

ABSTRACT

Music, Labor, and Capitalism in Manila's Transforming Colonial Society in the Late Nineteenth Century

Arwin Quiñones Tan

In this dissertation, I interrogate how music, in the form of labor, provides a powerful instrument for interaction, interrelation, negotiation, and engagement among social classes. It marks the owner of this important social tool with distinction. Filipino musicians of the nineteenth century colonial society of Manila mostly belonged to the lower class, and the possession of music as cultural capital allowed them to maneuver into the restricted world of the upper class. In accumulating enough cultural capital, these musical laborers were entitled by capitalist society to be in a position where they could convert this capital into its various forms: economic, social, and symbolic. Those who were able to reproduce their capital attained social mobility that transgressed social divisions. In the colonial society of nineteenth century Manila, the field of cultural production, particularly of the overflowing music productions of the period, marked the colony's attained modernity.

In this study, I discuss the relationships of music, labor, and capital in the context of music literacy, social organization, participation of women in public sphere, and the production of printed music for domestic consumption. These social processes created an alternative modernity that allowed for the free-flowing interaction, engagement and negotiation of social relations that were unique to the Filipino musicians' experience.