as a villain, Alipio returns later as a captain in

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[12] Heneral Emilia also claims to have read a report by the Internal Revenue that there had been a huge influx into the Philippines of about a hundred million feeding bottles since the women got involved in politics. Severino Reyes, *Tatlong Babae: Ang Babae Bukas*, 9. Original typescript of the libretto held at the Severino Reyes Collection at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Library and Archives, Pasay City, Philippines.

[13] Original text: Heneral Emilia: Bayang Pilipino, Bayang dakila: kayo'y manahimik na; ang Pamunuan ay na sa kapangyarihan na ng mga lalaki; ang mga babaeng gaya ko ay manunumbalik na sa tunay niyang tungkulin: 'mag-alaga ng kanyang sanggol, at pagyamanin ang sariling pamamahay, ang pugad ng pag-ibig.'" Lahat: "Mabuhay ang Pamunuan ng mga lalaki."

the army and a war hero, whose bravery and patriotism endeared him to his superiors and fellow soldiers. He takes advantage of his new position, kidnaps Felisa, and keeps her captive at a military encampment. Although no rape scene is explicitly shown, the dialogues in the opening scene of act three reveal that Alipio physically took advantage of Felisa.[14] Not long after, Alipio is arrested and convicted of his crime against Felisa. At the conclusion of the drama, however, Felisa arrives with a letter from the president granting a pardon to Alipio, saving him from a death sentence. In a final move reminiscent to the one made by the Christian Loling at the end of *Minda Mora*, Felisa forgives Alipio, eloquently tells Felipe that she cannot marry him and tarnish his good name because she is impure, and returns to living with her mother. Felisa's act is cast as a selfless service for the "greater good" and translates into heroism with nationalist overtones, especially in light of Alipio's stature as a war hero. It is also crucial to note that the subject of rape—although rare in Tagalog zarzuelas—is one among many other acts of violence against women depicted onstage that perpetuate the image of the all-suffering and self-sacrificing Filipina.[15]

These examples echo what musicologist Susan Thomas interprets as the "anti-feminist but pro-*feminine*" plots in the repertoire of Cuban zarzuelas. In her study, Thomas argues how Cuban zarzuelas relied on their female protagonists and the artistry of the female voice just as playwrights mirrored "a peculiar set of social, political, and economic conditions, all of which hinged on the role and behavior of women in Cuban society."[16] Similarly, Reyes's zarzuelas

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[14] In the dialogues, Felisa and Alipio used the Tagalog words for rape like "gahasin" and "gahasa."

[15] There are, however, a few occurrences of other types of abuse found in other works such as the example of domestic violence in the 1933 work *Calvario* written by Teodoro Virrey and adapted for the stage by Bernardino Buenaventura.

[16] Susan Thomas, *Cuban Zarzuela: Performing Race and Gender on Havana's Lyric Stage* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 7.

from the 1910s reveal the more reactionary responses to changes in gender dynamics during the US colonial period, especially as women became more visible in the public sphere. In her landmark study of working women of Manila, historian Ma. Luisa Camagay traces the lives of women employed in the tobacco factories, teachers, licensed midwives, vendors, maidservants, and prostitutes or *mujeres públicas*.[17] Many of these women started to migrate in the mid-nineteenth century from the outlying provinces to seek employment in Manila and increased in number during the first decades of US colonial rule as industrialization created a need for a new labor force, particularly in the emerging garment industry.

This influx of women in the public sphere and local workforce also gave rise to the women's movement. In 1905, Concepción Felix, a teacher and later suffragist, established the Asociacion Feminista Filipina, which campaigned for social reforms for women and children in schools, prisons, and factories.[18] By 1908, women were allowed into universities and started to occupy male-dominated professional fields as doctors, lawyers, school administrators, and university professors. Many of these women became pioneers of the women's movement in the early 1910s, which gained momentum in 1921 through the establishment of the National Federation of Women's Clubs that mobilized for suffrage.

In this changing social landscape of the 1920s, debates about the public role of women echoed in the theatrical stages of Manila. As discussed in the previous chapter, the zarzuela repertoire from this period often features settings and characters that contrasted urban cosmopolitan Manila with the more idyllic countryside. This juxtaposition of the urban and the

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[17] Maria Luisa T Camagay, ed., *More Pinay Than We Admit: The Social Construction of the Filipina* (Quezon City, Philippines: Vibal Foundation, 2010), xii.

[18] See Belinda A. Aquino, "Filipino Women and Political Engagement," in *More Pinay Than We Admit* (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2010), 19. Like many other women's movements in the early twentieth century, the Asociacion Feminista also campaigned against prostitution, gambling, drinking, and other social vices.

rural served to highlight the ideals of Filipino women being challenged by the "corrupting influences" of foreign liberal views. Characters ran the gamut of stereotypes, from the virtuous and chaste Filipina to the manipulative flirt, often depicted as a product of rapid urban modernization. Zarzuelas of the late 1910s and '20s often featured scenes set in cabarets (*kabaret* in the Tagalog scripts) or dance halls as indicators of urbanization. The dance halls that proliferated in the Philippines were at times subject to crackdowns by local authorities, while the women that worked as *bailarinas* (dancers) were perceived as agents of moral corruption.[19]

As debates raged on and off the stage about women's roles in society, female singers, actors, and dancers were dominating the zarzuela stage since the 1890s. Stars of the Spanish zarzuela in the Philippines such as Práxedes "Yeyeng" Fernández (1871-1919), Venancia Suzara (1869-1903), and Patrocinio Tagaroma (1874-1926) were among the most well-known Filipina zarzuelistas during the first two decades of the twentieth century and even formed their own zarzuela company, FERSUTA. Their company staged Spanish-language zarzuelas in Manila and in extensive tours in the Southern regions, particularly in Negros and Iloilo.[20] It was quite rare, however, for these artists of the Spanish repertoire to cross over to Tagalog zarzuelas, whereas a few Tagalog comedia artists began performing in the zarzuela staage. The rise of Tagalog-language zarzuelas provided new opportunities for women to perform, drawing on a new generation of artists and vocalists trained primarily in the European, largely Italianate, style of

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[19] Dance halls had been in operation at least a decade prior, when the American civil government authorized such establishments to enliven the Manila nightlife (primarily for its military service men). See Alfred W McCoy, *Policing America's Empire the: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 244. The Santa Ana Cabaret was one of the earliest dance halls, established in 1908, that was able to continue operating until the 1920s. Its orchestra was led by American jazz pianist Clifford Adams (ca. 1924). See Peter Keppy, "Southeast Asia in the Age of Jazz: Locating Popular Culture in the Colonial Philippines and Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 44, no. 03 (October 2013): 452.

[20] E. Arsenio Manuel, *Dictionary of Philippine Biography Volume 1* (Quezon City: Filipiniana Publications, 1955), 168-169.

singing who were also native Tagalog speakers well-versed with the cadence and rhythm of the language. Such artists included Maria Carpena (also considered the first Filipina recording artist), Estanislawa San Miguel, and Casiana de Leon, all of whom worked for the Gran Compania Zarzuela de Tagala and Samahang Ilagan. It was in this theatrical milieu that Atang de la Rama began her performance career.

Atang, the "dalagang bukid"

Brought up by her older sister Pastora Matias and her sister's husband, the zarzuela composer Leon Ignacio, de la Rama began performing child roles in Spanish zarzuelas and Spanish translated operettas like *La Mascota* and *Viuda de Alegre*. Growing up in a musical family with direct connections to the theatrical stage boded well for the young de la Rama. She also performed for audiences in *veladas* (musical soirees) and musical concerts in Manila. Her early repertoire consisted of popular numbers and arias from operas making the rounds in Manila at that time. De la Rama, for example, performed excerpts from *Caballeria Rusticana*, the Spanish-language version of the Mascagni opera. A short review published in the June 26, 1915, issue of *The Independent* noted de la Rama's effective performance of "Romanza de Santuzza." The review commented on her remarkable clarity of pitch and intonation, which showed her musical maturity at a very young age.[21] At age fifteen, de la Rama made her debut in a leading role in *Dalagang Bukid* in 1917, with music composed by her brother-in-law Ignacio. Theater historian Nicanor Tiongson underscores the importance of Leon Ignacio and Atang de la Rama's familial

[21] Original review: "Atrajo la atencion de la concurrencia la niña Honorata de la Rama, que cantó con una afinacion sorprendente la romanza de Santuzza, de la ópera 'Caballeria Rusticana.' Mereció los honores de la repetición. Es una niña que promote ser una gran cantriz en el futuro." The aria, most likely "Voi lo sapete, o Mamma" from the original Italian, is an intense and emotionally demanding excerpt for a very young singer.

relationship, and how the composer helped launch de la Rama's career by guaranteeing her roles in zarzuelas for which he was commissioned to write the score.[22] Yet it was also plausible that the composer's career and perhaps even the entire Tagalog zarzuela scene in Manila took an upward turn because of de la Rama's successful debut in *Dalagang Bukid*.

In the zarzuela, de la Rama played the part of Angelita, a young girl working as a flower vendor who functioned as the virtuous Filipina amidst the backdrop of Manila's bustling nightlife. Angelita's parents plan to marry her off to the much older and wealthy loan shark Don Silvestre. Deflecting the advances of the aging suitor, Angelita eventually elopes with her childhood sweetheart, the law student Cipriano. *Dalagang Bukid* showcases familiar scenes and social practices of early twentieth-century Manila such as the *kabaret* and gambling, a pastime of Angelita's parents, whose constant losses indebted them to Don Silvestre. The cabaret scenes are particularly striking as these portray glimpses of the leisurely life of young, middle class men and of bailarinas. Throughout the zarzuela, the urbanization of Manila and its perceived vices are subtly contrasted with the idyllic image of the countryside especially embodied in the character of Angelita. In the drama, Angelita is often referred to as gentle and "ladylike" with an aura of virtue and innocence about her.[23] Her occupation as a flower vendor highlights these contrasts amidst the cabaret and the life of bailarinas.

The solo "Nabasag ang Banga" ("The Clay Jar Broke") from the first act, however, adds a striking image of Angelita's character as she sings in front of a crowd of male admirers. The diagetic song number is typical of Taglog zarzuelas where the female lead role performs for her on-stage audience. The song tells the story of a young maiden fetching water who accidentally

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[22] Nicanor Tiongson, "Atang de la Rama: Una't Huling Bituin," *Liwayway,* March 10, 1980.

[23] Cipriano, in his first solo, refers to Angelita as his "banal na Birhen" ("holy Virgin [Mary]").

slips and breaks the jar when interrupted by a persistent suitor. The song ends with the maiden coming home in tears, explaining to her parents that an *aswang*, a shapeshifting monster in Philippine mythology, scared her and took her jar, leaving her with nothing but her muddied clothes (see Appendix B). A few theater and music scholars have underlined the sexual innuendo in "Nabasag ang Banga" with the possible reading of the broken jug as a metaphor for lost virginity.[24] A publication from 1923, however, counters this interpretation. In the introduction to his compilation of short stories entitled *Nabasag ang Banga?*, Tagalog writer Remigio Mat. Castro writes that he borrowed his title from the popular zarzuela and insists that the playwright Ilagan did not intend any metaphorical messages for the original song but instead meant for it to be taken literally.[25] Castro further explains how the saying "nabasag ang banga" only later became an idiom for the Tagalog-speaking audience, who found the phrase more pleasing to the ear and a more appropriate substitute to saying "losing one's virginity" in public.[26]

A closer reading of de la Rama's performance of "Nabasag ang Banga," however, points to the sexual implications of the song couched within the seemingly innocent and bucolic text. It also underlines the more affective performance of de la Rama that teasingly plays with the demure and delicate "dalagang bukid" stereotype. Listening to a recording of "Nabasag ang Banga," the power of de la Rama's voice is defined not so much by its intensity as by her preciseness of pitch and clarity of tone.[27] De la Rama's voice remains distinct from that of her

[24] Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 331.

[25] Remigio Mat. Castro, *Nabasag ang Banga?* (Manila: Paredes Inc., 1923), n.p.

[26] It is also entirely possible that Castro's reading of the original intent of the phrase was a self-censoring tactic.

[27] Atang Dela Rama, *Kamuning: Re-mastered*, Yesteryears Music Gallery, 2000, compact disc. This compact disc is a rare compilation of de la Rama's songs held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Mills Music Library and the Library of Congress Recorded Sound Research Center.

contemporaries.[28] Her earlier vocal training primarily in Italian opera combined well with the nuances and theatricality of the Tagalog language. The light and slightly faster vibrato, the higher timbral quality, and the more open sound of her voice all aid in the clear articulation of her singing of the Tagalog text, which is crucial in telling the narrative of the song. As "Nabasag ang Banga" progresses, however, the playfulness she adds to her interpretation slowly complicates the image of the pure and virginal dalagang bukid. In the final repetition of the song's chorus, de la Rama plays out affective nuances with vocal slides and the pronounced slowness of her delivery. Here, she is deliberate in her pauses and slides, commonly referred to in Filipino music parlance as "bitin" and "hagod," and gives the listener a sense of being left hanging just before the final cadence. Confident in her languid disregard for the composer's melody, de la Rama renders a playful and even flirtatious version of the song; it is almost as if she is mischievously waiting to tip over and break the jar herself. [29]

Accounts of de la Rama's performance of "Nabasag ang Banga" mention her dancing while singing, her *bakya* or wooden clog slippers tapping to the fox trot tune.[30] Except for these casual anecdotes, few sources provide descriptions of de la Rama's performance. The song's use of the fox trot is, nevertheless, instructive. The dance genre was extremely popular around the

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[28] Compared with contemporary singers like Naty Arellano and opera singer Jovita Fuentes (who also sang Tagalog repertoire), de la Rama's vocal style is more distinctive in its articulation and legibility of the sung Tagalog. It is quite difficult to ascertain the date of this recording. In his notes in the performance program accompanying a tribute to de la Rama in 1987, Nicanor Tiongson mentions that the recording was produced in Japan during her tour abroad sometime in 1926. See Nicanor Tiongson, *Atang de la Rama: Una't Huling Bituin* (Pasay: Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1987), 16.

[29] Tiongson similarly underlines de la Rama's flirtatious performance as he anecdotally reconstructs the artist's rendition of "Nabasag ang Banga": "The star winks naughtily. As bemused laughter begins to break out in ripples, the audience perks up to the rhythm and tune of: *Ano ang nangyari?/ Nabasag ang banga/Pagkat ang lalaki/Ay napadupilas… …*[What happened?/The jug broke/Because the young man/slipped…] Tiongson, *Una't Huli*, 19.

[30] Nicanor Tiongson, "Atang de la Rama: Una't Huling Bituin," 59. See also Doreen Fernandez, "Zarzuela to Sarswela," 331.

same time as the zarzuela's premiere. In 1915, a lengthy article on the fox trot by American dancer Joan Sawyer appeared in the Manila weekly journal *The Independent* complete with detailed instructions and suggestions for music to accompany the dancing.[31] Incorporating a fox trot in the zarzuela points to a fairly standard practice among zarzuela composers of using both imported and local popular music and dance genres in their scores, as outlined in the previous chapters. This was a practice employed by composers of the earlier decades, who used popular forms such as the waltz, habanera, tango, mazurka, and the more localized genres like the balitaw and kundiman. De la Rama tap-dancing to a fox-trot, moreover, poses a striking contradiction to the image of the pastoral dalagang bukid and attests to the influence of American popular music in the Tagalog zarzuelas.

Atang, a singular voice with a multifaceted career

While de la Rama's role in *Dalagang Bukid* built her reputation as the demure Filipina in the 1920s, the rest of her career encomapassed a wider variety of roles and performance opportunities. After de la Rama's breakthrough in *Dalagang Bukid*, she performed in a succession of works that revitalized the lackluster Tagalog zarzuela scene in Manila, including writer Preciosa Palma's *Paglipas ng Dilim* (1921), Julian Cruz Balmaceda's *Sa Bunganga ng Pating* (1921), and Servando de los Angeles's *Alamat ng Nayon* (1925), and *Ang Kiri* (1926). The scores for these zarzuelas, along with most of the others featuring de la Rama, were

[31]Joan Saywer, "El 'Fox Trot,'" *The Independent Weekly*, September 4, 1915. Sawyer recommends listening to the recording "Ballin' the jack" to get the beat of the dance. The article was basically taken from a booklet put out by Columbia Gramophone Company with a letter written by Sawyer, dated November 23, 1914. See Mark Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz and Other Scandalous Dances: Outrage at Couple Dancing in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 99. Sawyer also campaigned for womens'women's suffrage during this period and, at one time, claimed that "dancing aided women's minds, as well as exercising their bodies, which helped shape new, independent attitudes for women." See Russ Shor, "Joan Sawyer: Jazz Vampire," 8, http://www.vjm.biz/161-joan-sawyer.pdf (accessed December 27, 2017).

composed by her adoptive father Leon Ignacio. As mentioned above, the two figures sustained each other's careers: Ignacio's success as a zarzuela composer was fueled by de la Rama's popularity as much as the young artist benefitted from the theater networks to which her adoptive family belonged. The zarzuelas in which de la Rama performed mirror the late 1910s and early '20s of urbanizing Manila with its dance halls and cabarets from which the character of the Filipino "working girl" emerge.

In 1926, de la Rama starred in *Ang Kiri* ("The Coquette"), a moralizing story about the ex-bailarina Sesang and her re-entry into polite society. Sesang is labeled in the libretto as a "dalagang haliparot," a descriptor for a young and licentious woman.[32] As a former cabaret dancer, Sesang bears the social stigma of her previous occupation and struggles to seek respectability and moral redemption. Genevieve Clutario notes how the Tagalog word *kiri* had become synonymous with the flapper and became one of the dominant symbols of Filipina modernity in the late 1920s.[33] This particular strain of Filipina modernity corresponds to the ways in which new fashion and beauty regimens became strongly tied to perceptions and subsequent depictions of the "babae ngayon" (woman of today) in the zarzuelas as more sexually liberated. As the *kiri* character, Sesang embodies the modern, cosmopolitan woman of the 1920s, while scenes and costume details situate her "worldly" characterization: in her first entrance at the opening party scene, for example, the libretto instructs the actor to be in a dress décolletage ("nakabestidong escotado"). In a tennis court scene showing the new types of social spaces that women now inhabit, Sesang dons sports attire as she hangs out with her string of suitors.

To complicate the stereotyped character of the morally suspect flirt, however, de la Rama

[32] Later re-stagings of the zarzuela changed the title to *Ang Masayang Dalaga* (The Happy Maiden), which reflects a subtler variation of the "dalagang haliparot" type.

[33] Clutario, "The Appearance of Filipina Nationalism," 110-111.

uses her voice to provide a subtler portrait of a woman's struggle in polite society. In Sesang's solo "Ang Masayang Dalaga" ("The Coquette"; literally, "The Happy Maiden") from the second act, de la Rama plays the seductress who confidently entices her admirer to an intimate dance. A recording of the song, set in the lilting *danza* rhythm, begins with a subdued rendition by de la Rama of the opening verse (see Appendix B for full lyrics) as Sesang sadly reminisces about her cabaret days. In the first line of the chorus, de la Rama prolongs the opening word "halina" ("come hither"), adding a subtle allure as she sings of a heart-stopping kiss and promptly instructs her partner not to be timid in touching her.[34] In the closing verse, de la Rama sings with more urgency as the text describes the movement of the dance and the dance floor as a kind of heaven where the *bailarina* sings of her dreams.

Another work, titled *Maria Luisa* (1929), garnered favorable reviews for de la Rama.[35] Her performance in a 1930 production again illustrates the idea of the performer as author, in that her contribution as performer provided a crucial component to increasing the value of the works themselves owing to the positive critical acclaim. In *Maria Luisa*, de la Rama played the role of Anita, the daughter of the wealthy Don Justo, who cruelly punishes Anita for getting pregnant out of wedlock by taking away her daughter. Among the highlights of the production was one particular song rendered by de la Rama, "Awit ng Pagkahibang" (Delirium Song) from act two. In the emotionally charged number, Anita finds out that her daughter is missing; she alternates between singing about looking for her child and spiraling into manic laughter as Don Justo tries to comfort her to no avail. No recording of this particular song has so far materialized, but reviews of the zarzuela underline the effectiveness of de la Rama's performance. Several

[34] Atang Dela Rama, *Kamuning: Re-mastered*.
[35] The zarzuela was written by Remigio Mat. Castro and set to music by Jose Z. Rivera.

commentators unabashedly praised the Tagalog diva in the local press, including the zarzuela's author, Remigio Mat. Castro, who wrote in the paper *Pagkakaisa*:

> If "Maria Luisa" is being praised and enjoyed, I can only say that as its author, I am indebted to Atang de la Rama, who is a true miracle in her role…from the first act of the play until the end…more so when she sang the song of madness…Jesus…One hears from all corners of the theater the audience crying and the mute sighs of their pent-up emotions.[36]

Franco Vera Reyes similarly exclaims in his review in the *Taliba*:

> I hope the many artists who starred in "Maria Luisa" will not be offended by this…but they owe a huge part of the zarzuela's success to the "Mutya ng Dulaang Tagalog" [muse of the Tagalog drama]. She is still the Atang de la Rama of the popular *Dalagang Bukid*.[37]

Vera Reyes's observations reveal how, after about a decade, de la Rama's reputation and early success in *Dalagang Bukid* still remained fresh for frequent theatergoers in Manila, especially as de la Rama had also become associated with other theatrical entertainment venues such as in the thriving vaudeville stages of Manila in the 1920s.

In addition to the roles she portrayed in Tagalog zarzuelas, de la Rama was a frequent performer in the Savoy Nifties, a prominent *bodabil* act in Manila that featured both local and foreign artists in a variety of popular song and dance programs. Newspaper reviews between 1922 and 1924 remark on her performance of Tagalog repertory, especially of kundiman songs.[38] This likely contributed to her earning the moniker "Queen of the Kundiman," which in turn

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[36] Original text: "Kung napupuri at kinagigiliwan ang 'Maria Luisa," ang masasabi ko, bilang awtor, ay utang kay Atang de la Rama na isang tunay na himala sa pagtupad ng kanyang papel…simula sa unang bahagi ng dula at hanggang sa wakas…lalo noong inaawit niya ang awit ng pagkahibang…Hesus…Naririnig sa lahat ng dako nang dulaan ang iyakan ng mga manonood at ang mga piping buntong -hininga ng damdaming nakukuyom sa kanilang mga puso…" Remigio Mat. Castro, *Pagkakaisa*, January 12, 1930.

[37] Original text: "Huwag namang daramdamin ng maraming artistang lumalabas sa 'Maria Luisa'…ay utang sa pagtupad ng Mutya ng Dulaang Tagalog ang lalong malaking bahagi ng tagumpay ng sarsuewlang ito. Siya pa rin ang Atang de la Rama ng napabantog na *Dalagang Bukid*." *Taliba*, April 26, 1930.

[38] Newspaper clippings from the Atang de la Rama Collection at the National Library of the Philippines (NLP) Special Collections.

enhanced her enduring image as the demure and "traditional" Filipina of the theatrical stage. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the kundiman as an established song genre steeped in nationalist sentiments did not emerge until the early '20s; yet, on contemporary zarzuela and vaudeville stages, it was already seen as an inherently Filipino traditional song persevering alongside the influx of modern global popular music. The contrast between modern and traditional music genres was further reinforced by performing jazz songs and the kundiman repertory side by side in popular singing competitions such as the "Jazz and Kundiman Championship" contest. Pitting "Jazz girls" against "Lady Kundimans," these singing contests featured Atang de la Rama and Maggie Calloway, a silent film star in the late 1920s.[39] But other reviews of local bodabil also commented on how de la Rama expanded her fan base and complicated her image as the "dalagang bukid." At times, de la Rama also performed other genres like novelty songs in English and popular excerpts from Italian operas, which she often sang with the Italian baritone Mario Padovani.[40] One review expressed shock to see how the "demure little Queen of Kundiman steps out with some of the most wicked scandal-stuff imaginable. And she gets away with it."[41] Although details are scarce on this particular performance, other existing commentaries portray her as commanding the stage; as in the columnist and art critic Ignacio Manlapaz's account during one of de la Rama's performances:

> Atang de la Rama helps in the eradication of untoward behavior of theatergoers and that they may learn to respect the art of acting. She often looks out for those who distract her when she sings in the theater, and the moment she finishes, she goes

[39] Peter Keppy, *Tales of the Southeast Asian Jazz Age: Filipinos, Indonesians and Popular Culture, 1920-1936* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2019), 80. A playbill for such singing contests is also held in the Atang de la Rama Collection, National Library of the Philippines.

[40] "At the Savoy," *Manila Daily Bulletin*, March 17, 1923. Also in newspaper clippings from the Atang de la Rama Collection at the National Library of the Philippines Special Collections.

[41] "Savoy Nifties New Spanish Ballet," *The Tribune* (January 24, 192?) [year incomplete]. Newspaper clippings, Atang de la Rama Collection, National Library of the Philippines.

> down the stage and slaps whoever heckles her many times over. She did this twice already and she hopes to continue doing so until all who comes to watch her learns to behave properly.[42]

De la Rama's popularity went beyond Manila as she went on to do several extended tours abroad in 1926, 1932, and 1936. She was especially popular in Hawai'i where there had already been a large population of Filipinos recruited to work in the sugar cane plantations as early as 1906. In 1926, Manila bandmaster Andres Baclig brought Atang de la Rama and his jazz band, the Manila Syncopators, to Hawai'i.[43] She was contracted by Cornelio Gorospe, head of the Consolidated Amusement Company's "Filipino Branch," to do performance tours and appear in the recently built Waikiki Theatre.[44] Several newspaper reports claim that Atang signed a P800/month contract for a six-month engagement in Hawai'i, with side tours in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Kobe, Japan.[45] A report on one of her performances in Hawai'i described her as a "Filipino prima donna," who impressed her audience with different "ethnic" performances: first, she came out as a Japanese woman singing the 1916 Broadway song "Poor Butterfly" and then as a Filipina, "dark and bright-eyed," singing Tagalog songs and kundimans.[46]

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[42] Original text: "Tumutulong si Atang de la Rama, upang ang mga may pangit na asal na nanonood sa mga dulaan ay matutong gumalang sa arte. Kung umaawit siya sa tanghalan ay laging minamataan niya ang mga gumagambala sa kanyang pag-awit, at sa sandaling makatapos ay nananaog siya sa ibaba at binabayaran ng mariing sampal sa mukha ang sinumang bumastos sa kanya. Makalawa na niyang ginawa ito at umaasa siyang magpatuloy habang ang mga nanonood sa dulaan ay hindi natututong magpakatino." Ignacio Manlapaz, *Philippines Herald*, April 1934.

[43] Ruben Alcantara, *Filipino History in Hawaii before 1946: The Sakada Years of Filipinos in Hawaii* (Lorton, VA: 1988), 43, https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/17651 (accessed October 13, 2019).

[44] See Alcantara, *Filipino History in Hawaii before 1946*, 18. See also "Si Atang de la Rama," *Hiwaga,* September 19, 1936.

[45] See "Si Atang de la Rama," *Hiwaga,* September 19, 1936.

[46] Bert D. Chilson, [no title], *Hilo Herald-Tribune*, Sept 12, 1926. Also in Amado V. Hernandez, *Magkabilang Mukha ng Isang Bagol at Iba Pang Akda* (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1997), 229.

An account of de la Rama's early travels abroad also appeared in a 1926 issue of *Philippines Free Press* and highlighted the nationalist sentiments that such performances conveyed. The article, in particular, talks at length about de la Rama's appearances in Hawai'i:

> Atang de la Rama, the [gentle] ambassador of native kundiman, we've been occupied for many days by her recent departure to Hawaii on a goodwill mission of patriotic art. Once in Honolulu, [she took ownership of] the heart of the Hawaiian public with her …smile and the irresistible attraction that had made her the queen of Tagalog theater.[47]

En route to Hawai'i, de la Rama made stops in Hong Kong and Yokohama, Japan. Claiming to reproduce first-hand impressions from a letter by de la Rama, the article also mentioned her meeting Artemio Ricarte (alias Vibora or "viper"), a popular Filipino general during the 1896 Revolution against Spain and the Philippine-American War, living in exile in Japan for his fight for Philippine independence. At the meeting, de la Rama sang kundimans "in honor of the voluntary exiles." Moved to tears, the account continues, Ricarte then said to de la Rama

> …this is the first time since I don't know how long that I've heard one of our kundiman. Continue your trip to show other nations and whites our capacity for all classes of occupations and that we also have artists that we can be proud of.[48]

De la Rama's persistent programming of the *kundiman* in her performances abroad further built her reputation as a cultural ambassador. As elaborated in the preceding chapter, literature on nationalism in music and the performing arts often cites the *kundiman* as essentially produced by composers from more formal and academic institutions such as the University of the

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[47] "El Poder del Kundiman," *Philippines Free Press*, August 21, 1926, 62-63.

[48] "El Poder del Kundiman," 63. Also, it is telling how this encounter with an exiled "rebel" did not pose any problems for de la Rama as she returns to the Philippines. Original text excerpt: "Para demonstrar les su gratitude, la orquesta de la comitiva tocó aires Filipinos y Atang canto kundimans en honor a aquellos desterrados voluntaries. Y… "me faltan palabras para describer aqui—escribe Atang—la alegria del general, al oir mi kundiman. Se le cayeron las lágrimas y me dijo: 'Atang, ésta es la primavera vez desde hace no sé cuanto tiempo que oigo un kundiman nuestro. ¡Proseguid, vuestro viaje, para dar a conocer a otras naciones y a los blancos nuestra capacidad para toda clase de menesteres, y que también tenemos artistas de quienes podemos enorgullecernos!'"

Philippines Conservatory of Music. Missing from this historiography of the kundiman, however, is its earlier ties to the zarzuela stage and de la Rama's active role in performing and building up the kundiman repertory as much as its composers had done. Much of the early kundiman repertoire came from zarzuelas in which de la Rama starred. Songs such as "Kundiman ni Angelita" from *Dalagang Bukid* and "Amadha" from the zarzuela *Mutya ng Silangan* ("Jewel of the East")[49] serve as forerunners to the stand-alone kundimans of the 1920s. The patrotic anthem *Bayan Ko* ("My Country"), perhaps the most popular and enduring kundiman in Philippine music history, was also popularized by de la Rama. [50] Yet, standard accounts trace the development of the kundiman from its origins in a handful of songs created during the Revolutionary period at the turn of the twentieth century to the art songs of the conservatory composers while skipping over the existence of the kundiman in the Tagalog zarzuelas.

As mentioned earlier, the kundiman had already become an iconic type of song steeped with patriotic sentimentality that stemmed from romantic love songs and serenades of an earlier local repertoire. Images of the ideal woman and the virtuous Pilipina recur in many of these kundimans, often standing in as a symbol for the longed-for independent motherland. De la Rama's vocal technique and theatricality not only made her especially well-suited for the song genre but also created the kundiman's distinctive sentimentality and now-standard performative nuances. The characteristic "bitin" or prolonged delivery of cadential phrase endings, for example, echo vocal techniques heard in de la Rama's own recordings. De la Rama can even be credited for transforming the kundiman into a particularly potent musical and cultural symbol of

[49] Composed by Juan S. Hernandez. There is a common misconception that "Amadha" is from Hernandez's earlier score for *Minda Mora*, but this is incorrect.

[50] The brief biographical sketch included in the research guide for her personal collection deposited at the National Library of the Philippines mentions her premiering the iconic song in 1924 at a workers' rally.

Filipino-ness and patriotism in the 1920s. As Abbate aptly notes, there is power and authority in performances and in how a particular work does not exist except as it is given phenomenal reality by performers.[51] Composers of this period took a serious interest in creating kundimans precisely because of the very voices that opened up the genre to a wider audience and gave materiality to their compositions. De la Rama's role in the Tagalog zarzuelas and in the nascent popular entertainment industry in the Philippines undeniably set the stage for the genre's popularization. Her reputation as the "Queen of the Kundiman" once more revises the notion that performers are but conduits for composers' creativity and instead emphasizes the role of singers and musicians as authors themselves.

Technology and the diva

De la Rama's career and popularity were further boosted by new media such as audio recordings, radio, and film. By the 1930s, de la Rama recorded no less than a dozen Tagalog tracks for Columbia records.[52] A number of these songs come from zarzuela scores such as "Nabasag ang Banga" and "Masayang Dalaga." The recordings further showcase de la Rama's vocal quality and range. Her voice retains a youthful character, not unlike that of a soubrette soprano, with its piercing and bright tone and fast vibrato that most likely reinforced her image as the youthful and innocent dalagang bukid. Despite the poor quality of these older recordings, de la Rama's voice remains striking in its clarity and vibrancy. One in particular, the duet "Bibingka" (a type of Filipino rice cake/delicacy), shows de la Rama's theatrical skills and a more jazz-like and

[51] Abbate, "Opera; or, the Envoicing of Women," 234.

[52] Tiongson comments on how de la Rama cut records for RCA [Victor] in Japan in 1926. See Tiongson, *Atang de la Rama: Una't Huling Bituin*, 16. However, existing records of de la Rama are all by Columbia records.

vaudevillian characteristic in her voice.[53] The song features a short, comedic dialogue where de la Rama plays the role of a vendor who sells rice cakes to tenor Vicente Ocampo, who then tries to squirm out of paying for the bibingka he had just tasted. De la Rama retorts by calling the police, and the following text describing how the bibingka is cooked is full of double-entendre, bordering on the raunchy. De la Rama uses heavy vocal slides and a gruff timbre as she sings of the final verse:

Si nanay at si tatay
Minsan ay nagkagalit
Dahil sa bibingkang
Ayaw daw ni tatay
Na malagkit...

Mother and father/At one time quarreled/
Because of the bibingka/Father did not want it/Sticky…

De la Rama's distinctive voice was also heard in early Philippine radio. In the 1930s, de la Rama was on the roster of artists in the KZIB radio station founded by the American department store owner Isaac Beck. Beck's store sold radios and phonographs and was the distributor of Columbia records in Manila. He initially set up KZIB to advertise his merchandise and to help boost sales through entertainment, which Beck provided by tapping the local recording artists for Columbia, including de la Rama, as part of his regular music programming.[54]

Histories of film and radio in the Philippines often remark on how stage performers often transitioned to radio or the silver screen. Such a narrative assumes that the new technologies, film in particular, have made the older zarzuela stage obsolete. This is not entirely accurate, as

[53] Atang Dela Rama, *Kamuning: Re-mastered*.
[54] Elizabeth L. Enriquez, *Appropriation of Colonial Broadcasting: A History of Early Radio in the Philippines, 1922-1946* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2008), 43; 109.

some artists still continued to remain active in various forms of popular entertainment including the zarzuela. Many artists, however, navigated across different performing media and saw these various platforms as part of a larger network of popular entertainment in the Philippines. De la Rama frequently crossed over into different venues and enjoyed success wherever she performed. As I outlined in Chapter Three, the theatrical stage in Manila actually benefited from the novelty of cinema, at least in the early 1920s. The 1919 film version of *Dalagang Bukid*, for example, is considered the first film largely produced and directed in the Philippines by Filipinos, and it capitalized on de la Rama's success onstage as much as it propelled her career. Film historian Nick Deocampo remarks how her successful debut on the zarzuela stage as dalagang bukid convinced the film version's director, Jose Nepomuceno, to cast her in order to "ensure patronage for this novelty entertainment that, in the early years of moving pictures, could hardly compete with the immense popularity of theatrical shows."[55] And even with Nepomuceno's silent-film version of the zarzuela, it was de la Rama's live singing from behind the curtain that provided the emotional depth to the images projected on screen.[56]

De la Rama appeared in several films throughout her career. Following the 1919 *Dalagang Bukid* film version, she starred in nine other films, including the pre-World War II productions *Dalagang Silangan* (Maiden of the East, 1930), *Ay, Kalisud!* ("Oh, How Difficult!" from 1938), and *Mahiwagang Binibini* ("Mystical Maiden," 1939).[57] In April 27, 1940, more than twenty years after its premiere, *Dalagang Bukid* was restaged at the Manila Grand Opera House. Produced by the original playwright Hermogenes Ilagan's son, Moneng Ilagan, the zarzuela provided a way to see film stars ("mga bituwin ng Aninong Gumagalaw") live on stage.

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[55] Nick Deocampo, *Film: American Influences on Philippine Cinema* (Anvil Publishing, Incorporated, 2017), 519.

[56] Laconico-Buenaventura, *The Theater in Manila*, 88.

[57] Tiongson, *Atang de la Rama: Una't Huling Bituin*, 31.

The restaging featured a still youthful de la Rama as Angelita and the film actor Angel Esmeralda as Cipriano, who recounts in the zarzuela's printed program how he played a minor role in the original production when he was five years old (see Figure 7). In the same program, de la Rama surveys her own performing career in the Philippines and abroad as well as in the different "world of art: in *bodavil*, radio, and film." But de la Rama also insisted on her continued commitment to the theatrical stage and expressed optimism about a renaissance of Tagalog theater, especially at a time when the Tagalog language had been recognized as the national language.

Figure 7. Cover page for the 1940 restaging of *Dalagang Bukid* featuring de la Rama and Angel Esmeralda[58]

[58] Program part of the Hermogenes Ilagan Collection in the Special Collections at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

The rise of commercial photography and its use in promoting works and artists was also crucial in this period in the Philippines. Photographs of de la Rama undoubtedly aided her popularity locally and abroad and served as additional sites for her "performance" of Filipina femininity. As she embarked on her first tour to Hawai'i, de la Rama was featured in the July 1926 issue of *The Women's Outlook* magazine. The bilingual (English and Spanish) magazine advertised itself as "devoted to the best traditions of the Filipino home and the progress of the women in the Philippines" and was edited by Filipino suffragist Trining Fernandez-Legarda. Although many of the magazine's articles cover family life and domesticity, historian Mina Roces aptly comments that it also encouraged women to "*go out of the home* in order to become better wives and mothers [emphasis in original]," and its editorial board transparently advocated for women's suffrage during this period.[59] De la Rama's inclusion in this publication therefore signaled how her international celebrity status lent particular potency to the idea of feminine progress and made an already familiar face available to a strain of Filipina nationalism that promoted women's active participation in the public sector.

Other newspaper accounts of her tours abroad commented on de la Rama's appearance, revealing media's familiar tendency to focus on female singers' physical looks more than on their musical talent. For de la Rama, however, her self-fashioning style became an integral part of her status as a celebrity and a commanding artist. Photographs from the 1920s and '30s elaborate on how the artist creatively combined traditional and modern fashion trends that often contradicted with prescriptions on how women should act and dress in contemporary Filipino society. This is particularly significant when the use of fashion negotiated multiple aspects of

[59] Mina Roces, "Is the Suffragist an American Colonial Construct?: Defining 'the Filipino woman' in Colonial Philippines," in *Women's Suffrage in Asia: Gender, Nationalism and Democracy*, eds. Louise Edwards and Mina Roces (London; New York, NY: Taylor and Francis, 2004), 37.

Filipina identity at a time when women's roles in the larger society were changing rapidly.

In many of her publicity photos, de la Rama is seen wearing Filipino dress typically worn by middle- and upper-class women, the *traje de mestiza*, later called *terno* (see Figure 8).[60] This consisted of a top called the *camisa*, the *saya* skirt, and the *pañuelo*, which evolved from a functional modesty shawl of the earlier decades into a more decorative lapel sewn on to the camisa.[61] The traje de mestiza was worn by upper class Filipino women and became reserved for evening and more formal wear.

Figure 8. Atang in different versions of the *traje de mestiza* / *terno*

[60] There are rare exceptions to her multiple images in Filipino dress, however, like a promotional photo for her 1926 performances to Hawai'i and the 1934 staging of *Ang Kiri*, both showing de la Rama with an evening gown. Later newspaper articles and publications about her (especially the 1987 program that accompanied the ceremony conferring her the National Artist award) had photos of her mostly in Filipiniana attire.

[61] The term *terno* emerged in the late 1900s and originally referred to the use of a single type of material (like the *sinamay* or abaca fabric) for the camisa, pañuelo, and saya of the dress, creating a more uniform and matching look. See Gino Gonzales et al., *Fashionable Filipinas: An Evolution of the Philippine National Dress in Photographs, 1860-1960* (2015), 141.

By the 1920s, it became the symbolic national dress worn by women in public and in various civic organizations, contrasting with the Western-style dress worn by women who pursued higher education and those who were visible in professional spaces traditionally occupied by men. The Filipino dress' prominent butterfly sleeves and abaca fabric were considered impractical for more modern work spaces. For the new class of working and professional women, "[m]odernization required the abandonment of traditional dress when performing 'modern' tasks."[62]

As Roces further points out, however, a complex politics of dress was carried out by the local suffragists, who purposefully used the traje or terno in their civic-oriented work to counter those who saw the movement as another form of colonial imposition. This position ironically came from the male politicians advocating for independence. To them, the US American characteristics deemed feminine were conflated with the "modern" woman: English-speaking, public school educated (preferably university educated, a professional or a "clubwoman" active in civic work), and by the 1920s, a suffragist. The perception that suffragists also had strong support from American colonial officials (i.e. Governor General Francis Burton Harrison) added to the political tensions. This created what Roces considers a dilemma in which Filipina suffragists supported the nationalist project while lobbying for a (male-dominated) government that would disenfranchise them as women.[63] Rejecting the idea that their campaign grew out of an essentially US cultural construction of the feminine, Filipina suffragists took to what they called "panuelo activism" in their use of the terno and reasserted the idea that the women's suffrage was, indeed, a Filipino project.[64]

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[62] Roces, "Is the Suffragist an American Colonial Construct?," 45.

[63] Roces, "Is the Suffragist an American Colonial Construct?," 27-30.

[64] Roces, "Is the Suffragist an American Colonial Construct?," 25.

For de la Rama, the terno was an essential component of her musical performances for both local and international audiences. She writes

> I have always believed that the "panuelo" is an indispensable part of the Filipino "terno" and that without it the terno is incomplete. Wherever I go, in the course of my professional tours and engagements, I always wear my "saya" long and the sleeves of my camisa as ample as they should be like the "gauzy wings of a butterfly," and it has never failed to elicit sighs of admiration among women of other countries I have visited. The intricate folding of the "panuelo" is in itself an art, and it has been a constant source of wonder among foreigners. I will never permit myself to be caught dead in a "knee-length" skirt, without the customary "panuelo," and without camisa sleeves that look like the wings of a newly hatched grasshopper.[65]

Although one can read a certain conservatism in de la Rama's disdain for the "knee-length skirt," her insistence on wearing the terno became an integral part of her performing her own femininity and Filipino identity. Moreover, de la Rama's choice of a short wavy hairstyle (i.e. the Marcel and finger waves) and use of makeup points to what historian Clutario argues as a conscious act among Filipinas to "transform their appearance as a way to make claims to modernity vis-à-vis modern beauty."[66] Combined with the terno, de la Rama's appearance conveys a fusion of the traditional and modern, pastoral and cosmopolitan. This ran contrary to some of the prescriptions in contemporary zarzuelas on how women should dress and carry themselves in public, as illustrated in the previous chapter.

Earlier photographs of de la Rama represent the more idealized images of Filipina femininity found in the zarzuelas. In *Dalagang Bukid*, de la Rama is photographed wearing a *balintawak* dress in the 1919 benefit program quoted in the opening of this chapter. The *balintawak*, with the top shirt's prominent sleeves and translucent fabric, was the everyday wear of the lower and middle working classes in the first decades of the twentieth century. De la

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[65]Personal Papers—Statements—Reports, Atang de la Rama Collection, National Library of the Philippines (undated). Original text is in English.

[66] Clutario, "The Appearance of Filipina Nationalism," 224.

Rama's portrait found in the 1919 playbill mentioned in the opening of this chapter shows her wearing an earlier version of the *balintawak* (see Figure 9a). A later, undated photo of her shows de la Rama in a similar dress with its bell-like sleeves holding the *banga* or clay jug (see Figure 9b). This later type of dress is a stylized version of the older *balintawak* and has a more straight-lined silhouette with matching fabric for the top and bottom parts of the dress. The later type of *balintawak* shown in Figure 3 developed strong associations with images of the rural countryside such as the neighboring town of Antipolo where the more affluent Manileños would visit for summer jaunts and picnics.[67]

Figure 9a. As "dalagang bukid"

Figure 9b. De la Rama holding a *banga*

Figure 9c. Amorsolo's "Campesina" ("Peasant," 1927)

This earlier staged photo invites further reading on how de la Rama's own image carries a powerful influence separate from that created for her by the zarzuela authors. In her introduction to an essay collection on technology and the figure of the diva, musicologist Karen Henson remarks on the how the diva is created when "sopranos, audience members and one or more

[67] Gino Gonzales et al., *Fashionable Filipinas,* 280.

technologies come together." In this process, the visual is equal to the aural and goes against the notion that the diva's "authenticity" "only resides in the 'pure' power of the voice and vocal expression."[68] The use of photography became a crucial medium in which the photographic image of the celebrity extended the iconic roles for which artists have become known and created a new set of audiences beyond the theatrical stage. In de la Rama's case, her visual iconography as the dalagang bukid caught on as a fashion trend in early Philippine commercial photography. The sartorial imagery of the dalagang bukid became a standard for young women who had their portraits taken in the 1920s and '30s, wearing balintawak with pastoral backgrounds and props such as a banga and baskets of flowers or produce.

Although it is difficult to ascertain the circulation of de la Rama's image from the 1919 playbill, it is highly probable that her onstage character contributed to the popularity of the country theme in many studio photographs. These iconic images of de la Rama's dalagang bukid also likely inspired the "dalagang Filipina" figure found in painter Fernando Amorsolo's romantic-realist scenes of the idyllic countryside from the 1920s (see Figure 9c), with its bandana-clad young woman who bears some likeness to de la Rama's 1919 portrait. The dalagang Filipina figured prominently in Amorsolo's works throughout his career and had become, as historian Mina Roces argues, the romanticized image of "the Filipino woman" that most Filipino men in the 1920s wanted to keep, especially at the time when the women's suffrage movement was gaining traction in the Philippines.[69]

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[68] Karen Henson ed., *Technology and the Diva: Sopranos, Opera, and Media from Romanticism to the Digital Age*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press 2016), 20.

[69] Roces, "Is the Suffragist an American Colonial Construct?," 32-33.

Atang, the playwright

De la Rama's career went beyond a mere symbol for the contemporary social and political milieu of her time. She took charge of her career as an actor and eventually became a mover in the burgeoning popular entertainment industry as a producer and playwright. In the late 1930s, de la Rama was instrumental in bringing together other artists of the zarzuela stage in her activities as producer and zarzuela company director. After another extended and successful tour in Hawai'i in 1936, de la Rama formed Compañia De la Rama sometime in 1938 and produced several Tagalog productions. According to a lengthy advertisement in *La Opinion*, the company's repertoire included a revival of zarzuelas from the 1920s, including *Ang Kiri*, and even a Tagalog translation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*.[70] Reviving the Tagalog zarzuela at this moment also coincided with the campaign to institutionalize Tagalog as the national language and a renewed interest in local types of theatrical performances rooted in spoken Tagalog (*duplo*, Balagtasan). Across the country, several tours for the company were planned in an effort to support this project.

De la Rama also penned several new scripts for the Tagalog zarzuela and operetta stage, many of which were set to music by Leon Ignacio and later staged by her own company. Most notable among the librettos are *Dalagang Silanganan* ("Maid of the East," 1927), *Diwata ng Ipugaw* ("Fairy of Ifugao," 1932), and *Anak ni Eba* ("Daughter of Eve," 1939). Though some are incomplete, the extant scripts and scores for all three works provide insights into de la Rama's approach as a writer for the stage. Each revolves around a female protagonist who tries to rise above complicated circumstances. *Dalagang Silangan* is a story of family intrigue with a tragic

[70]El Teatro Tagalo Emergera Como Un Nuevo Ave Fenix," *La Opinion*, March 16, 1938. Other titles included *Sa Bunganga ng Pating, Anak ng Dagat, Bulaklak ng Kabundukan, Sundalong Mantika, Ararong Ginto*

ending. Its protagonist, Maring, was brought up by Tata Tonio because her real father, the wealthy Don Felix, did not want anything to do with her when she was younger. Now that she is a young woman, however, Don Felix attempts to take her back to his childless family with his wife Busia. Throughout the drama, Maring manages to evade Don Felix's ploys to take her away from Tata Tonio as well as from the advances of an American suitor, Dyer. In the end, a conflict between the families turns violent as Don Felix shoots Tata Tonio. The curtain lowers over a crying Maring, who curses Don Felix, the man who left her for dead, while the one she calls her real father, Tata Tonio, breathes his last. Although the tragic ending is not common in the Tagalog repertoire, *Dalagang Silangan* echoes the family-centered plots found in contemporary zarzuelas such as those of the Samahang Gabriel discussed in the previous chapter. What remains striking in de la Rama's writing, however, is the female protagonist's unwavering confidence in choosing her own destiny and those she considers to be her own family.

Diwata ng Ipugaw (alternate title: *Bulaklak ng Kabundukan/Flower of the Mountains*), on the other hand, echoes themes such as the city/country divide and the tensions of inter-class relations that were prominent in the later Tagalog zarzuela repertoire. De la Rama sets the action in Manila and the province of Ifugao in the northern mountain region of Luzon, introduced with the opening "Himno ng Kalikasan" (Hymn of Nature). The protagonist, Ilang, grew up in Ifugao and eventually fell in love with Alfredo, whose family is from Manila but has ties to the northern province. Tensions rise when Alfredo's mother and sister mock Ilang because of her background and disparagingly call her a rustic and dark-skinned nobody from the "boondocks" (derived from "bundok," which is the Tagalog word for mountain). The work includes the typical mix of serious narrative interspersed with comedic dialogues by minor characters, usually servants of the affluent families. De la Rama also added an older comic character, Aling Serapya, who is

wealthy neighbor known for her eccentricity and amateurish singing. Later in the work, Ilang confronts her in-laws by boldly talking back to them and calling them "ahas" (snake), in a rare show of emotional strength on the part of the heroine. A program exists for a May 7, 1938 performance in Biñan, Laguna's Cine Ligaya. The production also included bodabil acts in between scenes. It is curious how the program misattributes Jose Corazon de Jesus as the writer of *Bulaklak ng Kabundukan*, while a typescript of the libretto prepared and copyrighted in 1932 credits de la Rama as the author of the work. This may have been a typographical error, or it might have been done intentionally because de Jesus was a popular Balagtasan artist at the time.

In the early 1930s, de la Rama also became a director and writer of bodabil shows for various entertainment venues in Manila.[71] She wrote and directed a short program titled "Hele Hele" for the Cine Paris in 1932, featuring a mix of jazz and blues songs with Tagalog repertoire that de la Rama performed.[72] Copies of her comedy sketches include two short and racy skits that were set on an island full of women, all of whom pursued a stranded and hapless man with a mix of enticing dialogues, songs, and comedic repartees. This is a side of de la Rama's stage career that is not well known. Her versatility as a writer and performer working on multiple theater stages also illustrates the overlapping networks of the different popular entertainments in the Philippines in which she circulated.

Other short comedic sketches and scripts penned by de la Rama explore the dynamics of home life that lay beyond the norms of the ideal Filipino family. In "Ang Yaya," a single father left by his wife seeks out a "yaya" or a childcare nurse and finds a fifteen-year old girl applying

[71] At the Cine Star (Azcarraga; Funeraria Paz na sa Recto), Bellevue (Paco), Cine Metropolitan (Quiapo). Caagusan, "Atang de la Rama: Reyna ng Sarsuwela," (n.d. and newspaper title), newspaper clipping from the Atang de la Rama Collection, NLP Special Collections. See also Nicanor Tiongson, *Una't Huling Bituin*, 31.

[72] Program and Manuscripts, Atang de la Rama Collection, NLP Special Collections.

for the position. The father, shocked at the girl's age, asks how many children she has and clarifies that he expected someone to serve as a wet nurse. The girl, unruffled, replies that she has none but she can learn things very quickly, including nursing a child. The father expresses his disbelief and comically faints in response. In "Ayaw sa Kapwa Artista" ("Not Liking Fellow Artists"), de la Rama portrays provincial domestic life clashing with the demands of working as a professional theater artist. Here, de la Rama sketched out scenes between a husband and wife, whose relationship is strained by the husband's frequent business trips to Manila and his obvious disdain for his wife's former performing career. De la Rama's own personal essays hint at the same balancing act common to middle-class marriages. Reflecting on the domestic and economic concerns of the Filipino working woman, de la Rama writes

> It is not for selfish motives that a Filipino woman works and gets a job but it is because of the burning love she has for the poor suffering husband and the spirit of cooperation that compels her to do so. She finds it impossible to keep on a balanced budget unless she helps her partner in life—that is she gets a job. Upon landing in a job she, however, either chooses to be financially independent of her husband (this usually happens when relations of husband and wife are [estranged]) or to remain a dependent of the husband.[73]

De la Rama's own marriage to poet and labor leader Amado Hernandez in 1932 possibly reveals the sources of some of these concerns. In his biography of Amado Hernandez, Jun Cruz Reyes tells the story of their first meeting in a Balagtasan where Hernandez was one of the poets participating as a *lakandiwa* or judge on the panel while de la Rama was a guest performer.[74] Their marriage was at times fraught with rumors of domestic quarrels, yet they remained together even after Hernandez was imprisoned for about six years in the 1950s on charges of rebellion and associations with the communist movement. In one of her more candid postwar

[73] Personal papers, Atang de la Rama Collection, National Library of the Philippines. Originally written in English.

[74] Jun Cruz Reyes, *Ka Amado* (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2012), 161.

interviews, de la Rama spoke of her own financial support of the social causes that she and her husband championed:

> Oh, Ka Amado was a **labor leader**, councilor, poet, writer. He was everything that didn't make money. It is good that I am **broad-minded** and I knew that he helped the poor and the workers. When there was a strike, he would order sacks of rice and cans of biscuits and charge them to me. That was why Atang de la Rama's pocket was always empty. (Emphasis in the original.)[75]

Throughout de la Rama's life, she took part performing at rallies and for various social organizations and women's groups like Panitik Kababaihan, Kaisahan ng Kababaihan sa Pilipinas (where she servesd as president), the Women Auxiliary of the Confederation of Labor Organization, and the Ladies' Association in her hometown of Gagalangin, Tondo.[76] Jun Cruz Reyes, Hernandez's biographer, also makes the compelling suggestion that Hernandez became more politically active because of de la Rama, not the other way around.[77]

Continued legacy

After the Second World War, de la Rama starred in several other films and hosted her own radio show in the 1950s. In the '60s and '70s, she made significant contributions to the restaging of prewar zarzuelas and continued to be a resource for younger theater performers and companies. Even in these later decades, de la Rama was seen in her trademark terno, a picture of grace with a little bit of spunk. Atang de la Rama's celebrity image and creative output arguably kept the Tagalog zarzuela stage afloat, even in the midst of an increasing competition from other forms of

[75] "Atang de la Rama: Zarzuela Star," *Philippine Panorama*, August 28, 1983. Original text: "Ay naku! Si Ka Amado, **labor leader**, konsehal, makata, manunulat. Lahat na lang ng di mapagkakakitaan, nasa kanya na. Mabuti na lang at **broad-minded** ako at nalalaman ko ang tulong na ginagawa niya sa mahihirap at sa mga manggagawa. Pag may welga, magpapakuha yan ng saku-sakong bigas at lata ng biskuwit kaya't palaging laslas ang bulsa ni Atang de la Rama." Emphasis in the original article.

[76] Nicanor Tiongson, *Una't Huling Bituin*, 33.

[77] Cruz Reyes, *Ka Amado*, 265.

popular entertainment in the 1930s and '40s. But because of her ubiquitous visibility (and audibility) in the artistic and civic life in the Philippines, her name has outlived those of most other artists of the zarzuela stage, and her career has withstood the changes and technological advances in mass media. Or, perhaps more accurately, it was because of her remarkable use of such technologies that her work and contributions to Tagalog theater have found lasting resonance. Of all the zarzuelas that de la Rama performed throughout her entire career, *Dalagang Bukid* remains the greatest success.[78] But a more comprehensive account of her creative and artistic breadth reveals an artist with a keen understanding of performance on and off the stage. De la Rama's voice, mediated through her recorded performances and her rich writings, is at once a source of musical authorship and a powerful testament to women's creative work that has long been overlooked in the historiography of Philippine music.

[78] Manuscripts, Atang de la Rama Collection, NLP Special Collections. List estimated number of performances of *Dalagang Bukid* compared to other works.

Coda: Postwar Resonances

The impulse towards projecting a national identity through the Tagalog zarzuelas re-emerged in post-colonial Philippines. In the decades following the Philippine independence from the US in 1946, private initiatives as well as state-sponsored projects worked towards the revival of the zarzuelas as an important cultural legacy. In the 1950s and '60s, remnants of several theater companies from various locales in and outside of Manila formed civic societies and collectives in order to survive the dwindling interest in zarzuelas postwar. In 1949, the Philippine Dramatico-Musical Society (PDMS), which aimed to promote the continued performance of zarzuelas and other related theatrical genres, was established. Some of the founding members of the PDMS were associated with the Abucay Dramatico-Musical Society (ADMS), an offshoot of a zarzuela company that traces its roots from the first decade of the twentieth century in the province of Bataan, about seventy miles northwest of Manila. Although information is scarce on the PDMS, the transformation of the Abucay society from a locally situated entity to a national one is telling of the impetus to consolidate resources and compile zarzuela-related materials beyond those of the Abucay group. Delfin Manlapaz, who owned a publishing company and was associated with both the PDMS and the Abucay group, also began efforts to collect original scores and librettos with the intention of copyrighting and republishing zarzuela repertoire.

Manlapaz's began collecting the Abucay Dramatico-Musical Society's librettos and scores, especially by those of Nicolas Flores (ADMS's theater director and playwright), in preparation for the centennial celebration of the birth of the Philippine hero José Rizal. This initial effort opened up potential leads for acquiring more materials related to the Tagalog

zarzuela, including works by composer Leon Ignacio and the bulk of the Samahang Gabriel repertoire. The collection that Manalapaz amassed also became one of the very few resources for productions initiated by educational institutions and private theater companies that restaged prewar zarzuela repertoire in the 1960s and '70s. Yet, these restagings are often still one-off productions and did not necessarily create a sustained interest in zarzuela performance.

Coinciding with these private performance intiatives are examples of scholarly interest in Tagalog theater. Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio's ethnographic research on the state of the theatrical scene in Manila's neighboring province of Bulacan in the early 1960s remains an important study. For her research, Lapeña-Bonifacio conducted interviews with directors, impresarios, and actors who were struggling to get jobs at that time and observed how remaining members from earlier troupes similarly created an artists' collective to navigate the tenuous landscape of theatrical performance at that period. In the end of her study, Lapeña-Bonifacio offers recommendations on how to revive the production of zarzuelas. One of her suggestions was the importance of public and private agencies in promoting and sustaining the production of zarzuelas while exploring ways that would not alienate actual arts practitioners. She also emphasized the importance of government support in sustaining companies, which had largely been absent throughout the zarzuela's existence in the early twentieth century.[1] Moreover, Lapeña-Bonifacio's scholarship on theater in the Philippines (including her 1972 monograph *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights: Early American Occupation*) was part of a

[1] See Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The Tagalog Zarzuela: A Study of Its Writing, Production and Problems in a Philippine Municipality* (Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1963), 58. Lapeña-Bonifacio, who received her Master's Degree in Speech and Theatre Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, also referred to the grassroots-oriented initiatives of The Wisconsin Idea Theater as a model.

larger corpus of historical works that reasserted anti-colonial nationalism amidst US neo-colonial overtures in the Philippines during the Cold War.[2]

Later in the 1970s and '80s, zarzuela revivals also coincided with this growing nationalism amidst the social and political turmoil surrounding the years of the Marcos regime. State entities and government-sponsored establishments such as the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines were among the main proponents of renewed interest in Tagalog zarzuelas in these later decades. Several state proclamations from 1974 and 1979, for example, authorized the Zarzuela Foundation to conduct nationwide fundraising campaigns that would provide the resources for re-stagings of prewar repertoire. These efforts resulted in the re-staging of *Minda Mora* in 1975, which was used to reinforce ideas about cultural nationalism as the zarzuela was performed in other parts of the country, including cities in the southern Visayas and Mindanao regions. The new production also included the music and dance group Dayang-Dayang from Mindanao as an attempt towards cultural "authenticity" and actual Muslim representation on stage. Quite ironically, however, the 1975 score still retained the solo "Dalit ni Minda" in its original form with its caricaturing image of the "savage" Moro.

The *Minda Mora* production also went on tour internationally, including performances in Malaysia and Indonesia, as a form of cultural diplomacy. As a state-driven project, the zarzuela production sought to highlight the Philippines' ties to its Southeast Asian neighbors by heightening its Islamic identity via Muslim Mindanao. While the touring production garnered generally positive reviews in its efforts to promote Philippine culture abroad and to corral

[2] Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, *The "Seditious" Tagalog Playwrights: Early American Occupation* (Manila: Zarzuela Foundation of the Philippines, 1972)

regional unity, the 1970s also saw newly erupting violence and armed conflict between the Philippine government and separatist groups in Mindanao resulting from the long history of state neglect and strained Christian-Muslim relations in the region. Such contradictions highlight how politics is inextricably linked with art and cultural forms and complicate the often-celebratory nature of written histories of zarzuelas as valued cultural legacies.

Alongside these restagings of older zarzuela repertoire, newly written works specifically conceived by its principal authors as contemporary *sarsuwelas* sought to recover an anti-colonial past in their continued investment on the theme of Filipino nationalism. Such works were either set during the late-nineteenth to early twentieth century, or focused on contemporary issues that touched upon Filipino-American relations postwar.[3] Nicanor Tiongson's *Pilipinas Circa 1907* (1982), for example, resituates the genre as part of the "evolution of a national theater that is pro-Filipino" as it puts center-stage the political conflicts that manifested themselves between the Partido Nacionalista and the Partido Federal during the early years of US occupation.[4] *Pilipinas Circa 1907* was largely inspired by Reyes's 1906 work *Filipinas para los Filipinos*, a theatrical commentary on miscegenation laws against Filipino men marrying white American women during Reyes's time, which Tiongson reworked into a broader critique of Americanism. In *Pilipinas*, the Federalistas are cast as the antagonists and "Filipino collaborators" that facilitated US encroachments in local businesses, politics, and education, a rather ironic reimagining of the period given Reyes's ties to the Partido Federalista I discussed in the first chapter.

While zarzuela productions remain few and far between in the postwar period, the perception of the zarzuela as an essentially anti-colonial and subversive theatrical form persists

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[3] See Tiongson, "A Short History," 180.

[4] See Nicanor Tiongson, "Production Notes: Playwright's Notes," in *Pilipinas Circa 1907: Production Script & Notes, Score for Piano and Voice* (Quezon Vity: Philippine Education Theater Association, 1985), 11-13.

strongly in historical narratives of the genre. Much work is needed in reconstructing a comprehensive account of the zarzuela's development in the Philippines, especially as it intersected with the emergence of other forms of popular entertainment and helped create an industry that continues to rely on content and aesthetics familiar to the zarzuela. Filipino films during the first few decades post-WWII (and even later in television) featured storylines and themes of hardship, social mobility, and domestic melodramas found in the zarzuelas of the 1930s. The lingering popularity and almost cultish emphasis on love teams and the stereotypical "bida-contrabida" (protagonist-antagonists) characters in Philippine films and TV shows can be seen as a continuation of the narratives that were first featured in the Tagalog theater. Likewise, the popular music industry that emerged postwar retains the soundscape of the zarzuela stage. The popular ballads of the 1950s and '60s and the heavily orchestrated tracks found in recordings from this period echo the previous decades' aesthetics of sentimentality that accompanied the melodramas of the later zarzuela repertoire. These postwar resonances continue to reflect the nature of the zarzuela as a multivalent form of music-theater and its lasting influence in Philippine popular entertainment.

During its most productive years in the first half of the twentieth century, the Tagalog zarzuela vividly documented the ways in which Filipinos creatively reimagined their everyday colonial experience. The network of playwrights and intellectuals invested in the Tagalog theater reveals the political complexities of the early decades of US colonial rule. Mapping out the debates on the ideal modern Tagalog theater critically underlines the different agendas and competing nationalisms that were projected on the theatrical stage. Such a nuanced history of the early development of the zarzuela in the Philippines improves on the one-dimensional formulation of artists as either seditious (and, therefore, faithful nationalists) or collaborators

under larger US imperial machinations. The Tagalog zarzuela stage also provided a creative space for composers and performers to project a Filipino cultural identity rooted in the mastery of a musical language that combines imported and local performance styles. Competency in the global genres of opera and operetta were deployed by the produers of the Tagalog zarzuela as cultural uplift to counter the demeaning portrayals of the local population in US American political rhetoric. The notion of cultural uplift, however, inadvertently recreated racial prejudice and colorism among Filipinos themselves and highlights the messy process of representation and identity-formation through stage performance. In the later decades of the 1920s and '30s, those advocating for cultural uplift in creating a Filipino national music decried the influence of new forms of imported music, namely Tin Pan Alley repertoire, and ironically misconstrues the importance of this new musical language in the Tagalog zarzuela's later development.

The perspectives of performing artists and musicians also stand as vital sources in defining the multi-faceted character of the zarzuelas and in acknowledging the role of performers as equal laborers in the popularization of the genre. Bringing to the fore the indispensable role of women in various capacities of zarzuela production radically redefines the way we think of the playwright and composer as the sole creators of the zarzuela. Such a shift in understanding authorship is crucial, particularly in arguing for the continued relevance of zarzuela productions in the Philippines amidst the rise of other popular forms of entertainment like film and vaudeville. Alongside playwrights, composers, and performers, audience members also contributed to the richness in meaning created by zarzuela productions. While reconstructing audience reception is a difficult and often neglected endeavor, glimpses of how contemporary audiences may have understood the zarzuela performances reveal how artistic works continue to accrue meaning beyond its creators' intentions. Further, the changing demographic of the

zarzuela's audience points to the class-motivated interests and concerns of the genre's main advocates throughout the decades. While early proponents of the zarzuela had the goal of educating the local population and providing entertainment for both colonial elites and an urban mass audience, the later repertoire reveals a more concerted effort among the zarzuela practitioners to create a musical theater practice by and for the lower working classes.

Through these various perspectives enumerated above, the story of the zarzuela's development in the Philippines also becomes a story about the formation of Filipino modern subjectivities through the performing arts. As this development unfolds during a time of rapid change driven by both global and local conditions, the question of nationalism and national identity remains a strong current in how subsequent scholars have framed the history of the Tagalog zarzuela. But by attending to the sociological questions of race, class, and gender, a more nuanced history of the Tagalog zarzuela vocalizes the disjuncture between claims to a national identity and the social realities that expose the arbitrariness of nationalism as a totalizing construct. In the end, the story of the Tagalog zarzuela contributes to larger narratives of cultural mobility and of music and theater practices that have circulated across the globe and have become localized in different colonial contexts.

Appendix A

Zarzuela Productions from 1890 to (ca.) 1940

	Title	Date	Genre	# of acts	Author	Composer	Score	Location/ holding	Reference
1	*Budhing Mapagpahamak*	1890	zarzuela	5	Maximino de los Reyes	Isidoro Roxas/ Delfin R. Manlapaz (arr.)		Manlapaz, UPCMu	
2	*Masamang Kaugalian*	1901		3	Pantaleon Lopez	Remigio			Hernandez, EAM I, 255[1]
3	*Manga Caraniuang Ugali*	1900	zarzuela	3	Ambrocio de Guzman	Gavino Carluen	orch parts	UPCMu	
4	*Ang Magkakayo/ La Mercadera*		zarzuela tagala	1	C. Lopez	R. Cuevas	piano - vocal	UPCMu	
5	*Pag-ibig sa Lupang Tinubuan*	1901	zarzuela	3	Pascual Poblete	Severino Kenpin Bautista			
6	*Cecilia Mabini*	7.15.1901	drama lirico	3	L. Galvez	Gavino Carluen	piano-vocal	UPCMu	

[1] Tomas Capatan Hernandez, *The Emergence of Modern Drama in the Philippines (1898-1912)* ([Honolulu]: Asian Studies Program, University of Hawaii, 1976), 166, https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10125/12167/2/uhm_phd_7525161_r.pdf (accessed October 13, 2019); E Arsenio Manuel, *Philiipine Biography volume 1*, 255.

7	*Ang Larawan ni Doray*	9.15.1901	zarzuela	3	Roman Reyes	Gavino Carluen	piano - vocal	UPCMu	
8	*Ang Sampaguita*	11.17. 1901	zarzuela		Patricio Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon			Hernandez[2]
9	*Ang manga Pinagpala/ Martires de la Patria*	3.18.1903	zarzuela	4	Severino Reyes	Fulgencio Tolentino	orch parts	CCP	
10	*Ang pagcacatiuala/ La confianza*	4.27.1902	zarzuela	3	P. Natividad / J. Molina	F. Marin / L. Ignacio	full orch score	Sibley (Rochester, NY)	
11	*Laong Laan*	1902	zarzuela fantastica politica-religiosa		Pascual H Poblete	Alfredo Roa			
12	*Ang Kalupi*	04.3.1902	zarzuela	1	Severino Reyes	Fulgencio Tolentino	pno-voc/ parts	CCP	
13	*Walang Sugat*	06.14. 1902	zarzuela	3	Severino Reyes	Fulgencio Tolentino	??	CCP	
14	*Filotea o Ang Pag-aasawa ni S. Pedro (Leyenda Filipina)*	10.9.1902	zarzuela	3	Severino Reyes	Gavino Carluen	piano	CCP	ER 01.22.1903
15	*Mariang Sinukuan*	1902?	opereta	3	Aurelio Tolentino	Fortunato Pineda	piano score	UPFil	
16	*Sandugong Panaguinip*	1902	opera		Pedro Paterno/ Roman Reyes (trans)	Ladislao Bonus	piano?	Filipinas Heritage Lib	

[2] Hernandez, *The Emergence of Modern Drama in the Philippines*, 169-170.

17	*Rosa*	1902		4	Pantaleon Lopez	Leon Ignacio			Hernandez 168, EAM I 256
18	*Maria Encarnacion*	1902/ 1903	zarzuela	3	Faustino Salomon	Cayetano Jacobe			CCP/EAM
19	*Magdapio*	1903	opera	4	Pedro Paterno/ Roman Reyes (trans)	Alejo Carluen		UPFil	
20	*Sa San Lazaro*	01.4.1903	zarzuela	1	Severino Reyes	Crisipino Reyes		CCP	
21	*Simoy sa Kaparangan*	01.10/ 11.1903	melodrama tagalo		Bernardo Solis	Jose Estella	pno-vocal	UPCMu	ER 01.8.1903
22	*Sumpaan*	01.15.1903	zarzuela tagala	3					ER 01.13.1903
23	*Rizal at ang mga Dios*	3.8.1903	Tagalog opera	3	Aurelio Tolentino	Simplicio Solis			
24	*Ang Infierno*	3.7.1903		3	Pantaleon Lopez	Hipolito Rivera / Leon Ignacio (acts 2-3)			Hernandez, 167-68
25	*Declaracion de Amor*	5.4.1903		1	Pat. Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon			Capatan-Hernandez[3]
26	*Ang Capangyarihan nang nais*	9.27.1903			Corcuera	Carluen			ER 9.24.1903
27	*Wagas na Pag-Irog*	10.10.1903	zarzuela	3	Hermogenes Ilagan	Hipolito Rivera			EAM
28	*Ligaya*	1904	zarzuela	3	José Carvajal?	Jose Estella	orch, parts, pno-vocal	UPCMu	La Dem, 1904

[3] Hernandez, *The Emergence of Modern Drama*, 170.

29	*Minda Mora*	04.23.1904	zarzuela	3	Severino Reyes	Juan S. Hernandez	pno-vocal	CCP	
30	*Ang Bagong Fausto*	1904	zarzuela	1	Severino Reyes	Crispino Reyes		CCP	
31	*Huling Pati o Luha ng Puso*	1904	zarzuela	3	Severino Reyes	Gavino Carluen			
32	*13 de Agosto (title or date?)*	8.1904			Pascual Poblete				ER/MP 8.17.1904
33	*Dalawang Hangal*	9.3.1904		1	Hermogenes Ilagan	Leon Ignacio			
34	*Gayuma*	1905	operang filipina	3	Pedro Paterno, Roman Reyes (trans)	Gabino Carluen			
35	*Filipinas para los Filipinos*	12.23.1905						CCP	
36	*Ang Buhay ni Rizal*	1.14.1905	zarzuela	4	Pedro Paterno				
37	*La Venta de Filipinas al Japon*	06.23.1906	zarzuela	2	Severino Reyes	José Estella	pno-vocal	CCP	
38	*Ang Opera Italiana*	1906	zarzuela		Severino Reyes	José Estella	orch score	CCP	
39	*Lukso ng Dugo*	04.22.1906			Severino Reyes	Juan S. Hernandez	pno-vocal	CCP	
40	*Noli Me Tangere*	12.7.1906	drama lirico	4	E.M. Gross/ Sofronio Calderon, (trans)	José Estella			
41	*La Glorificacion de Rizal*	12.27.1906	zarzuela	4		Crispino Reyes			
42	*Los Amores de Rizal*	12.30.1906	zarzuela	4	Pedro Paterno	Alejo Carluen			
43	*Ang Sangla ni Rita*	8.1907	zarzuela comica	1	Hermogenes Ilagan	Jose Estella	pno-vocal, parts	UPD Ilagan coll	

44	*Ang Sulo y Yebana/ Yebana y Sevillana*		juguete comico	1	Aurelio Tolentino			UPD Tolentino	
45	*Apo Apo*	1908	zarzuela	1	Pantaleon Lopez	Mateo Varios			
46	*Las hadas filipinas ante la tumba de Rizal*	12.30.1910	Poema lirico-fantastico	1	Severino Reyes	Juan Hernandez, Alejo and Gavino Carluen			
47	*Paz y Buen Viage*				Aurelio Tolentino	Francisco Buencamino	pno-vocal	UPCMu	
48	*Ang Tala ng Unibersidad*					Nicanor Abelardo			
49	*Lucila*	1911				Nicanor Abelardo			
50	*Sumilang*					Nicanor Abelardo			
51	*Bill de Divorcio*	04.27.1912	drama lirico tagalo		Hermogenes Ilagan	Leon Ignacio		UPD Ilagan	
52	*Liham ng Hilahil ó Carta Funesta*	10.1913	opereta	1	Severino Reyes	Ramon Corpus	parts, pno score		
53	*Akibat*	1913	opereta		Florentino Ballecer	Nicanor Abelardo			
54	*Ang Liham ng Ligaya*	1927	sarsuela	4	Severino Reyes	Alejo Carluen		CCP	
55	*Ang Tatlong Babae*	1914	sarsuela	3	Severino Reyes	Ramon Corpuz		CCP	
56	*Bisa ng Pag-ibig*	1915			Hermogenes Ilagan	A. Custodio			
57	*Sa Kapahintulutan ng Asawa*	1915			Pat Mariano				Indepen-dent Weekly
58	*Mga Artistang Sampay-Bakod*	1915			Pat Mariano				

59	*Panarak ni Rosa o Puñal de Rosa*	12.1.1915/ 6.28.1921	dulang tagalog		Hermogenes Ilagan	Leon Ignacio	orch score, parts		Manlapaz coll
60	*Ang Kundiman ni Naty*	3.10.1918	zarzuela filipina	3	Severino Reyes	Antonio Molina	--	CCP	
61	*¡¡Cinematografo...!!*	6.1.1918	dulang tagalog	1	Jose Ma. Rivera	Gavino Carluen	--		
62	*Kawanggawa*	1918				Nicanor Abelardo	--		
63	*Kapabayaan o Bunga ng Masamang Hilig*	1918	sarswela				--		
64	*Ang Krus na Pula*	1919	zarzuela		Emiliano Trininidad Reyes	Juan Hernandez	--		
65	*Ana Maria*	1919	zarzuela	2	Severino Reyes	Antonio Molina	pno-vocal	CCP	
66	*Venus, o ang Operang Putol*	1919	sarzuela		Hermogenes Ilagan	Fortunato Pineda	--	UPD Ilagan	
67	*Puso ng Isang Pilipina*	1919	zarzuela	3	Juan Hernandez	Severino Reyes	--	CCP	Daria's thesis (138)
68	*Paglipas ng Dilim*	1920	opereta	3	Preciosa Palma	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal		
69	*Bunganga ng Pating*	1921	sarsuela		Julian Cruz Balmaceda	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
70	*Lihim at Pag-Ibig*	1921	zarzuela	1	Patricio Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon	--	Manlapaz	
71	*Tatlong Bituin sa Cabaret*	1921	opereta	3	Severino Reyes	C. Reyes	parts	CCP	
72	*Ang Anak ñg Dagat*	12.14.1921	zarzuela	3	Patricio Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon			
73	*Ang Mestiza*	1922			Engracio Valmonte	Nicanor Abelardo	--	Manlapaz	
74	*Lakangbini*	3.22.1922	opera	3	Patricio Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon			

75	*Ararong Guinto*	4.19.1930 (restaging)	sarsuela	3	Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
76	*Sundalong Mantika*	1924	dulang tagalog	3	Florentino Ballecer	Leon Ignacio	parts, pno-vocal	UPD Ilagan, Manlapaz	
77	*Ang Alamat ng Nayon*	1924	sarsuela		Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal		
78	*Dakilang Punglo*	1926			Servando de los Angeles	Nicanor Abelardo	--		
79	*Ang Kiri*	1926	opereta	3	Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
80	*Tayo'y Pakasal Na*						--		
81	*Ang Likha ni Pierrot o ang Batik ng Kabihasnan*	1931	opereta	3	Florentino Ballecer	Nicanor Abelardo	--	Manlapaz	
82	*Makabagong Dalaga*	1934				Nicanor Abelardo	--		
83	*Batang Tulisan*	4.17.1905?				Nicanor Abelardo	--		
84	*Mutya ng Silanganan*	--			Hermogenes Ilagan	Juan S. Hernandez	--		
85	*La Guardia Nacional*	--				Juan S. Hernandez	--		
86	*Ilaw ng Katotohanan*	--	sarsuela		Hermogenes Ilagan	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal		
87	*Diwata ng Ipugaw*	6.16.1932	opereta	3	Atang de la Rama	Leon Ignacio	--		
88	*Ang Bagong Kusinero*	--			Julian Cruz Balmaseda	C? Buencamino	--		
89	*Puri at Buhay*	1935	opereta	3	Atang de la Rama/ Flor Ballecer (score)	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal		

90	*Ligaya nang Palad*	4.20.1935	sarsuela				--		LIW 4.19.35 p23
91	*Carmen (Matiisin)*	1895	sars-welang Pilipino		recounted by Catalino Canlapan to Nicolas Flores (reconstr.)	Isidoro Roxas	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
92	*Kahapon, Ngayon at Bukas*	1903	drama simboliko	3	Aurelio Tolentino		--		
93	*Sa Bubungan*	1911	zarzuela	1	Flor Ballecer		--		
94	*Paglipas ng Dilim*	1920	sarswelang Pilipino		Preciosa Palma	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz coll	
95	*Maria Luisa*	1921	dulang Tagalog	4	Remigio Mat. Castro/B. Buenaventura	Jose Z. Rivera	pno-vocal		
96	*Batik ng Kabihasnan (Ang Likha ni Pierrot)*	1922	operetang Tagalog	3	Ballecer	Nicanor Abelardo	--	Manlapaz	
97	*Lihim at Pag-ibig*	1922	dulang Tagalog	1	Patricio Mariano	Bonifacio Abdon	--	Manlapaz	
98	*Kiri, Ang*	1926	opereta	3	Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
99	*Katubusan ng Puri*	1928	dula	1	Flor Ballecer		--	Manlapaz	
100	*Deo...!*	1928	dula/sarzuelang Tagalog	3	Bernardino Buenaventura	Jose Z. Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
101	*Magpapawid, Ang*	1933	zarzuela	4		Jose Z. Rivera	parts	Manlapaz	

102	*Birheng Walang Dambana*	1936	opereta	4	Fausto Galauran/B Buenaventura	Pablo Navarro	parts	Manlapaz	
103	*Maria Clara*	1936	Operetta		D. Jose Sedano	Leon Ignacio/arr. Hilarion F. Rubio	--	Manlapaz	
104	*Kaban ng Tipan, Ang*	1938	sarsuela/ opereta	4	Bernardino Buenaventura (adapt.)	P.E.I.N. ? - Dan Gabriel (arr.)	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
105	*Krus na Bulaklak*	1941	sarsuela	3		Danding Gabriel (arr.)	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
106	*Himagsikan 1896*	1957	dulang musikal		Rustico R. Babat	Rustico R. Babat	--	Manlapaz	
107	*Ama*	--	dulang tagalog	4	Lazaro Francisco/ B. Buenaventura	Jose Z Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
108	*Anak Ko*	--	dulang tagalog/ sarsuela	3	Deo. A. Rosario/B Buenaventura	Liberato Samala	parts	Manlapaz	
109	*Pinaglupitan ng Tadhana o "Diwata"*	--	opereta tagala	3	B. Buenaventura	F. Pineda	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
110	*Pitong Susi, Ang*	--	Dulang Tagalog/ sarsuwela	3	J Rivera/B Buenaventura	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
111	*Bulaklak ng Kabundukan*	?	opereta	3	Atang de la Rama	Leon Ignacio	--	Manlapaz	
112	*Mga Pusong Dakila*	?	sarsuela	3	Severino Reyes	A. Carluen		Manlapaz	

113	*Puri at Buhay*	(no earlier than 1921)	sarswela		Flor Ballecer	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
114	*Akibat*	10.11.1913	melodrama ng tagalog	1	Florentino Ballecer	Nicanor Abelardo	--		
115	*Dalagang Bukid*	1917/19? [restaging]	opereta	3	Hermogenes Ilagan/Ballecer/ Buenaventura	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal (later copy)	Manlapaz	
116	*Babaing-Banal*	10.17. 1920	sarsuela	3	B Buenaventura	Alejo Carluen	--	Manlapaz	
117	*Dalagang Masaya*	4.1926	opereta	3	Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	--	Manlapaz	
118	*Alamat ng Nayon*	12.9.1927	sarsuela/ operetang tagalog		Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
119	*Mga Bilanggo ng Pag-ibig*	3.24.1927	dula	3	Eusebio Gabriel/Buenaventura	Jose Z. Rivera	--	Manlapaz	
120	*Baliya*	4.19.1927	sarzuela	3	Gregorio C Chocing/B Buenaventura	Jose Z Rivera	--	Manlapaz	
121	*Mangingisda, Ang*	5.11.1927	sarzuela/ sarsuela	3	Nieves Baens y Sevilla/ B Buenaventura	Jose Z Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
122	*Isang Regalo de Boda*	8.29.1927	zarzuela	3	Severino Reyes/B Buenaventura	Jose Z Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
123	*Nanay Ko!*	1.10.1928	dula		Greg C. Coching	Jose Z. Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	

124	*X-3-X*	6.28.1928	dulang Tagalog		Jun R. Lazaro/ B. Buenaventura	Jose Z. Rivera	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
125	*Lihim ni Bathala, Ang*	7.13.1928	dulang tagalog	3	Teodoro Virrey/ B. Buenaventura	Alejo Carluen	--	Manlapaz	
125	*Palihan ng Bayan*	12.7.1930	sarswelang Tagalog	3	Ballecer	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
126	*Ika-anim na Utos, Ang*	5.24.1930	sarsuela	3	Bernardino Buenaventura	Pablo Navarro	--	Manlapaz	
127	*Ang Ararong Ginto*	4.19.1930	sarsuela		Servando de los Angeles	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
128	*Mga Kamag-anak*	4.11.1931	sarsuela		Jose Ma. Rivera	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
129	*Ang Dugong Makamandag*	10.5.1932	zarzuela/sarzuela	4	Jose Esperanza Cruz?	Rivera - Pineda	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
130	*Calvario*	7.27.1933	opereta	4	T. Virrey, B. Buenaventura	Pineda Navarro (Nicanor Abelardo in typescript)	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
131	*Puso ng Dios*	10.27. 1934	dula	4	Gregorio C. Coching	Pablo Navarro	orch parts	Manlapaz	
132	*Makiling*	8.15.1934	Opereta Pilipina	4	Mat. Castro, B. Buenaventura	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
133	*Ang Pamana ng Pulubi*	2.22.1936	dula	4	L Francisco, B. Buenaventura	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
134	*Sanga-sangang Dila*	1937	opereta/ sarsuela	4		Jose Z. Rivera, Pablo Navarro, Atong Pineda; Danding Gabriel (arr.)	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
135	*Malambot na Bato*	1.14.1937	sarsuela	3	Dan. Gabriel, arr.		pno-vocal	Manlapaz	

136	*Anak ni Eva (previously "Aking Ina")*	5.22.1939	operetang Tagalog	3	Atang de la Rama	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
137	*Lihim ng Bilanggo*	9.13.1939	dula	1	Bernardino Buenaventura	Leon Ignacio	parts	Manlapaz	
138	*Takas, Ang*	9.18.1941	dula	3	B Buenaventura	Pablo Navarro	--	Manlapaz	
139	*Fidel at Floro*	--	sarsuela		Nicolas Flores		--	Manlapaz	
140	*Hiyas ng Tahanan*	--	drama	1	Flor Ballecer		--	Manlapaz	
141	*Ikaw na nga Kaya*	--	dula		J C Balmaseda	Leon Ignacio	--	Manlapaz	
142	*Kiri, Ang/Masayang Dalaga/Lirio sa Putikan*	1926	opereta				--	Manlapaz	
143	*Laura (Ikaw Pa rin)*		opereta	3	Florentino Ballecer	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
144	*Manotok (Oh, Katarungan)*	--			Makahiya		--	Manlapaz	
145	*Mapait na Tagumpay*	--	dula	3	B Buenaventura	Pablo P. Navarro	--	Manlapaz	
146	*Momoy at Leonila (Ulila)*	--					--	Manlapaz	
147	*Nag-iisang Langit*	--					--	Manlapaz	
148	*Pag-aabot ng Kalayaan*	--	sarswela		Vicente Estrella	Bonifacio Lawas	--	Manlapaz	
149	*Pangarap ng Bayan*	--					--	Manlapaz	
150	*Prinsesang Naging Pulubi, Ang*	--		3		Jose Z. Rivera	--	Manlapaz	
151	*Sa Baybayin ng Pasay/ Higanti/Harangan sa Talanyag*	--	zarzue-lang katatawa-nan	1	Flor Ballecer trans/Enrique H. Davila	Jose Estella	--	Manlapaz	

152	*Sa Bunganga ng Pating*	1921	sarsuela	3	Julian Cruz Balmaseda	Leon Ignacio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
153	*Sabina*	--	opera	1	Severino Montano/ Vicencio (lyrics)	Laureano G. Vicencio	pno-vocal	Manlapaz	
154	*Sakim, Ang*	--	sarsuelang Pilipino		Nicolas Flores		--	Manlapaz	
155	*Sino ang may Sala? (Dugo at Buhay)*	--	sarswelang Tagalog	3	Flor Ballecer	Leon Ignacio	--	Manlapaz	
156	*Tagumpay*	--	dulang Tagalog		Flor Ballecer	Jose Z. Rivera	--	Manlapaz	

Appendix B

Song Lyrics and English Translations

"Dalit ni Minda"	"Minda's Dalit"
Ako'y si Mindang mora buhat sa Mindanao anak ng moro at ng mora naman kay Ginoong Felix ay naninilbihan huhubdan ng damit, bibigyan ng bihisan	I am Minda, the moor From Mindanao, daughter of a moro and a moor I serve Master Felix, And help him change his clothes
Kaming mga moro kung naga tutua kinakagat namin ang aming kapua At kung nagagalit aming hinihiwa sa may dakong batok o sa tian kaya	We moros, when we are happy We bite our fellow And when we are angry we cut them in the back of their neck or in the stomach
Doon sa amin ang mga babayi hindi nangingibig sa lubhang marami dalawa ó tatlo at isang sarili ay katamtaman sa aming dilidili	Where I come from The women do not love too many But two or three for oneself Is just enough in our estimation

"Nabasag ang Banga"
(As sung by Atang de la Rama)

May isang dalagang nagsalok ng tubig
Kinis ng ganda nya'y hubog sa nilatik
Ano at pagkakaibig nang may lumapit
ang isang binatang makisig
Wika ng dalaga'y, "Wag kang magalaw"
Sagot ng lalaki, "Ako'y kaawaan"
Tugon ng babae, "Wag kang mambwisit"
Sambot ng lalaki, "Ako'y umiibig."

CHORUS:
Ano ang nangyari?
Nabasag ang banga
'Pagkat ang lalaki ay napadupilas
Kaya't ang babae nandu't umiiyak
habang sinasabi ay
sila'y napahamak

Ang kinasapitan pagdating ng bahay
"Ano't umiiyak?" tanong ng magulang
Sagot ng dalaga, "Ay mangyari po, Inay
ako ay tinakot ng isang aswang.

Nang sasabihin kong wag magalaw
agad niyang inagaw ang banga kong tangay
kaya nga po't ako'y umuwing walang
dalang tubig
at pati na ang baro'y napuno ng putik.

"The Clay Jar Broke"

A maiden drew water from the well
Her beauty was chiseled fine
Suddenly, there approached
A dashing young man
Watch what you're doing, said the maid
Have pity on me, was his answer
Don't pester me so, the lass decried
But I am in love, the man replied

[Chorus]
But oh, what happened? The earthen jar is broken
Because the young man, he suddenly slipped

And so the poor maiden sat there crying
Saying over and over she's in very deep trouble

When the maid reached home
Her mother asked why she was crying
Oh, mother, she said,
an *aswang* gave me a scare!

When I told him to be careful
He snatched the jar in my lap
So I've come home without
any water
And even my dress is all muddied up

“Masayang Dalaga”

Ako ang masayang bulaklak ng tuwa't galak
sa gitna ng salon pabango sa boong magdamag
sa tugtog at sayaw sa ngiting ubod ng sarap
Ay malilimot mo ang lahat ng mga hirap

[Chorus]
Halina irog at tayo'y magsayaw
May halik sa labi't tuhog ang pusong nag-iibigan
Huwag kang mangimi na ako'y hawakan
Ako'y Dalaga ng sayawan

Sa bawat kilos at imbag ng bisig
Hakbang tayong patungo sa langit
At doo'y awitin ang lahat ng panaganip
Ng Dalagang Masaya matamis umibig

“Happy Maiden”

I am the happy flower of joy and delight
in the middle of the salon, a perfume all night
with the music and dance, with smile so sweet
You will forget all your burdens

[Chorus]
Come love and let us dance
There is a kiss in the lips that pierces hearts in love
Do not be shy and hold me
I am the lady of the dance

In every move and pull of the arms
We step closer to heaven
And there sing all the dreams
Of the Happy Maiden, who loves sweetly

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