Harana: Fusion between Filipino indigenous and Hispanic music

The paper explores the intersection of indigenous and Hispanic music styles present in the *harana* by studying features that demonstrate the fusion of Hispanic influence with that of local tradition. The *harana* exhibits the orality of indigenous poetry shown in its choice of words and the rhythm of the *danza*, a Spanish music.

When one studies Cebuano culture and heritage, one cannot isolate it from the Cebuano singer. The ambivalent sense of identity due to several historical impediments brought about by Spanish colonization is easily exhibited by the modern Cebuano's preference for a second language for everyday expression. The modern Cebuano singer finds himself torn in expressing oneself accordingly in the language that one is born into, yet the prevalent colonial mentality influences his preference to identify and express himself in English.

This study on the *harana* explores the Cebuano's fluid identity. The *harana* is a hybrid form that emerged from the fusion of pre-existing Cebuano and Hispanic elements. Clearly, the *harana* demonstrates intangible cultural heritage characterized by the persisting orality of indigenous poetry while being permeated by new sensibilities brought about by colonization. The *harana* in this study illustrates that intersection which enriches the folk tradition owing to its contribution of a more elaborate oral tradition. According to Corazon Canave-Diaquino in *Folk Traditions*, "Hispanization was tied up with religious conversion and the people's thinking was affected, resulting in a hybrid expression tinged with a Latin taste." Because of a strong indigenous strain, it produced a music that was disconnected from the Catholic worship. As proof, the *harana* has its own distinctive style, its arrangement is simple and straight-forward. It always starts with an introduction of solo guitar then lyrical verses follow with a little guitar strumming. Resil Mojares adds that Spanish colonization "left a deep

imprint on native poetic traditions . . . and cultivated new themes and sentiments."² This phenomenon enriches the native poetic tradition.

The *barana* being a descendant of the Hispanic and the indigenous, exhibits common elements derived from both traditions. *Harana* is a Spanish traditional form of music where a man introduces himself to a woman, usually when she has just arrived from a big city to the countryside for a vacation. It has its early antecedents in the *las mañanitas*, the Mexican tradition which involves serenading the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Patroness of Mexico, before sunrise every year on December 12, her feast day. The day begins with a procession around church grounds during which the faithful honored the Virgin by singing *las mañanitas* in the chilly dawn air. The *mariachis* sing "*Madre mia de Guadalupe, dame ya tu bendicion, recibe estas mañanitas con un humilde corazon*," paving the way for the celebration of the Holy Mass. Everyone then enjoyed the traditional hot chocolate and *pan dulce* (Mexican pastry). This custom of singing *Las Mañanitas* also applies to birthday or Mother's Day celebrations and was and is still being practiced in the Philippines. Here is an example of a birthday *mañanita* entitled "Katahum sa Kabuntagon"6:

Katahum sa Kabuntagon Kami nagtukaw karon Ikaw among sangpiton Ning langitnon nga gahum Beauty of the morning
We who are awake
We will call you
With this heavenly power

Ang kahayag ning kandila Mag-awit ug magmaya Aron magmabulokon Ang kalinaw magdayon Chorus: The light of this candle Will sing and make merry So it will be colorful And peace will come

Mahayag na ang langit Sa kasilaw sa adlaw Oh! Bangon sa igsoon Ning kadlawong matahum The sky is light
The sun is bright
Oh! Rise to my sister
On this beautiful dawn

Ning adlaw mong natawhan Kabulakan ning buklad Gibunyagan sa ngalan Diosnong grasya imo na. On your birthday Flowers bloom Is christened Heavenly grace be yours. The *harana* borrows from the 19th-century tradition of songs of courtliness where wayward knights usually sing of love beneath the towers of fair maidens in medieval scenes. The pure young woman is protected inside the tower while the suitor who comes along from wandering is about to show his admiration and seek her attention. The lines of "The Serenade" (1825) so reads

Rise lovely Maid, shake off they balmy slumbers, Haste to thy casement, list the tuneful strain, Fondly he loves who breathes in warbling numbers, Ne'er wilt thou meet a heart so true again.⁷

Another example which displays the tradition is "Open Thy Lattice Love" (1844), the first published song of Stephen Foster, whose assortment of songs gives a brief of "sublimated chivalry."

Open thy lattice, love listen to me!
The cool balmy breeze is abroad on the sea!
The moon like a queen, roams her realms of blue,
And the stars keep their vigils in heaven for you.
Ere morn's gushing light tips the hills with its ray,
Away o'er the waters away and away!
Then open thy lattice, love listen to me!
While the moon's in the sky and the breeze on the sea!

In the Philippines, Lourdes Quisumbing notes that the *harana* was one of the ways a man could attract the attention of the woman he admires aside from reciting love verses to her. ⁹ She states that "the real *harana* is sung in verse to the accompaniment of the guitar (*sista*). ¹⁰ There is a wealth of lyrical beauty, appreciation for nature, and depth of sentiment contained in the love songs." ¹¹ The man woos a woman beneath her window at night by singing and playing his guitar. If the man is not a good singer, he will usually bring someone who can do it for him. Some men also invite their close friends to join in the singing or to provide accompaniment with the guitar if he is singing. ¹²

Early Cebuano *haranas* recorded are found in Fernando Buyser's collection *Amit sa Kabukiran*.¹³

Ang imong kahamili
Ingon sa Rosal nga maamyon
Bulak ko nga pinili
Natimban sa katahom
Nagadapit sa kalipay
Ning pobre nga masulub-on
Nga nanag-awit sa mamingaw
Sa pagdayeg sa imong kamahal.

Jazmin preciosa Ning kasingkasing Nga ginapaniba sa kalanggaman Ginadugok kay bulak nga mahumot Uban sa hinuyuhoy Ning tun-og sa kagabhion

Ikaw man mao ang bulak Nga gihatag sa Providencia Nakalingaw niining conciencia Nakalipay ning nagahilak Ipakita ang imong kagayon Sa imong pagkamalipayon Ning oras nga himalatyon Ning makuli kong pagkabutang.

Sa imong bintana
Tamboi sa madali
Oh! Venus astro
Ning kasingkasing
Ipakita Diosa
Ang imong kapawa
Niining mangitngit
Nga hunahuna.

Mahal nga mutya sa Oriente Nga sa kaanyag ikaw nahantog Kang Venus, Jupiter ug Marte Sa kahayag ka nakig-ilog Tamda ug patalinghugi Kining nagtuaw nga masulub-on Itunol Diosa, itunol Diosa Ang lunsay mo karong kagayon.

Ayam ikasakit
Ug ikabudlay
Kining nagbakho
Ug nagpanghayhay
Sa pasaylo hatagi
Kining mapasipala
Adios prenda querida

Your nobility
Is like a fragrant Rosal
My chosen flower
Full of loveliness
Inviting happiness
For this poor melancholy man
Who sings in lonely tones
Praise of your pricelessness.

Precious jasmine
Of this heart
Supped by the birds
Whose fragrance attracts many
Wafted by the breeze
In the cool night.

For you are the blossom Offered by Providence That lightens this conscience Brings joy to one who is tearful Show the breadth Of your happiness In this dying hour In my difficult state.

From your window Look down a moment Oh! Astral Venus Of my heart Show, goddess, Your brilliance To this beclouded Mind.

Precious pearl of the Orient Renowned for beauty With Venus, Jupiter and Mars You vie in brightness Heed and hear One who cries in sadness Goddess, hand over Your pure joy.

Don't be pained And don't be troubled Over one who weeps And sighs Rather, bestow your pardon To one who has sinned Goodbye, my pledged beloved Sa kasingkasing ko ikaw gidala.

I carry you in my heart.¹⁴

Florante Aguilar writes that *harana* is very distinct as it has its own style – "the rhythm is *danza* which is in 2/4 time."¹⁵

During the *harana* performance which is often favorably done on moonlit nights, curiosity is exhibited as to who is serenading and is serenaded. Family members and neighbors will be interested. Feigning nonchalance, a woman is usually elated at being serenaded, claims Quisumbing, especially when the song is dedicated to her.¹⁶

Some parents do not interfere; they may even invite the serenaders to come in to sing their songs and partake of the food and drinks prepared for them. But the majority show indifference or displeasure, while some are vocal in their disapproval, angrily tell the serenaders to stop.¹⁷

Usually, the next day, the woman becomes the object of teasing among her family members, even relatives. But if she happens to be a visitor from another part of the country, then from her friends and from her hosts. There are instances when the harana becomes the talk of the town especially when something odd happens like if poultry is missing or if *haranistas* were unjustifiably welcomed with a chamberpot of piss poured out of the window.

As in the preceding examples given, the *harana* has a formula. Three parts are evident: *pagtawag* (call out), *pagtug-an* or *pagsugid* (confession) and *pagtubag* (reply). In *pagtawag*, this is the stage where men are outside beneath the woman's window announcing their presence. It comes with a specific set of songs. These songs usually place the men in the act of serenading from the outside, politely imploring the woman to open the window and listen to the song. Consider the following examples:

Harana I

Yo te saludo Putli nga bulak, Mujer hermosa I salute thee, O pure flower! Beautiful maiden, Humilde flor; In thy bower. Ay! Yo soy indigno I am unworthy

Niña preciosa Of thee, jasmin sweet, Jazming biyuos E'en to kiss thy feet. Nga makawiwili. List to my pleading

Sulnga ra Pulana And to my tears, imploring Kining nagsangpit Thy pity. Give thy hand Ug patalinghugi To this wretched one Ang mga kasakit Who knows no joy, Walay kalipay But is full of sorrow Kining makalolooy. Until loved by you.¹⁸

In the first four lines, you have the pagtawag. Most opening lines describe the beauty of a woman and she is likened to a flower or a star in the sky. She is the prettiest thing the young man has ever seen. The sun, the moon and the stars are favorite devices in the depiction of the lady's beauty. It is also possible for her to compete with the flower and to exceed it in terms of fragrance and beauty. Consider this next harana:

Harana VI

Oh! Thou art Oh! Clavel cang maamyon Nga ginamasitas Carnation sweet! Niining tanaman In the garden of my heart Cong macawiwili Thou growest apart; Ug ang caambong mo Thy fragrance surpasses Minglabaw sa rosas, That of the roses, Icaw mao ang himaya Thou art the glory Niining miserable. That hides my mis'ry.

Icaw mao ang bituon Thou art the star Nga labing masulaw That, with brightest light Nga nagahayag Shines in the night Niining dughan; Of my bosom dark; Cong mangitngit Dark clouds anpve Apan cay ginadulman O'ershadow my love. Ang gugmang masilaw Thus my heart in tears Busa ang dughan co will reckon with the years.

Apan, Señorita But, dearest maiden Imo aco pasayran Tell me truly -This love unbidden Has made me lonely If there be justice In this my fate Which is worse than death.

Mahatungud ning gugma Naging masulub-on Cong wala na bay "justicia" Mao na ba lamang Ang mapait nga camatayon.

Nagbakho sa camingaw.

Wala nay fuerza
Ning adorador mo
Kong ang camatayon
Maoy magbawi
Maculi nga icahatag
Ang calag ug kinabuhi.

All drained is the strength Of this who adores thee And when at length Death beckons me Vain and useless to me Will my soul and life be.

Notice that in the first two lines, the *pagtamag* compares the woman's beauty is likened to a carnation which fragrance surpasses that of the rose. The succeeding lines in the first including that of the fourth stanza constitute the *pagtug-an* or *pagsugid* (confession). In *pagtug-an* or *pagsugid*, the man successfully awakens the woman's interest. Usually the woman opens the window and invites the man into the house. In the living room, usually with a chaperone if the parents are not around, another round of singing follows. The man confidently declares his veneration of the woman's virtues and beauty.

If the woman being serenaded will reply, it will also be in a song form. This constitutes the *pagtubag* (response). In some areas like Cavite, women are known to give a response. Aguilar records this

The haranistas in Maragondon, Cavite introduced me to an elder lady known for her singing during serenades. When I asked her which song she would respond with, she said "It depends. If I like the fellow, there are some songs for that. If I am not that interested or if I am unsure, it's a whole different set of songs". ¹⁹

When unsure, the choice could be Constancio de Guzman's Ang Tangi Kong Pagibig (My Only True Love), a song where the first line declares "Ang tangi kong pagibig ay minsan lamang" (True love for me is rare). When affirmative, the song could be Maala-ala Mo Kaya by the same composer, a joyous song that declares O kay sarap mabuhay, lalo na't may lambingan (Oh how sweet it is to live, more so in the presence of love and affection).²⁰

When a *haranista* is rejected, he could sing a song to plead his case further. Some of these songs are titled "Kay Hirap Mawalay sa Piling (How Painful to be Away from You),

Ako'y Isa Na Ngayong Sawi (I am Now Brokenhearted), Pusong Wasak (Shredded Heart) and my favorite Laot Ng Dusa (Open Sea of Suffering)."²¹

The *barana* shows the custom of the day. It presents the composers' ideas of how men and women are to interact, ideas which were circulated among the members of the community. The practice of courtship created by the serenade elevates its performers by mimicking the knightly approach to courting a woman then using the formula of allusions to words from the earlier tradition.

The concept of ennobled courtship invoked by the lyrics and music tended to intensify the different position of the sexes . . . though popular songs progressively suggested greater limitations on the influence and freedom of women to act in the outside world, they also endowed women with an innate superiority (expressed literally in serenades) and moral authority. ²²

In the Philippines, suitors were not knights on horses coming to serenade damsels after battle. Men dealt with women openly. As barrio beauties who opened their windows and listened to the songs of love, Filipinas participated in night romances and engaged in the world outside their homes. An undercurrent of energy and excitement runs through the *barana* and offers possibility in the new style that is accessible and endures in the songs towards the last half of the twenty-first century.

The Beloved

The *harana* increasingly pressed into a vogue of songs about the beloved and composed songs continued in this vein until the trend mellowed down towards the turn of the twenty-first century. The lyrics spend most of their energy in praise of the beloved, usually named as in the example of Olivia by Cengo Arias and Carmen by Max Surban, and

invoke high speech accordingly. More than this, the style imparts a sense of immediacy to courtship: the man in the song demands a response so that he can proceed further

Olivia Olivia

Dawata na Olivia Ang gugma kong gihalad Balaanon nga gugma Ug dili molubad.

Refrain:

Refrain:
Pagkatahum Olivia
Katahum mong sud-ongon
Daw sama ka sa Diosa
Maayong hagwaon.

How beautiful Olivia How beautiful you look Like a goddess That is teasing.

And will not disappear.

Olivia please receive

This love I give Love divine

Pagkabulahan ko kaha Kon buligan ni Bathala Unya dawaton mo kining gugmang gihalad ko nga walay pagluib. How fortunate I will be If Bathala helps me And if you accept This love that will not fade That I offer.

(Repeat refrain)

Carmela Carmela

Carmela dungga kining nagsangpit

kay dad-on ko ikaw sa himayang dayon Carmela listen to me who calls you For I will take you To heavenly bliss

Sa akong pagmata nakita ko Ang langitnong sidlak sa bitoon Sama sa imong larawan Ang kaanyag mo walay sama, ay! When I awoke I saw The heavenly light of the star Like your picture Your beauty's no compare, ay!

Carmela unsay akong mahimo sa gugmang pagbati ikaw ang natingban Timan-i, kutob karon timan-i, Carmela what can I do with this love I feel You are all Remember, until now

nga kining tanan, tanan matuman.

remember,
That all these will come to be.

Carmela dungga kining nagsangpit

Carmela listen to me who calls

kay dad-on ko ikaw sa himayang dayon. you For I will take you To heavenly bliss. In the *harana* by Celestino de Gracia entitled "Carmencita," the suitor pleads for his beloved to accept his love and to refrain from making him suffer. All he needs to live through the day is a picture of her.

Carmencita, dawata na ang gugma ko!

Carmencita, ayaw ako paantusa

Kaloy-a ako intawon

Pangandoy ko sa adlaw'ng tanan

Ang imong larawan.

Like the lover in Max Surban's *harana* who promises his beloved heavenly bliss, the suitor here proposes to take care of her forever until death with a love that's true after alluding to her pity:

Carmencita, ihatag na ang kaluoy mo

Carmencita, ayaw ako'g pahilaka

Kaloy-a ako! Kaloy-a!

Dawata na kining gugma ko,

O akong pinangga.

Ikaw unungan ko gayud

Pangga-on hangtud sa lubnganan

Ihatag ko gugma'ng tinu-od

Akong unungan ug pakamatyan!

Just as the text mixes elevated language with plain speech, the music retains elements of the *danza* in the melodic lines.

Angelic Women

Haranas about the purity of a woman suggest that even when women are no longer kept closeted in the home, their roles remain strictly defined – they must remain shining

examples, of having angelic or heavenly attributes. This is proposed in the harana by Emil Loseñada entitled "Ikaduhang Bathala" demonstrating how a woman is viewed as a goddess who is entreated to pity the poor suitor's heart.

Ikaduhang Bathala

Gikatug-an ko na kanimo ang tanan

Nahigugma ako ug nga kanimo lang

Inay sagupon mo kining gibati ko

Mipahiyum ka lang ug mipahilayo

Kon daw sa kasingkasing mo

May dapit man ako

Pakitaag kahayag ang mga panag-um ko

Limsi'g pagbati limsi'g kaluoy

Nga makagpahid sa mga luha ko

Π

Kon ugaling sa gugma mo

May katahap ka man

Wad-a sa panumduman mo

Wad-a na ang tanan

Ayaw kalimot, ayaw pinangga

Ikaduha ko ikaw nga bathala.

The woman is adored as being second God. She is put on a pedestal. In the succeeding *harana* found in one of Buenaventura Rodriguez's sarsuela *Ang Mini*, he wrote a song given melody by Dionisio Jakosalem. Limited to their undefiled private world, women exert power over the public domain of men by projecting the values of kindness and temperance.

Harana

Ani-ay nagtuaw sa imong silong

Nangitag buligan sa imong kalooy

Ayaw, Inday, tamaya

Ayaw siya'g isalikway.

Nagpakilimos siya sa imong kalooy.

Midag-um ang langit ug mangitngit na,

Mitago ang bulan sa panganud,

Kay siya nasina

kay siya nasina sa imong kaanyag

Kay ikaw labaw man ug kaanindot.

The separation between the domains of men and women intensified the fantasy of the beloved so love becomes a mystery that allows a lover to sacrifice all. Fernando Alfon's harana is given melody by Ismael Villareal in Kahibulungan.

Kahibulungan

Kahibulungan ang gibati ko

Natawo ang gugmang makabuang

Kanimo pinangga ko

Ani-a intawon ako ning mabugnaw'ng gabii

Binuksan kining dughan aron ka makasaksi

Nga dinhi sa ilawom sa langit

Ang gugma ko imo da

Kahibulungan ang gibati ko

Natawo ang gugmang makabuang

Kanimo pinangga ko

Ania intawon ako ning mabugnaw'ng gabii

Binuksan kining dughan aron ka makasaksi

Nga dinhi sa ilawom sa langit

Ang gugma ko imo da

Ang gugma ko imo da

Since the 1980s the *harana* lost its popularity for a host of reasons. In the rural areas, electric power gave way to television and the introduction of latest songs available from Manila and abroad that were no longer traditional. The disco had paved the way for the demise of the practice of the *harana*.

Martial Law was also imposed bringing the curfew to ban the nightly *barana*. Men were no longer encouraged to woo late at night. Courtship mores modernized to allow meetings in places outside the home which used to be the only place where young ladies could entertain suitors under the watchful eyes of parents or relative chaperones. Moreover, most Filipinos have acquired Western tastes that the local traditions have been relegated to the occasional performances in school programs or cultural programs at most.

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- ³ Las Mañanitas, which literally means "little morning" is celebrated widely in Mexico. Although several Marys are the object of veneration, La Morenita or Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe is one of the most powerful religious symbol as it is a symbol perceived as belonging to the poor, involving the story of a poor native man whose image is reflected in her eyes. In Virgilio Elizondo, *The Future is Mestizo*. Bloomington, Indiana: Meyer-Stone, 1988. 63.
- ⁴ This translates as "My Mother of Guadalupe, give me your blessing, receive these mañanitas with a humble heart."
- ⁵ Catherine Wilson, *The politics of Latino faith: religion, identity, and urban community*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2008. 183.
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 - ⁸ Winson 33-34.
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- ¹⁰ In Justin Cydrick Cabales's master's thesis entitled "Music of Pre-colonial and Spanish Colonial Philippines, and the Filipino *Rondalla*" he writes that the guitar was the preferred choice of instrument for its accessibility. However the violin and the *banduria* are also used (13). MA Thesis. USA: California State University, Northridge, May 2015.
 - ¹¹ Quisumbing 11.
 - ¹² Quisumbing 12.
 - ¹³ Fernando Buyser, Awit sa Kabukiran Tomo I. Sugbu: Liberty Press, 1911. 30-3.
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- ¹⁹ Florante Aguilar, "The Different Stages of Harana." *Florante Aguilar*. 31 October 2018. https://floranteaguilar.com/the-different-stages-of-harana-serenading/
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 - ²² Winson 41.