

Introduction

journal or publication title	Senri Ethnological Reports
volume	133
page range	1-7
year	2016-01-25
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10502/00009071

Introduction

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This booklet is a report of the international symposium, *An Audiovisual Exploration of Philippine Music: The Historical Contribution of Robert Garfias*, which was held at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) on May 19, 2014. Robert Garfias is an eminent ethnomusicologist who has had global impact, and is one of the pioneers in the field who recognized the importance of audiovisual documentation at an early stage of his career. He has shot the 64,000 feet of film to this date and the list of his films, included in this report, is remarkable by any standards (see Appendix 2). However, what is truly impressive is not the sheer number of the films he produced, but the whole array of great musicians he documented and his ear for underestimated musical genres and styles that might have gone unnoticed. Furthermore, the list only contains edited programs: a substantial amount of unedited footage is equally, if not more, precious (see Appendix 3). The value of his documentation has increased, and no doubt will further increase, as time passes.

Garfias went to the Philippines and Korea in 1966, almost half a century ago, with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, and conducted his first major filming project whose purpose was to document the music and dance tradition of each country as much as possible in a relatively short time. With a pioneering spirit, he volunteered to undertake the project when the opportunity presented itself although he had no prior experience with filming per se. Garfias himself has described elsewhere the preparation for the trip and consultation on film methods with various experts at that time (Garfias 2011: 10–11). In subsequent years, many films were produced through the University of Washington where he had established an ethnomusicology department, and they have been used for research and in classroom. Because the filming was done almost a half century ago, most of the artists documented are no longer alive and many of the genres and performance styles are no longer continued.

Koizumi Fumio Prize for Ethnomusicology

I conceived the idea of organizing this symposium when I learned that Garfias would be visiting Japan to receive the Koizumi Fumio Prize for Ethnomusicology for 2013. While he has received many prestigious awards before, including the *Kyokujitsu-sho* (Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays) from the Japanese

government in 2005 for his role in disseminating Japanese music abroad, the Koizumi Prize appears particularly pertinent and befitting to him.

When Garfias came to Japan in 1958 to study its court music (*gagaku*), Koizumi was in India conducting his first extensive research outside of Japan. After his return to Japan, they developed an immediate rapport with each other as they shared many common interests and perspectives on music and music studies. They were both very active in academic studies and public arena alike, had a wide range of thematic and geographical interests, conducted field research in multiple locations with vastly different historical and cultural backgrounds, had exceptional skills in discerning musical characteristics in analysis and on the spot and in communicating at ease in local languages. They both even hosted a radio program for a number of years through which people outside of the academia were exposed to the beauty of music from all corners of the world (Figure 1).

Koizumi was perhaps the very first ethnomusicologist in Japan, as we understand the term today. As a professor of music at the Tokyo University of Arts, he spearheaded ethnomusicological research in Japan and trained many students who continued his legacy and later became established scholars in their own right. His social impact was equally notable. Through his accessible writings, LP recordings and frequent appearances in mass media, he exposed the general public to music cultures of the world, showing them new ways of listening to and appreciating music. In fact, through his activities and media exposure, the term



Figure 1 Robert Garfias (center) with Koizumi Fumio (right) in 1959. Photo courtesy by Robert Garfias.

ethnomusicology, virtually unknown outside of the academic circle then, became part of common parlance. After his premature death in 1983 at age 56, a foundation was set up to perpetuate his memory and an award was established in 1989 to honor the individuals and organizations who made distinguished achievements in ethnomusicology. On May 15, 2014, Robert Garfias was presented with the award for his life-long contribution.

Minpaku Symposium in Honor of Robert Garfias

This symposium was organized to celebrate this felicitous occasion. As one of his former students, I take the greatest pleasure that his contribution to the field and the influences of his activities on society at large have been officially recognized in Japan where he conducted his first extended research in the late 1950s. That work served as a recurring point of reference for his subsequent research in many other parts of the world.

Minpaku seemed to be an appropriate venue to hold a symposium in honor of Garfias, given his long and close association with the Museum. He served three times as a visiting professor, for the first time for seven months in 2003, followed by two shorter stays in 2009 and 2013. During and between these appointments, he participated in multiple symposia and public forums as a speaker and commentator, including *Performance and Culture*, an international symposium sponsored by the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) as a collaborative research project in 2009. His tangible academic output includes an important monograph on the theories and methodologies of ethnomusicology: *Music, The Cultural Context* (Garfias 2004) published by Minpaku. More recently, he collaborated with Sasahara Ryoji and myself for two audiovisual documentation projects and produced ethnographic films on music cultures of Spain, Portugal and Puerto Rico (2008–13; see Appendix 2). He also served as a primary advisor when our music gallery was renovated in 2010. His extraordinary enthusiasm for music and almost any other aspect of life is contagious and has left an indelible impression on myself and other Minpaku staff.

The symposium had two related objectives. The first goal was to examine the content and method of the Garfias' documentation in detail. We planned to discuss the selection of traditions documented, the type of filming and editing techniques applied, the effect of such methods on the final product, and the logistical and technical limitations. The second objective was to assess the historical contributions and future applications of his documentation in relation to Philippine music research, music education, preservation of traditional performing arts, and impact on local communities. We can safely assume the value of the documentation since it was made almost half a century ago at a time when it was

virtually impossible to obtain the necessary equipment and funds in the Philippines to prepare audiovisual records. Beyond this generalization, what aspects of the documentation are particularly valuable and on what account?

With these objectives mentioned above in mind, I invited three distinguished scholars of Philippine music: Professors Ramon Santos and Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes from the University of the Philippines and Dr. Usopay H. Cadar, ethnomusicologist and director of the performing ensemble of *kulintang*, one of the music genres documented by Garfias. The biography of each participant is shown in the List of Contributors.

Three Sessions

The symposium consisted of three sessions. In the first two, we focused on two particular regions of the Philippines, namely Luzon and Mindanao respectively. The selected 1966 footage was first screened, followed by a paper presentation on the documentation in each area (Figure 2). In the first session, after showing the film footage from Luzon Island, Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes directed our attention to the selection of genres in Garfias documentation. Particularly, the inclusion of Spanish traditions, such as an elderly Ilocano man dancing *fandango* to the guitar



Figure 2 Film screening prior to paper presentation. Photo by Terada Yoshitaka.

accompaniment, serves as a critical intervention, in her assessment, to the Filipino tendency to regard indigenous music as exclusively comprising and representing Filipino music, thus neglecting the Spanish and Mexican traditions transmitted in villages.

In the second session, we first screened the footage of Maranao music and dance. Usopay H. Cadar then traced in his presentation the pivotal role that Garfias has played in the transmission of *kulintang* music from the Philippines to North America and beyond, with the 1966 expedition as a starting point of this long and complex journey. He also stressed the increasing value of the Garfias documentation in relation to emerging “digital tribes,” in a new generation that relates to music in ways unthinkable at the time of documentation.

In the third session, Ramon Santos provided the contextual running commentary to the Garfias documentation as he moved from region to region, genre to genre, and concluded that the footage collectively serves as a testimony for the existence of diverse locally-based musical systems that were based on different sensibilities of time, timbre, and kinetic movement. With this observation, he also questioned the relevance of the term “music” to describe the wide gamut of seemingly remote expressions (Figure 3).



Figure 3 Ramon Santos presenting his paper as Robert Garfias looks on. Photo by Terada Yoshitaka.

I requested the authors to incorporate the comments and suggestions made during the symposium into their essays, which are included in this report (Chapters 2 to 4). During the symposium, Garfias shared many illuminating anecdotes and stories regarding his 1966 expedition in interaction with the three presenters and the audience (Figure 4), and he kindly agreed to contribute an essay on the subject, a kind of travelogue that takes the readers to the filming sites chronologically (Chapter 1 of this report). Illustrated with many valuable field photographs, the essay evokes a sense of the technical and logistical problems and other challenges faced, and the excitement of finding unexpected gems during the expedition.

The report also contains a concluding essay by Fukuoka Shota who led the NIHU research project, *A Study on Visual Ethnography of Performing Arts as Human Cultural Resource* (2010–2015), which funded this symposium. He notes the significance of the symposium in the context of the project and two case studies from Japan with which he was directly engaged.

The appendices provide additional information about the filmmaking activities by Robert Garfias, which can be consulted as readers go through the essays: Appendix 1, the locations of documentation on the Philippine map; Appendix 2, the list of all films released by Garfias; Appendix 3, the list of individual footage at the University of Washington where original films are stored and archived; Appendix 4, the list of audiovisual collection available for research at the University of the Philippines Center for Ethnomusicology (where Ramon Santos is currently director) and Appendix 5, sample pages from Garfias' film log.

Finally, I would like to thank Robert Garfias who himself attended the symposium, actively participated in discussion, and wrote an essay on the 1966 trip for this



Figure 4 General discussion (from left, Usopay Cadar, Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes and Robert Garfias). Photo by Terada Yoshitaka.

report. While his other achievements are well documented, the contribution he has made in audiovisual documentation deserves much wider recognition. I hope that the symposium will bring due attention to the audiovisual treasures that Garfias has given us all as an *enduring gift* (after Cadar's apt expression in his essay). My heartfelt thanks go to Ramon Santos, Usopay Cadar and Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes for sharing their expertise on this special occasion, Kubo Masatoshi, Deputy Director-General of Minpaku for delivering a welcome speech, and the audience for their interest and active participation. I also thank Tokumaru Yoshihiko (Professor Emeritus of Ochanomizu University and chair of the selection committee for the Koizumi Fumio Prize for Ethnomusicology) for his timely assistance and Laurel Sercombe (Director of the Ethnomusicology Archives at the University of Washington) for permission to reproduce in this book the list of Garfias film footage on the Philippines. Before I close, I should also express my gratitude to the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) for funding the symposium, through its inter-institutional research project, "A study on visual ethnography of performing arts as human cultural resource," and its project leader Fukuoka Shota for moral and logistical support, and to Minpaku which provided facilities and additional funds.

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