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Unraveling Ethnicity and “Beyond Exoticism”: Robert Garfias’ Films on Philippine Music and Dance

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Introduction

In his *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (2007), Timothy D. Taylor discusses Western empirical power over non-Western world underlying in the works of Western art music. It is a music version of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (Said 1979), so to speak. Published nearly three decades after *Orientalism*, *Beyond Exoticism* advances the discourse of “Orientalism” based on both the textual and contextual analysis of Western art music. The former refers to in principle the analysis of notes in scores, an approach conventional historical musicology has been engaged in, while the latter pertains to the analysis of “cultural, social and historical conditions” of works, the trinity Taylor repeatedly emphasizes throughout the volume. His research findings are integrated with the emerging consciousness of global history; that illustrates the dynamics in the formation and spread of imperialism as impetus of Orientalism in the history of the connection between the East and the West.

Taylor presents more sophisticated arguments on imperialism and modernity than Edward Said did. Viewed from the global history of music, an important feature of imperialism and modernity is the shift in a form of consumption epitomized by the emergence of “‘aesthetics’ of exoticism”. That is to say, as a result of “changes in manufacturing technique in Europe” that led to “democratization of luxury”, “consumer goods began to be valued more for their illusions than for their utility” (Taylor 2007: 90). Thanks in part to international expositions, the “exotic” was increasingly consumed, increasingly viewed as a stimulus of fantasy. Taylor cites Hobsbawm’s assertion (1989) that the “colonial pavilions” at international expositions increased in number: there were eighteen at the Eiffel tower in 1889 (2007: 90).

The concept of the emergence of “‘aesthetics’ of exoticism” inspired me to reflect on ethnomusicological film works on the northern Philippines produced by Robert Garfias in the 1960s. This is not to say Garfias films promote exoticism. Quite contrarily, examining his films from the 1960s enables us to uncover what the popular narrative on Philippine culture has exoticized since the 1970s.

By the popular narrative, I refer to the narrative commonly employed in explaining Philippine culture in education (at all levels) in the Philippines, in mass media, and in Philippine Studies at large. It describes Philippine culture by

contrasting the highland and lowland, each corresponding to the native/indigenous and hispanized, and the ethnic minority and majority, respectively. The premise here is the confluence of culture, space and ethnicity. For instance, as shall be illustrated in detail later, in the discourse of “nationalistic” art production, artists have tended to seek “pure” Philippine materials, among the northern (and southern in a lesser extent) highland communities, with the rhetoric of un-hispanized or indigenous in order to express Philippineness broadly defined. Such a framework assumes the highland as “home of the natives”, who are “uncivilized” in one perspective but paradoxically “cultural” in another. On the contrary, the lowland Philippines has been, to quote Fenella Cannell, “perceived as ‘merely imitative’ of their two sets of Western colonisers [sic]” (1999: 1). While Spanish and American colonizers have treated Philippine lowlanders as “civilized” and the assumption has been inherited by Filipinos after independence in the second half of the 20th century, Cannell aptly points out that this assumption coexists with negative conception of the lowland Philippines whose “culture was for many years, and often still is, depicted as broken, contentless [sic] and insubstantial” (1999: 2), in both academic and non-academic literature.

The highland areas in northern Luzon are often called Cordillera. Treated as a cultural category, this term is commonly used among the general public in the Philippines, among Filipino migrants across the globe, as well as in the international community of Philippine Studies, to refer to an area in northern Luzon. The narrative would differentiate its people as the “Other”, having a “distinct” culture — obviously from the point of view of the metropolis of the country. In the popular usage of the term, Cordillera is assumed identical to the land covered by the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), a regional administrative unit, between the national and the provincial. The CAR consists of six provinces located along the Cordillera Gran Central, mountain ranges running from north to south in northern Luzon; namely, Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, and the Mountain Province (shaded area in the map in Figure 1). Today, the term “Cordillera” is often associated with visual images of rice terraces on mountains, colorful woven costumes (i.e., loin cloth, wrap skirt), and “traditional” culture at large, including flat gongs (*gangsá*) and bamboo musical instruments, as manifested in thousands of posts on the Internet by different stake holders, as well as in pictures and illustrations in the conventional media such as print (newspaper, magazine, book including textbook, etc.) and electric audiovisual ones (radio, television, CD, DVD, etc.) (Figure 2). In other words, the highland-lowland dichotomy has served as a framework that promotes exoticism of the highlands — its culture, space and peoples. It is approximately the area contoured by the dotted line in the map (Figure 1) that is actually mountainous. Some parts in the CAR are lowland, while some areas outside the CAR are highlands (Figure 3). There are



Figure 1 Cordillera Administrative Region, based on Finin (2005: 9).

ARALIN 2

Kami ay mga Pilipino rin



ISIPIN

Sinu-sino pa ang mga Pilipino?



a.

Figure 2 (a-b) Images of the “Cordillera” in a Grade 1 social studies textbook.
a. Images of the Ifugaos and Kalingas, based on Gasingan (2001: 7).
b. Images of Rice Terraces of Ifugao (up), based on Gasigan (2001: 39).

also hilly, midland areas between the highlands and the lowlands, approximately around the dotted line (Figure 1). For these reasons, the term Cordillera is misleading if it connotes the highlands. Therefore, in this essay I call the actual highland areas in northern Luzon the “northern Luzon highlands” in principle while with Cordillera or Cordillera Region I refer to the administrative region.



BASAHIN AT ALAMIN

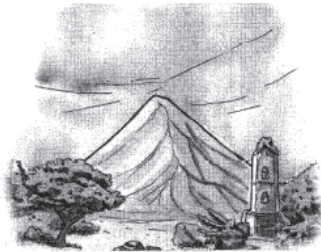
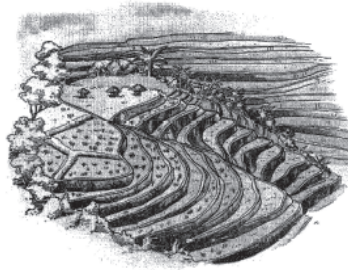
***Magagandang Tanawin
at Pook-pasyalan sa Luzon***

*Hagdan-hagdang
Palayan*

Ito ay makikita sa Ifugao.

Ginawa ito ng ating mga ninunong Ifugao.

Para itong mga hagdang paakyat patungo sa langit.



Bulgang Mayon

Ito ay makikita sa Albay.

Kilala ito sa buong daigdig.

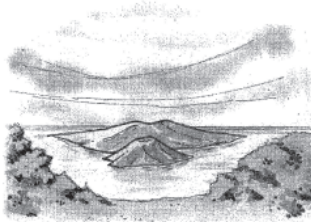
Ito ay hugis apa. Isa itong aktibong bulkan.

Bulgang Taal

Ito ay matatagpuan sa Batangas.

Ito ang pinakamaliit na bulkan sa buong mundo.

Ito ay napaliligiran ng isang lawa.



b.

Films by Robert Garfias on northern Luzon are organized somewhat differently in labeling places and peoples from the categorical norms familiar to many Filipinos and students of Philippine Studies today. It is this deviation from the master narrative that I explore in this critical review essay. I ask how cultural categories adopted in Garfias films problematize the master narrative on ethnicity, and how we can benefit from that. In doing so, I will also summarize the content of these films from the northern Philippines in 1966. That will be followed by the examples that describe Philippine culture by dichotomizing the “highland” and “lowland”, formulating a template narrative in describing the Philippine music,



Figure 3 Topographic Map of the Northern Part of the Philippine Island Luzon with the Babuyan Islands (By Alexander Altenhof, 2012, based on NASA Shuttle Rader: Topography Mission Digital Topographic Data [SRTM3 2.1] and Philippine 2007 Census of Population).

culture and people, with the assumed confluence of the land/space/place. Lastly, I compare them with Garfias' manner of categorizing people, music, and place, along with the studies that contest the master narrative. Supporting my argument, I will draw heavily on literature that critiques the master narrative and/or suggests alternative frameworks.

Garfias Films on the Northern Philippines

Robert Garfias (b. 1932) pioneered ethnomusicological film production from the 1960s. Ethnographic film production is one area that requires a special mention among Garfias' significant contributions in the field of ethnomusicology, aside from his distinguished scholarship in Japanese traditional musics. In 1966 he visited the Philippines and shot music and dance at several sites. In 1969, eleven film works on the Philippines were produced (See Appendix 2). These are among his early film works, and at the same time, among the earliest audiovisual documents of Philippine music and dance produced from an ethnomusicological point of view. In this essay, I reflect on the music and dance of the northern Philippines, found in the following three films made available to me as of this writing: a) *Three Dances from Bokod*, in *Music and Dance of the Ibaloy Group of the Northern Philippines*; b) *Ilocano Music and Dance of the Northern Philippines*; and c) *Music and Dances of the Philippines and Korea*. This essay primarily reflects on the music and dance of the northern Philippines as featured in these films.

I summarize the benefits of watching these films in two terms: a) the films reaffirm and call our attention on the significance of musical text in ethnomusicology, through exhibition of effective filming techniques; and b) the manner of labeling cultural categories (place, peoples, music) reminds us that the categories we are familiar with today are not static but fluid.

Considering the trend of ethnomusicology at the time of film production, it is plausible that these films pay more attention to the musical text than to the context of performance. Today, that serves as an awaking call to remind us of the importance of musical text itself, as the scholarship of ethnomusicology has become more inclined to the context, than the text, in recent decades.

Three Dances from Bokod features three types of dance that go with three forms of *gangsa* playing (an unnamed courtship music/dance, "victory dance", and "healing dance") as documented in 1966 in the village of Karao, in the present-day Municipality of Bokod, the Province of Benguet.¹⁾ *Ilocano Music and Dance of the Northern Philippines* consists of film clips of the performance of bamboo violin, harp, flute and drum band with *fandango* dance, bamboo tube harp, mouth harp, lip valley flute, *fandango* dance accompanied by guitar and harp. *Music and Dances of the Philippines and Korea* contains the film clips of the performances of flat gong,

bamboo tube harp, and bamboo quill-shape clapper, and dance (accompanied by flat gong).

In *Three Dances from Bokod*, the first part presents a dance piece performed by pairs of male and female. This music (note no name given to it in the film) is characterized by three flat gongs (*gangsá*) with two conical drums (*sulibao* and *kimbal*) and a pair of metal clappers (*palas*).²⁾ The music fairly resembles what is popular in the current Mountain Province and called *takik*. In the first section, a fixed camera, set at a distant point, captures the overall view of the performers in the open air; namely, ten players of gongs, clappers and drums, and dancers in the foreground, and several observers of the shooting in the background. Three gong players and one clapper player form a curved row and move around anti-clockwise with steps that go with the rhythm, while female dancers facing their respective male partners make counter movement against their respective male pairs who lead the row of instrumentalists. Two drummers squat on the ground, outside the circle. The second section features all of the players in the first section gathered at one place playing the same music, without moving around. Dancers are excluded. Musicians' hands and instruments are focused by the sliding camera and microphone that zoom in on one player to another for some moments, while for other moments, capture the whole ensemble. Thus we can observe effectively the manner this music is played; how each instrument sounds against the whole, and how each instrument is played: Flexible wrists and fingers in playing the drums produce hollow sound: Alternation of tightening and relaxing of the gripping, in holding the gongs, and different manners of stroking in beating them produce complex mixture of clangorous and dump sounds.

The second part of the film features "Victory Dance from Karao". Eight female dancers in uniformed "ethnic" attire make two horizontal rows holding hands, while five male instrumentalists holding flat gongs also make a horizontal row. They move around counter-clock-wise on the ground. The gongs play an interlocking rhythm; in the first section, fast and in the second, slowly. The third part of the film features "Healing Dance" in which a pair of male and female dancers perform the role of healers, while a woman holding a baby joins them dancing. Both healers wear a woven shawl on their shoulders and dance around a tin basin (presumably containing water) on the ground. The male dancer, holding a bunch of branches with leaves on the right hand, shakes them repeatedly over the baby, while the female dancer also shakes her right hand occasionally over the baby when the male is not doing so, holding the edge of her shawl with her left hand at her chest. The camera captures two other women squatting on the ground at the left corner of the screen near the dancers while male instrumentalists squatting on the right. These two dance forms look unusual to the contemporary eyes familiar with the several forms of standard(ized) *gangsá* repertoires such as

patpong (interlocking beating of gongs with stick by a row of male players accompanied by a row of female dancers who make circular formations), or *toppaya* (interlocking beating of gongs with palms by male players squatting on the ground to accompany a courtship dance), among others. For this matter, a Garfias video clip on Apayao featuring female flat gong players is another informative but "unusual" material, as the popular narrative on the Cordillera music today has tended to be Kalinga-centric and it often describes the *gangsa* as "male's instrument".

Ilocano Music and Dance of the Northern Philippines is another fascinating piece. Philippine musicology in the post-World War II decades did not pay much attention to the music of the lowland communities like those of the Ilocos region when audiovisual technology became relatively accessible to ethnomusicologists for documentation. Lowland materials did not interest the nationalistic artists and researchers when anything colonial had to be eliminated, in their effort to promote Philippine culture. Therefore until today, this film remains one of the few, rare documents of the music of the Ilocos region in the 1960s, including violin made of bamboo tube and *arpa* (harp). These films inform cultural continuities between the highlands and lowlands in the north as manifested by the commonality of certain elements of music and dance across the region, despite the ostensible differences. For instance, the dance formation in *fandango* resembles that of Bokod previously mentioned and that of a video clip of *sinuklit* of the Province of Abra (the music popularly known as *topaya* today in Philippine ethnomusicology) in *Music and Dance of the Philippines and Korea* to be illustrated in the following section. In all of these, a male dancer spreads arms wide (but relaxing wrists) and then moves them upwards and downwards. A female dancer who similarly raises her hands faces him from a distance. The two facing each other move forward but the female turns back when the two get close. After a while, the female turns again to face the male partner once again from a little distance and repeat the same movement, until finally the pair meet. It is safe to assume the cultural affinity between the three dances from three areas; lowland Ilocos, highland Bokod, and highland Abra (Figure 4).

Music and Dances of the Philippines and Korea contains four film clips from northern Luzon. In *Sinuklit*, the first piece, the camera focuses on the *gangsa* (flat gong) and two hands of each player. As in *Three Dances of Bokod*, by panning the camera and microphone from one *gangsa* to another, the film successfully captures the rhythmic pattern (including its variations and the constantly changing timbres) of each *gangsa* in the ensemble, called *sinuklit* (Figure 5). To the best of my knowledge, hardly any other films, among a number of those featuring *gangsa*, have been able to capture the complexity of *gangsa* sound and rhythm as successfully as *sinuklit*. This manner of documentation maximizes the potential of



a.



b.



c.



d.

Figure 4 (a-d) Similarities of courtship dance formation in highlands and lowlands of the Northern Philippines: (a) From *Fandango: Duma Flute and Drum Band*, in *Ilocano Music and Dance of the Northern Philippines* (ca. 01:18); (b) From "Vintareño" *Fandango*, in *Ilocano Music and Dances of the Northern Philippines* (ca. 03:15); (c) From *Three Dances of Bokod* (ca. 01:18, original in color); (d) From *Abra Dance*, in *Music and Dance of the Philippines and Korea* (ca. 00:38, original in color).

audiovisual technology when used for knowledge production, particularly in ethnomusicology: that could have been not possible with only audio technology. Similarly, the advantages of audiovisual technology are effectively utilized in *topaya* (on *kolibit*, a bamboo tube harp of Lubuagan, Kalinga) by zooming in on the instrument and fingers that play it.

The *gangsa* music labeled *sinuklit* in the film is more popularly known as *topaya* in contemporary ethnomusicology in the Philippines. In the northern Philippine highlands, the same or very similar musical instruments are used across villages but those are called by different names. Also, some very similar musical forms performed here and there in the region are named differently in different villages. But in Philippine ethnomusicology, the terms used in some part of the Province of Kalinga tend to dominate those of the other areas. In the communities that call this music *topaya*, they also play the same music on the bamboo tube harp and call it *topaya, too*. *Sinuklit* is presumably an emic terminology for this music in Abra where it was shot. Meanwhile, the bamboo tube harp *kolibit* in the film is usually called *kolitong* in contemporary Philippine ethnomusicology, as the terminology of other Kalinga communities is favored over that of Lubuagan. Similarly, it is safe to assume that *kolibit* as a term for bamboo tube harp reflects the emic perception of the community in Lubuagan where (and when) the performance was shot. Such terminological differences reveal emic cultural



Figure 5 From *Sinuklit*, in *Music and Dances of the Philippines and Korea* (ca. 00:11, original in color).

categories that the narratives of Philippine ethnomusicology have concealed, demonstrating the benefits of perusing Garifas' films.

Highland-Lowland Dichotomy in Philippine Studies

José Maceda (1917–2004) was a pianist, composer, and pioneer of ethnomusicology in the Philippines in the second half of the 20th century, and was awarded the title of National Artist in Music in 1998. He consistently described the Philippine music in the framework of the highland-lowland dichotomy, and with his bias towards the former. That is manifested, for example, in the entry of the "Philippines" in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Stanley 2001: 565–587). According to Maceda, the Philippine music consists of three kinds of music; a) the indigenous music of the mountain peoples of the Cordillera and of Mindanao, which oddly includes the music of Islam-influenced peoples, too; b) Western art music; and c) popular music. This categorization leaves no space for non-art music of the lowland communities. Out of the total of 17 pages, Maceda devotes 14 pages for the indigenous music; while only 2 pages for Western art music; and 1 page for popular music. Maceda's view is well summarized in his interview conducted by Helen Samson in the 1970s:

"Genuine Asian music in the Philippines is music untainted by any contact with the Western world. It exists today in certain places in the Mountain Province, Palawan, Mindoro, Mindanao, just to mention a few regions. It can also be described as Pre-Spanish music." (Maceda quoted in Samson 1976: 137; emphasis by the author)

Such a view served as a conceptual framework for promoting "nationalistic" music education, which is believed to be attained by integrating local musical materials from the "mountain peoples." This narrative has certainly influenced leaders of music education in the Cordillera region in the succeeding decades. In the early 2000s, I conducted an archival survey of locally produced ethnomusicological studies, at the Regional Office of Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) of the Department of Education (DepEd). I was able to examine six master's theses on music education produced in 1982–1990 by teachers or officers in the Region. All of them justified their producing a *de facto* anthology of musical examples of their respective communities for their master theses by stating that these materials will be useful in classroom to inspire nationalism.³⁾

Indigenous music is a significant part of the national identity and these provisions may aspire for the preservation, development, promotion and transmittal[sic] of this culture by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, ethnomusicologists, song writers or

composers and other music enthusiasts. ... indigenous music may contribute something to music education, to a richer national identity and cultural presentations for world brotherhood. (Padeo 1982: 3)

The music of the Philippine non-christian[sic] ethnic group clearly shows the wealth and perennial beauty of Filipino folk songs and dances before contact with the western world. There is an urgent need for preserving the musical heritage and culture of the Filipinos. In the present period of orientation, the Philippines should wake up to the need for the propagation and cultivation of Pilipino music, for it is through a people's music that its soul is already manifested. (Brillantes 1987: 5)

The singing of native songs which are indigenous to Filipino culture and traditions stimulates and deepens the artistic chauvinism among Filipinos, energized by new romanticism in Philippine music sweeping the nation these days. ... This research report (thesis) hopes to contribute towards the stimulation of that nationalistic fervor alive in the Filipino youth through their appreciation, pride and love of their own native songs. (Saboy 1990: 24–25)

Such a framework in mapping Philippine music mirrors the prevailing Philippine anthropological discourse and narratives. Largely succeeding H. Otley Beyer's classification of ethnic groups of the Philippine populace used in the 1916 Census (Beyer 1917) and its variations, works of F. Landa Jocano (1930–2013) also represent another set of examples that reflect a similar framework in interpreting Philippine culture. Jocano, thirteen years junior to Maceda, was a leading anthropologist in the country in the second half of the 20th century. Believing that "Filipino indigenous communities offer tremendous opportunities for advancing the frontier of knowledge on Filipino cultural heritage" (Jocano et al. 1994: 16), Jocano, in his tentative bibliography of Philippine ethnology, lists 1006 titles on "indigenous ethnic communities" published in 1870–1984. Out of 1006 titles, 321 studies are listed under "general works", and 685 titles as those on "particular ethnic groups". Out of 685 titles, 447 are on the northern Luzon groups: 414 for highlands and 43 for midlands. No works are listed on the majority groups in the lowland Philippines, who are not considered "indigenous".⁴⁾ Jocano maintains:

Ethnic community life is said to "mirror" the conditions in the archipelago prior to extensive exposure to exogenous influences, specifically the Western ones. Thus, it has been argued, when the data found in studies of ethnic communities are compared with early historical accounts of the Philippines, "it is possible to obtain a more comprehensive picture of our Filipino heritage, and of the traditions which will form part of the matrix of contemporary Christian and Muslim societies."⁵⁾ (1994: 15)



Figure 6 From *Cordillera Suite*, Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group
 (Source: Official Website of Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group;
https://ramonobusanfolkloric.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/mg_7002.jpg).

Such a framework is made tangible to us through, for instance, performances of two state-sponsored, folkdance companies: the Bayanihan, the Philippine National Folkdance Company (Bayanihan) and the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group (ROFG) (Figure 6), both of which are resident folk dance companies of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).⁶ A standard full-length performance of these troupes is composed of four suites: namely, the *Mountain Suit* (also called variously like *Dances of the Mountain Province*, *Northern Suite*, *Highland Suite*, *Tribal Suite*, or *Highland Tribal Suite*), *Spanish Colonial Suite*, *Muslim Suite*, and *Rural Suite* (Castro 2011: 82).⁷ In other words, the show implicitly conveys the message that the Philippine population consists of highlanders in the north, lowland hispanized ones in the middle, and Muslims in the south, with gross and odd oversimplification and abstraction. Bayanihan as well as ROFG, “established the standards for representing the nation” (Castro 2011: 65). Christi-Ann Castro aptly suggests that “the narratives of the nation in staged productions condense both place and time in order to foster a sense of national unity”: as for the place “the remote and exotic are performed” to forge identity of the self by incorporating “the internal Other” while as for time, this “Other” is relegated to premodernity, as the present-day evidence of the nation’s past (2011: 62).

Counter Narratives

It has become almost a norm to discuss the Philippines by contrasting the highland against the lowland and such narrative may even sound plausible. However, some experts on the northern Philippines argue that at least for the north it is more reasonable to view the whole area of northern Luzon as a seamlessly connected and related cultural zone, than contrasting the lowland and highland. That is because the dichotomy framework, which tends to exoticise the highlands, not only obscures the mutual cultural relevance and continuity between the highlands and lowlands, but also makes the midland communities invisible.

Each river running from highland to lowland forms a connected and unique cultural sphere; We should not wrap all upstream communities into one, cutting them from their respective downstream communities. In historiography, Felix M. Keesing (1902–1961) illustrates the history of entire northern Luzon across the highlands and lowlands, by dividing the region into nine areas (1. Pangasinan area; 2. Southern Ilocos area; 3. Middle Ilocos area; 4. Northern Ilocos area; 5. Northwest Cagayan area; 6. Lower Cagayan area; 7. Chico river area; 8. Middle Cagayan area; and 9. Upper Cagayan area) (1962) (Figure 7). The division is determined in accordance with topographic conditions such as the mountain ranges of the Cordillera Gran Central and the major rivers; namely the Chico (area 7 in Figure 7), Cagayan (areas 6, 8, 9), Tineg/Abra (areas 2, 3, 4), and Magat (area 9) Rivers running from the ranges to an eastern or western side. It is reasonable that Keesing divides the region at the ranges to the west (areas 1, 2, 3, 4) and east (areas 5, 7, 9), and considering the Cagayan River the benchmark of labeling (areas 6, 8, 9), in the western side. Keesing emphasizes that each river has facilitated the movements of people, goods, knowledge and technology, and that during the Spanish era residents of the upper stream and those of the lower stream of the same river were often related by kinship.

This remains true to a large extent today. In my empirical observation, to mention an example, those from the south-western part of the Province of Ifugao today (southern part of the area 7) not only have close kin members among the Ifugao migrant communities in the Province of Quirino (area 9) and those in the Province of Isabela (area 8), they often shuttle between those communities upstream and downstream on the Magat-Cagayan Rivers, at an individual level. Contrary to the popular narrative that Baguio City is the melting pot of the “Cordillera” population (the northern Luzon highlanders), and Ilokano is the *lingua franca* of the northern Luzon highlands, those from south-western Ifugao today have weaker connections in Baguio City (area 1) and do not speak Ilokano very well.

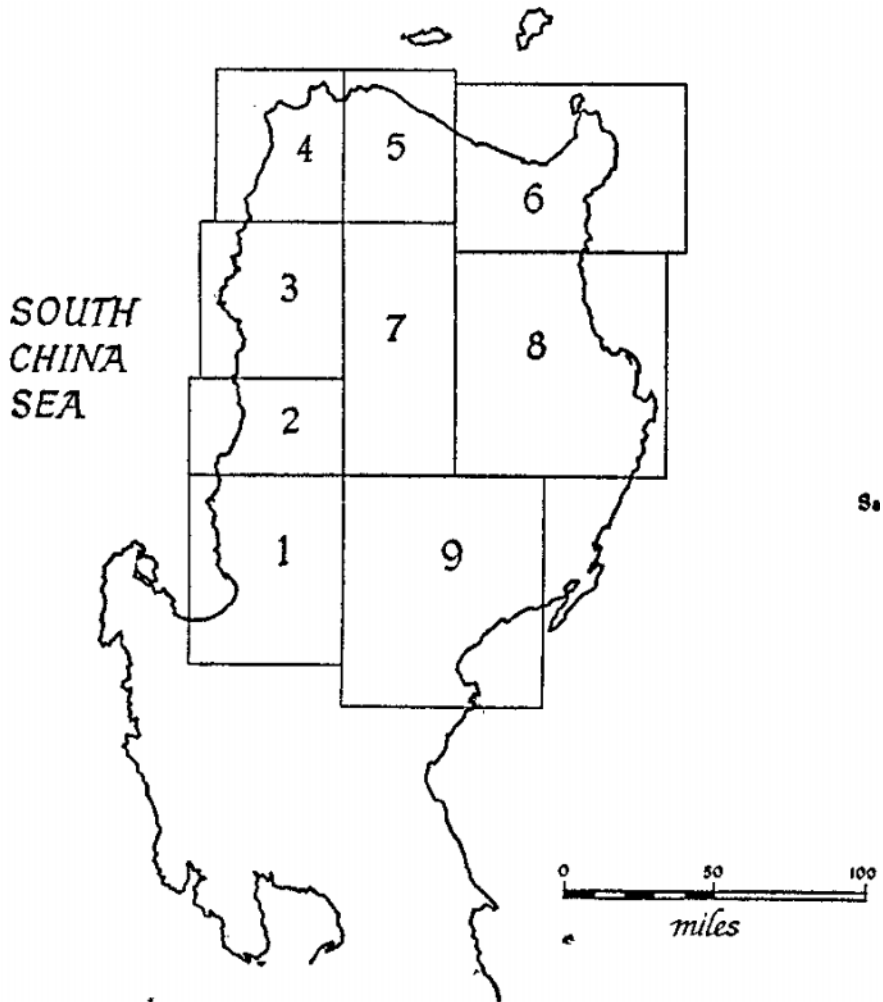


Figure 7 Keesing's zoning of Northern Luzon⁹¹ (Keesing 1962, facing page 1).

During the Spanish period, mission workers “transferred converts down to the lowland communities” (along a river), and “the lines were drawn between Christian and non-Christian, which were to last up to modern times” (Keesing 1962: 27). In other words, the difference between the highlanders and lowlanders was not of ethnicity or biological inheritance, but of religious status.

William Henry Scott (1921–1993) once warned us that it is the “20th-century tourist descriptions or anthropological studies” that “have made us so aware of the difference between the so-called minorities and the rest of the Filipino people that we regard them as a separate species” (1982: 28). Similarly to Keesing, Scott also informs us that a colonial process of Spaniards “had steadily divided the Filipino

people into two categories—the submissive and the unsubmissive, the faithful and the faithless” (1982: 40); that is to say, in terms of religious status, namely either being converted or not, and not in terms of ethnicity.

The view of Benedict Anderson resonates: “No such Filipino minority-majority division appears” (2004: 29) in Spanish historical records. Anderson states, in his reference to the first serious enumeration of the populace in the Philippine archipelago conducted in 1818 by the Spanish church apparatus, that “(c)ross-category totals, the necessary basis for majority-minority groupings, were scarce. There was no trace of territorialism, nor of the dozens of ethnolinguistic groups dotted across the islands” (Anderson 2004: 39). It was only in the late years of the Spanish era that the notion of ethnic group vis-à-vis land/space began to emerge as expressed in different channels such as travelogues and maps produced by European intellectuals who had a chance to travel the area.

Fernando Blumentritt’s ethnographic map of 1890 classifies the population of the archipelago into three, new Christians among the infidels, Spanish Filipino Christians, and Moros (Figure 8). “New Christians of the infidels” in the north include 20 groups; namely Adang, Agulainos, Apayaos, Alimut, Bayabonanes/Ganuenganes, Igorrotes de Bontok, Bouayanan, Bugnanos, Calaluas, Calingas, Calalanjeanes/Jrayas, Gaddans, Guinaanes, Ifugaos/Mayaoyaos/Quianganes/Gulipanes/Pangianes, Igorrotes, Italones, Itetapanes, Ituys?[sic], Nabayuganes, and Tinguianes. While some names such as Apayaos, Calingas, Ifugaos, Bontok, Tinguianes, and Gaddanes (or their respective variations) are used today, many names have disappeared at least from the print (i.e., official documents, academic research, mass media).⁹⁾

Keesing speaks out that it is “modern scholars” like [Dean C.] Worcester, [Fay-Cooper] Cole, [H. Otley] Beyer and others who “*reduced* them” — that is to say, the “varied patterns of mountain living and local names having geographic, ethnic, or other significance” such as “‘Adan,’ ‘Mandaya,’ ‘Busao,’ ‘Jumangi,’ ‘Silipan’”— “in turn to the recognized groupings given in modern classifications” (1962: 305).

The areas (territory) of the “new Christians” (read as the areas not very much hispanized) in northern Luzon do not coincide with the topographic highlands. It is remarkable that some of those marked as “new Christians” during the Spanish era came to be labeled as “non-Christian” during the American era, while others got absorbed by the category “Ilokanos”. It was in the 20th century, through American colonization and the process of nation building by the post-independence Philippines that the non-hispanized population during the Spanish period came to be associated with highlands. The details of the process are reserved for future research, though.

The establishment of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in 1901 was one of the first administrative measures the American colonial administration crafted to

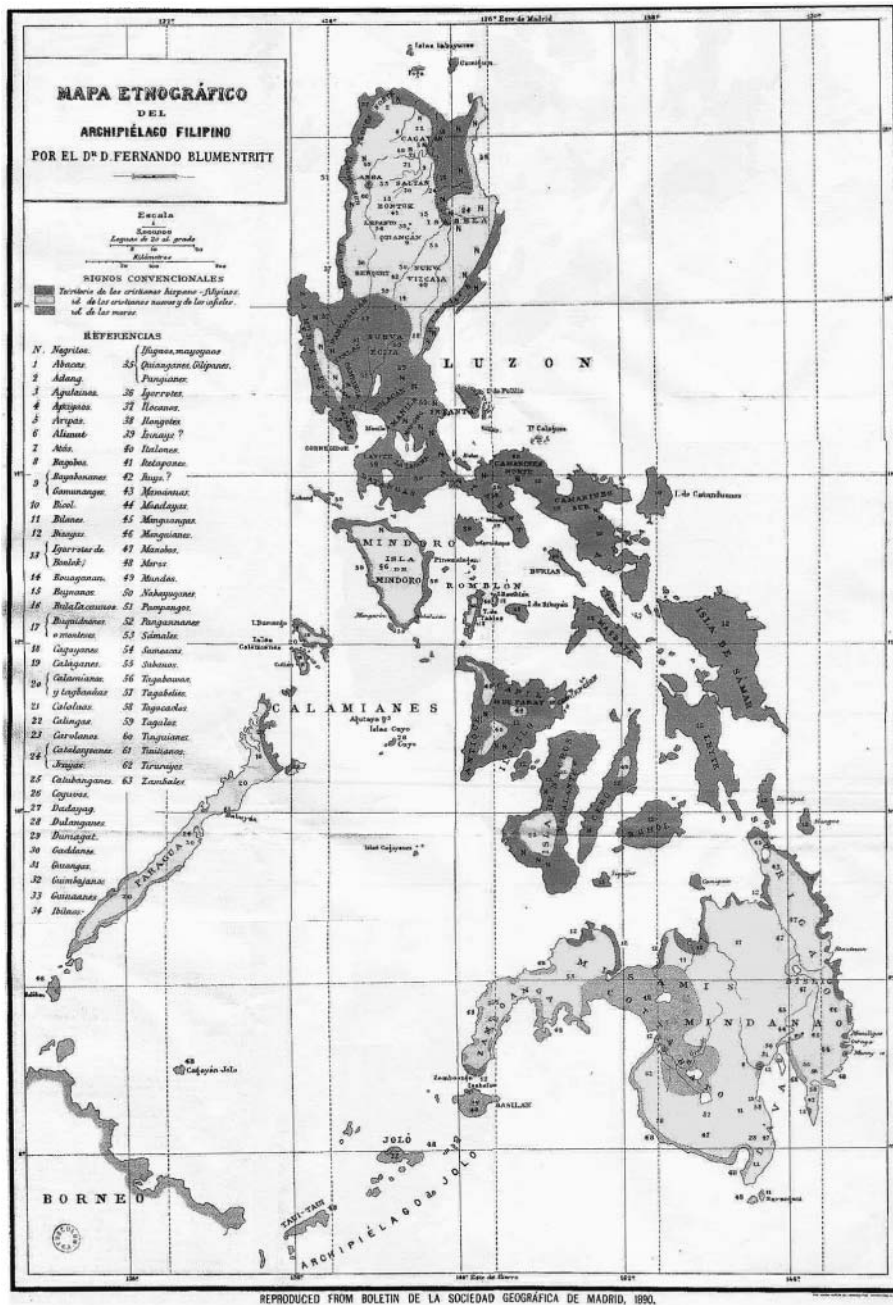


Figure 8 Blumentritt - Ethnographic Map of the Philippines, 1890 (Source: <http://www.univie.ac.at/ksa/apsis/aufl/blumen/fblumap.jpg>).
 Dark area: "Spanish Filipino Christians"
 Gray area: "Moros"
 Light area: "New Christians among the Infidels"

investigate the “uncivilized tribes” and Muslim population and to conduct “scientific” research on such people and their land (Fry 1983: 15–16, citing President McKinley’s instruction to David P. Barrows, the first chief of the bureau). Dividing the populace into Christians and non-Christians is obviously a continuation of the Spanish categorization of the populace of the archipelago. This division was further formalized in the 1903 Census.

The 1903 Census is the first census the American colonial government conducted throughout the Philippine archipelago. Vicente L. Rafael, with sharp insight, convincingly illustrates how the census as a strategic colonial project of the United States contributed to the division, codification and consolidation of the Philippine population into two groups: civilized/ Christian, and wild/non-Christian. According to Rafael, the census was to “recode race” (Rafael 2000: 32). While labeling the populace either civilized or wild, it further divided people into roughly twenty-five linguistic groups. A tribal name was assigned to each individual, five skin colors were distinguished, and the locations of birth and residence were recorded (Rafael 2000: 29–32). The division became a rigid racial distinction associated with a particular language/dialect (recorded as majority versus minority) and space (recorded as lowland versus highland), that was encoded, printed and circulated.

In due course, the Mountain Province was formed in 1908, another remarkable step of institutionalization of ethnicity in the colonial Philippines. It consisted of five sub-provinces, namely Apayao, Benguet, Bontoc, Ifugao and Kalinga. The boundaries of these sub-provinces are almost identical to today’s provinces with these names. They form five of six provinces that constitute today’s Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) (the additional province in CAR is Abra). William Henry Scott described this event as one of the “impressive accomplishments of the American administration” in the region. He wrote in the early 1990s that “few of the provincial names themselves had been in general use and some of them were highly peculiar” (1993: 57). Scott reminds us in his book posthumously published that:

The very names of the former five provinces...(namely Bontoc, Ifugao, Benguet, Apayao and Kalinga) were imposed on the mountaineers by American authority in the present century in accordance with American ethnological survey. Seventy-five years ago, the people of Bontoc and Tucucan or Mayaoyao and Kiangan called themselves by the names of their town, not by the names of provinces or sub-provinces or tribes (Scott 1993: 46).¹⁰

If the first American Census of 1903 was to codify the civilized and non-civilized, and the creation of the Mountain Province in 1908 was to establish ethnic names assigned to the populace residing in respective contoured areas, the second Census by the American administration in 1916 was to consolidate the

American definition of ethnic groups. At that time, five names of the sub-provinces of the Mountain Province, namely Apayao, Benguet, Bontoc, Ifugao, and Kalinga, were in the process of entering into and molding the consciousness of the people in the region themselves as names of the ethnic groups designated to them. Francisco Billiet and Francis Lambrecht inform us of their conversation with an old man in Lubuagan in 1920, at the then capital of sub-province Kalinga. "Kalinga" is, according to the old man, "what the Americans now call us"; the lowland Ilokanos used to call his village mates *Itnóg*, and they *will be called Christians when* they have priests. They call themselves *iLubuwágan* (people of Lubwagan), or *tágu* (men) that is *iLúta* (people of the Earth). The informant meant that he and his fellow villagers are "visible inhabitants of the Earth", and "they are not *álan* (spirits), who roam around on the Earth" (Billiet and Lambrecht 2001: 8–12, emphasis by the author). "What the Americans now call" have gradually become the popular or common framework.

The Philippines became independent in 1946, after brief occupation by Japan in 1941–1944. The young Philippine government basically succeeded America's administrative framework in managing the "non-Christian" populace in the northern region. It was in 1957 that the Bureau on Non-Christian Tribes crafted in 1901 was restructured as the Commission on National Integrity (CNI), in order "to effect in a more rapid and complete manner the economic, social, moral and political advancement of the non-Christian Filipinos or *national cultural minorities* and ... the integration of all said national cultural minorities into the body politic" (Fry 1983: 229–230, emphasis by the author). Thus, in the integration policy, the term "national cultural minorities" became an official label in referring to the population who used to be called non-Christian and considered uncivilized in the integration policy. William Henry Scott reminds us that "a cultural minority" was "created where none had existed" (Scott 1982: 41).

Such studies and descriptions [20th-century tourist description or anthropological studies] have the result, if not the aim of making us aware of the difference between these minority cultures and majority culture. ... They obscure the very question by reinforcing a natural tendency to consider present conditions normative and static rather than as the end product of an ongoing process of human history. Worse yet, they have fastened these differences on the civic consciousness of the Filipino people by projecting 20th-century observations into a prehistoric past complete with dates and details for which there is no archaeological evidence whatever. (Scott 1982: 28–29)

From 1964 to 1986, the Philippines was ruled by the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos, who is known for dictatorial leadership and idiosyncratic nationalism. Scott further points out that the promulgation of nation-building under the Bagong Lipunan (New Society) ideology of President Marcos has brought the cultural

minorities into new prominence, with the goals of nation-building and national consciousness expressed in such (problematic) slogans as “one race, one nation, one destiny” (Scott 1982: 28), and “unity in diversity” (Castro 2011: 101).

Ethnographic studies complement historical studies by presenting empirical data that both upland dwellers and their lowland counterparts frequently traveled for trade, migration, intermarriage, conversion, often along rivers. Michelle Z. Rosaldo illustrates the scattered settlement pattern of the Ilongots of Nueva Vizcaya along rivers and the wide migration routes of some Ilongots across the settlement areas of the Ilokans, Ifugaos, Ibalois and the Kallahans (Rosaldo 1980 e.g., maps in p. 6 and p. 11). Patricia Afable likewise informs us of the Kallahans (or Kalanguyas) that the “estimates of the number of speakers of the Kalanguya language vary from eighty thousand to one-half million”, and that “(w)hile the majority of them live in Ifugao, Benguet, and Nueva Vizcaya provinces, large numbers also reside in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Pangasinan, and Quezon provinces” (Afable 2000: 25). Afable cautions us that the line between Christian and non-Christian has been drawn arbitrarily; “little was said of the actual communications, trading and travel that had *always* taken place and *continued* to take place between people in the mountains and in the lowlands, or of the *extensive* transitional foothill districts” (Afable 1989: 144; emphasis by the author).¹¹⁾

Gangsa, Dance, Costume

On *gangsa* and dance, Patricia Afable and Gerald Finin provide us fascinating information in relation to the process of modernization of the northern Luzon highlands. Their accounts on *gangsa* and dance during American period provide us a hint on the impetus of the emergence of the aesthetics of exoticism.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, the American administration used to host an annual feast in each sub-province of the (old) Mountain Province. The feast was called *cañao*, named after an old Ilokano word *kaniáw* for “heathen practices” or “tribal feasts among mountain peoples” (Afable 1998: 55). The *cañao* was the opportunity for Secretary of Interior Worcester to make an annual inspection tour to each sub-province of the Mountain Province (Fry 1983: 5). The American-style *cañaos* were also opportunities for representatives of different communities within the sub-province to gather at one place, often for the first time in history. Mountain villagers met with those from “other” communities who had been considered “enemy”. They could stay in one place side by side relatively peacefully, ironically, thanks to the presence of the constabulary soldiers of the American colonial administration recruited from neighboring communities in the region (Afable 1998: 56; Finin 2005: 54).

At this secular feast, *gangsá* played a significant role. *Gangsá* was often beaten for a parade like entourage of Secretary Worcester at the *cañao* site, beside American flags and local residents crowding together along the roadway (Finin 2005: 54). Afable quotes Worcester writing "people in Ifugao and Suyoc dancing, around the American flag" (Afable 1998: 56, citing Worcester 1911, n.p.). In 1910, on the occasion of a visit of U.S. Secretary of War Dickinson, an unprecedentedly large scale *cañao* was held in Bontok, the capital of the Mountain Province then, with delegations from all sub-provinces. It is reported that welcoming of this American officer included the "deafening sounds of more than three-hundred fifty *gangsás*[sic]" (Finin 2005: 56, citing Kane 1933: 317).

Finin further cites an instance in which American *cañao* facilitated a "performance" of theatrical display of *himog*, a headhunting-related ritual of Ifugao, as requested by Americans to impress a group of American visitors. Elders of the community "expressed great hesitation" about the idea of performing it, as "there being all manner of taboo against such a thing". However, elders were convinced after two pigs were offered and another two were promised (Finin 2005: 56). Afable emphasizes in her reference to *cañao* that "not all Cordillera cultures accepted these organized activities equally.... Many continue to be ambivalent about showing traditional dance just for entertainment" (Afable 1998: 56). Afable further informs us that Ibaloy Igorots have resisted the "separation of dancing and feasting from the ritual setting" since "pre-World War II years when Americans in Baguio sponsored dancing contests", that "involved Bontoc and Ifugao people but not the local Ibaloyos", perhaps because Ibaloyos "tried to maintain their identity, through their religious life as they became displaced and marginalized in the first half of the century, in rapid urbanization of the Baguio region and in its adjoining mining areas." (Afable 1998: 56).

These accounts imply that today's *gangsá* playing at fiestas, either of the patron saints or of the Local Government Units (LGUs), have inherited the practice crafted through execution of the colonial *cañaos*.

In this connection it is noted that what is assumed to be traditional costume today seems neither a very native product nor having a very long history. Rather, it is of the product of the 20th century, both in terms of materials and of the practice of weaving. For the American *cañaos*, government funds were used to purchase loincloths, wrapped skirts (*tapis*), beads — items considered elements of ethnic costume today — as prizes during the festival, aside from pigs, blankets, agricultural tools, magnifying glasses, and so on (Finin 2005: 53). This information implies that what is considered ethnic costume of each group in the northern Luzon highlands today is a product of relatively new developments. Both Keesing and Scott inform us that woven materials were among the goods highlanders used to import from the Ilocos coast during the Spanish period and early 20th century.

They note that most of the highlanders used to wear loincloths made of bark then. Keesing cites Buzeta (1850, I: 58) referring to Igorrotes in upper Cagayan area in the mid-19th century “as wearing bark loincloths”, while the Christianized Isinai looks “little different from the Igorrotes” (Keesing 1962: 295). In the second half of the 19th century, Scott maintains, “lowland traders ... now began to appear regularly on the Cordillera with hogs for sale, and even opened a few stores where they sold cotton blankets, G-strings, heavy wire, and red cloth to the Igorots” (Scott 1977: 239).

At the first mass in Ahin (Ifugao) in 1881, Kalinga chieftains received “beads, meat, and rice as well as clothes and blankets” (Scott 1977: 270) as gift. Scott (1977: 310–317) also notes the diary of Alexander Schadenberg — a German scientist who traveled Abra and Kalinga in 1885 — in Guinaang, Kalinga. According to Schadenberg, G-strings were woven in the lowland like Ilocos. He also wrote down the process of preparations of bark cloth in Kalinga where woven cloth was obtained only through trade. In Apayao, next to Kalinga, similarly, they sewed with pineapple fibers and made bark G-strings, but got all the cloth for their *tapis* skirts, blankets, and little jackets from Ilocos. Scott further tells us that it was Fr. Malumbers who provided his school in Kiangan, Ifugao with a Singer sewing machine and western type loom between 1880s and 1890s (1977: 290). I myself have observed in the 2000s that two local museums, Bontoc Museum (Bontoc, Mountain Province) and Beyer Museum (Banaue, Ifugao) today exhibit locally produced old and new textile materials. Both exhibitions convey to us clearly that the local populations in these areas have been producing and wearing bark textiles until the early 20th century, and that cotton woven products, particularly those with colorful textiles, are of recent development, in the twentieth century.¹²⁾

Conclusion

Despite the studies that contest the prevailing narrative of highland-lowland dichotomy on Philippine culture, the master narrative continues to be prominent. Garfias films on music and dance of the northern Philippines documented in 1966 are valuable materials to fill the gaps in the highland-lowland dichotomy. I find here the merit of a foreign, transient researcher who is free from the ideology of nationalism.

As I have illustrated above, the highland-lowland dichotomy as framework in grasping Philippine culture was formulated with modernization projects in tandem; particularly, American colonial rule in the first half of the 20th century and post-independence nation-building in the second half of the 20th century. In the process, eventually, the highlands and population thereof were essentialized with the rhetoric of “cultural minority” (Philippine government), “genuine Asian” and

“untainted” (Jose Maceda), and “prior to extensive exposure to exogenous influence” (F. Landa Jocano). The shift from negative connotation (“uncivilized”, “wild”) to positive (“cultural minority”) in the post-World War II, post-independence era manifests the emergence of the aesthetics of exoticism.

Regarding similarities across highlands and lowlands, a common pattern of dance formation rendered by a pair of male and female dancers was pointed out. Inclusion of some bamboo musical instruments associated with the Kalingas today in the Ilokano music collection exemplifies the fluidity and arbitrariness of boundary-making between the highland and lowland. The music and dance of Karao, a Bontoc community in the midst of the Ibaloy communities, demonstrate that the connection between people, culture, and place is not always static but is rather loose. Similarly, use of alternative terms for musical instruments and musical forms (e.g. *kolibit*, *sinuklit*) warns us that prevailing jargon may not necessarily reflect emic perception. In sum, Garfias’ films suggest how things were perceived before the institutionalization of ethnicity by colonial and state authorities and by anthropologists, and that of the variety of music by ethnomusicologists. Garfias films unravel the categories that the conditions of modernity have institutionalized.

Eric Hobsbawm (1983: 1) maintained that, “‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented,” emphasizing that “invented traditions” are often products of the Industrial Revolution and nation-state formation, and fall into three general groups: a) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or incorporating the membership of groups, *real or artificial communities*; b) those *establishing or legitimizing institutions*, status or relations of *authority*; and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the *inculcation* of benefits, value systems and conventions of behavior (Hobsbawm 1983: 9; emphasis by the author). In short, “invented traditions” pertain to the elements of modernity: namely, imagined communities (“real or artificial communities”), institutionalization and power (“establishing or legitimizing institutions”), and pedagogization (“inculcation”). In other words, it is the conditions of modernity that reify the invention of past.

Tessa Morris-Suzuki aptly elaborates on the two-fold time aspect in nation-state formation — as project of modernity that needs a past and invents it, by incorporating the aspect of space. One of the primary requirements of a nation-state is, Morris-Suzuki maintains, defining the state-border. In so doing, the metropolitan authority may encounter the unfamiliar. When confronting the unfamiliar, it may be dealt with by “blurring of the notions of time and space ...in the language of ethnic or national identity” (2001: 82). That is to say, either of the two ways may be deployed: “(b)y defining it as spatially different — ‘foreign’; or by defining it as temporally different — ‘backward’, ‘undeveloped’ ‘primitive’, projection of the past into the present” (Morris-Suzuki 2001: 82).

In the narrative of a national culture with an agenda for nation building, a remote culture is convenient. The rhetoric needs people and culture that appear unfamiliar to the metropolis because that signifies the possession and control of a wider territory. But it must not remain foreign, because it has to be very much a part of the nation. Thus, it has to be located as temporally different, that is of the past. This insight explains the nature of the treatment of northern Luzon highlands and their peoples in a master narrative of the national culture project in postcolonial Philippines. Those labeled as an “ethnic minority” became a convenient group for the metropolitan authority. Their presence as “foreign”, or as spatially different, assumes the metropolis’ control of the space, often remote and/or of the margin. At the same time, they are conveniently associated with past, or considered temporarily different, which helps to justify their inclusion in the membership of the state. It is timely to review Garfias films today. It provides us the opportunity to revisit the era when the pertaining music and “cultural, social and historical conditions” —Taylor’s favorite trinity around the music — was in the early process of institutionalization, that is, in other words, when the aesthetics of exoticism was emerging.

Finally, I turn to the significance of musical text in ethnomusicology, which Garfias films remind us. Ethnomusicology since the 1990s has tended to treat musical text merely as an entry point, favoring instead discussion of the socio-cultural and historical contexts of music, being significantly influenced by critical anthropology, cultural studies, and multidisciplinary area/ global studies approaches. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, Taylor has successfully demonstrated in his *Beyond Exoticism* how to integrate both the textual and contextual analysis of music. This article focused on the role of category as context for the institutionalization of music and the emergence of an aesthetics of exoticism. The molding of musical text to modern standards has been left untouched as a topic of study. The coming generation of ethnomusicologists shall be inspired by Garfias’ films to also unravel what institutionalization has done to musical text. Such work will ultimately allow us to unpack modernity in terms of both musical text and context.

Notes

- 1) Although the Province of Benguet is generally known as home to the Ibalays, the villagers of Karao of Bokod, the documentation site, is known as the descendants of the migrants from Bontoc, Mountain Province, and perceived as “different” ethnic group from the neighboring Ibalays (Brainard 1992; Chanco 1980).
- 2) *Pelas* is not really a musical instrument. Any (metal) objects that produce metallic, distinguishable sound will be picked up and used, such as a short piece of metal pipe to be hit by a piece of stone.

- 3) These are Aguilan (1989), Brillantes (1987), Madarang (1990), Malateo (1987), Padeo (1982), and Saboy (1990).
- 4) See Reid (2009) for an interesting argument on the definition of “indigenous” peoples.
- 5) Citing National Museum of the Philippines (n.d.), p. 6.
- 6) See Namiki (2011) for the comparison of the two companies. Also see Castro (2011) for the brief history of these two dance companies, including the background on how each of them became the resident company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.
- 7) Namiki names five suits: “Cordillera”, western-influenced or “Maria Clara”, “Muslim”, “*lumad*” (the term often refers to indigenous persons as a whole in Mindanao) and “rural” (2011: 65, 84).
- 8) Compare Figure 6 with Figure 1. In Figure 6 each division, except for the area 7, contains both highland and lowland areas (The area 7 is so categorized as an upper Chico River area), while in Figure 1, the division is the area (imagined to be) highland (shaded portion) versus that of the lowland (white portion). See also Figure 3 for topography.
- 9) Some are still in use in vernacular speech.
- 10) Tucucan is a village, almost identical to today’s Barangay Tucucan and “Bontoc” Barangay Bontok Ili, both in the Municipality of Bontok in the current Mountain Province. Meanwhile, Mayaoyao and Kiangan are villages about 30 km afar from each other on the road, and today both are the Barangay Poblacion of the municipalities of the same name respectively in the Province of Ifugao.
- 11) See also Azurin (1991) for a similar argument on the fluid movements of the Ilokans and organic connection between the highlanders and lowlanders in northern Luzon.
- 12) The author’s observation at Bontoc Museum (2006 and 2010) and Beyer Museum (2009).

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