

Maria Alexandra Iñigo Chua. *Kirial de Baclayon año 1826: Hispanic Sacred Music in 19th Century Bohol, Philippines*. Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2010. 184 pages. With accompanying CD.

Historical musicology in the Philippines has grown in the past decade with the emergence of new music scholars. Maria Alexandra Iñigo Chua is one of them. Her pioneering study on the *cantorales* or choir books of the major churches in Bohol, particularly Baclayon and Loay, has uncovered a previously untapped facet of colonial music that is deeply rooted in the religious practices of the Catholic Church. *Kirial de Baclayon año 1826: Hispanic Sacred Music in 19th Century Bohol, Philippines* is a valuable study of masses, of which a few were putatively locally composed, including the *Missa Baclayana*. Most of the masses presumably originated from Spain and were copied by hand by an anonymous *escrivente de solfa* or church scribe of Baclayon Church in the nineteenth century. These masses and a few other sacred pieces were compiled in a book, the *Kirial de Baclayon*, which is now preserved at the Ecclesiastical Museum of the Baclayon Church. The size of the book and the expensive materials (including carabao hide) used in its making suggest the significant place that singing occupied in church activities in Bohol during the Spanish colonial era. Of interest is the *Kirial's* use of square and diamond neumes on a five-line staff for notation, a method quite different from the ones adopted by the Benedictine Abbey monks of Solesmes in France in the nineteenth century and published in the *Liber Usualis*. The neume groupings there were different, and they were written on four-line staves.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part provides the historical and cultural context for the production of the *cantorales*; the second part focuses on the musical aspects of the collection; and the third part presents musical transcriptions of five of the masses in the *Kirial* using modern notation, meticulously prepared by Chua. Aside from the musical transcriptions, the book contains photographs of Baclayon Church and the pipe organs inside the churches in Loay, Baclayon, Maribojoc, Loboc, and Loon. A few of these were either reduced to rubble or severely damaged after the strong earthquake that shook Bohol in late 2013. The photographs, then, are of historical value. Photos of original pages of the *Kirial* are also reproduced, the rubrics and ornamentation evincing the care with which it was produced.

Three chapters make up the first part. In the first chapter, Chua highlights the missions of the Jesuits and Augustinian Recollects on the island of Bohol. The latter missionary group is believed to have played a major role in the propagation of the Boholanos' strong religious musical tradition. The second

and third chapters focus on Baclayon and the dynamic musical life within the church, including the hierarchical structure of its musical organization, the installation of pipe organs in Baclayon and other neighboring towns, and the production of *cantorales*. Noteworthy are Chua's detailed description and cataloguing of the music scores and books contained in the church museum. These are very useful sources for researchers interested in pursuing further research in Bohol church music.

Chapter four is a concise introduction to musical concepts and medieval and early Renaissance music history. In chapter five, Chua provides a comprehensive structural analysis of the contents of the *Kirial de Baclayon*. She examines the musical factors that are used to unify the five parts of the mass, such as the application of head motives, the paraphrase technique, the use of sequences and pattern repetitions. She surveys the scale system used in the chants and provides a comparative inspection of cadences and harmonic analyses of the vocal parts in relation to the instrumental accompaniment. All assertions by Chua are substantiated by careful and detailed investigation of every single piece found in the *Kirial de Baclayon*.

The third part provides the musical incipits (beginning notes) of all the pieces contained in the *Kirial de Baclayon*. The musical transcriptions of five of the masses in the *Kirial* allow current musicians, most of whom are accustomed more to modern notation than to the aforementioned neumatic system, to perform them. It ought to follow from Chua's study that the music of the past should find its way to audiences today. The possibility of making the different *Missa* in the *Kirial* breathe once more is ultimately what makes Chua's painstaking unearthing of these cultural treasures worthwhile.

More than the retrieval of and formalistic discussions on the music of the *Kirial de Baclayon*, however, Chua's study shows that the Spanish colonial masters left behind a cultural legacy that improved the status of Filipinos in the past. Understanding the realities of our past through these recovered cultural objects contributes to a positive perception of who we are as a people; we begin to realize that our civic and religious practices today are connected to and similar to our predecessors'. Chua's careful reconstruction of Bohol's Hispanic musical past, including its social and cultural traditions, rests primarily on meticulous analyses of the *cantorales* that take into account issues and circumstances surrounding their production. Many of her assertions have been corroborated by vital archival documents, judiciously kept at the Museum of Baclayon Church. The most important of these are the *Libro de Inventario* and the *Libro de Recibo y Gasto*. These primary sources reveal aspects of Boholano community life. For instance, they show how financially

robust the Baclayon Church was in the nineteenth century: it purchased and installed a pipe organ to be used for the services and was liquid enough to afford a *cantor mayor*, instrumentalists, cantors, and other church staff.

Chua's rich research on the liturgical music of Bohol in the nineteenth century reinforces the scholarly endeavors of respected musicologists, such as Jose Maceda, William Summers, David Kendall, David Irving, Elena Mirano, and Patricia Silvestre. With this book, Chua opens vistas for younger Filipino musicologists. In this book, they have an exceptional guide to examining and preserving analogous musical collections.

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Edgar Calabia Samar. *Sa Kasunod ng 909*. Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2012. 254 pages.

The blurb of Edgar Calabia Samar's *Sa Kasunod ng 909* promises a mystery-thriller with a coating of fantasy. The novel does not fail in being exactly that. What the blurb does not prepare its readers for is how the novel is plotted. The story runs on two tracks involving two characters in two timelines. It opens with Eman, the protagonist, learning about the death of his friend Aaron. When Eman is shown the body, he is unconvinced that it is Aaron's. The odd-numbered chapters center on Eman's quest to solve the mystery of his friend's whereabouts. With reason to believe that Aaron is alive, he goes on a journey filled with stories about prostitutes, supernatural creatures, and writers—the usual subjects that Aaron writes about. The even-numbered chapters concern Norman, a member of a traveling circus, whose father, Antonio, has mysteriously disappeared. Though *Kasunod* might baffle readers at first, the interplay of the two perspectives creates a well-calculated complexity that is one of the charms of the novel.

Samar seemingly cuts the suspense prematurely when the narrator tells readers at the end of chapter two that Norman will see his father again. Raising more questions by answering one is a technique that Samar uses well throughout the novel. This writing style works wonderfully in cradling the novel's suspense. Samar lures readers by creating an atmosphere which