

# A Mexican Princess in the Tagalog Sultan's Court

Floripes of the *Doce Pares* and the Transpacific Efflorescence of Colonial Philippine Romance and Theater

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## Abstract

This preliminary study introduces a larger reflection on the emergence of a trans-Pacific culture between Mexico and the Philippines through the study of the figure of the Moor in Philippine colonial romance (popularly called *awit* or *korido*) and theater (*komedya*) during the late colonial period.<sup>1</sup> By analyzing the colonial tradition that was responsible for the appearance and dissemination of this figure as both theatrical performance and literary artifact, this essay attempts to bring the study of the colonial *awit* and *komedya* into the larger sphere of comparative studies of colonial traditions in the trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific reach of Iberian globalization in the early modern period. The focus of my analysis is admittedly narrow: in addition to a discussion about the history and stakes behind the study of colonial Philippine literature, theater, and culture more broadly, my analysis concerns itself primarily with arguably the most important colonial romance in Tagalog: the anonymous versification of the popular story of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers of France (*Salita at Buhay nang Doce Pares sa Francia campon nang Emperador Carlo Magno hangang sa ipagkanuló ni Galalong mapatay sa Rocesvalles* [*The Life and Saga of the Twelve Peers of France, Knights of Emperor Charlemagne, Up to their Betrayal by Ganelon,*

hereafter referred to as *Doce Pares*].<sup>2</sup> The analytical evidence suggests the necessity and value of considering the Philippines as a trans-Pacific frontier province of New Spain (contemporary Mexico), which renders it a particularly appropriate place to study Iberian globalization at the threshold of its failures, breakdown, and transformation into a new form of global consciousness.

### **Keywords**

Christianity, Christian-Moor Conflict Colonial Theatre, Doce Pares, Golden Age Spain, Jesuit Theatre

## The Moor Un-Moored: Reinventing the Crusade in the Americas and Asia

In *El teatro tagalo*, Vicente Barrantes pursues the colonial history of theater and literature in the Philippines exactly as one would expect a colonial official to do: through an investigation of the events or moments that an originally Spanish cultural practice or art was bastardized and corrupted by putatively indigenous Tagalog speakers: “*casi ninguna de las costumbres filipinas, como hemos dicho, carece del sello español en su fondo o en su forma*” [“in almost no Filipino custom, as we have said, is there lacking the mark of Spanish authenticity as seen in its foundation or form”] (Barrantes, *El teatro tagalo* 25). In the case of colonial Tagalog romances, Barrantes traces their original inspiration to the metrical romances or *corridos* that came to the archipelago through the soldiers and sailors of the Acapulco-Manila galleon trade route: “[romances were] received by the *indios* already disfigured, only to be disfigured by them in their turn, sometimes by ill-done readings in a different [*exótica*] language, sometimes by incomplete or monstrous recitations, this being the origin of *Corridos*, whose name literally signifies nothing more than pamphlets [*hojas volantes*] passed from hand to hand...” (*El teatro tagalo* 20).<sup>3</sup> Finally, Barrantes arrives at the putative origin of Tagalog theater in which Spanish *comedias*, promoted and directed by the missionary orders as a way of celebrating religious feast holidays and special occasions, began to mix with the performance of an indigenous war dance that became known as the *moro-moro*.<sup>4</sup> The putative event in which this mix of cultures was first recorded, Barrantes argues, took place during the baptism of the sultan of Joló, Alimudin [*Az'im ud-D'in*], on April 28, 1750. Alimudin's Muslim entourage, desiring to take part in the celebrations, arranged themselves in a circle, into which each member would enter the circle armed with a spear and sword or *kris*; and pantomime a skirmish (*El teatro tagalo* 34). Fearful of contradicting his own conviction regarding the supposed absence of indigenous invention or originality, Barrantes adds: “*No hay raza de los países intertropicales que no tenga su pantomima ruidosa, bailable y guerrera, cuyos puntos suelen ir en sentido inverso de su virilidad*” [“There is no race among the tropical countries that does not have its own noisy pantomime, at once dance and

warlike, in a show of virility that exists in inverse proportion to its representation”] (35).

Barrantes’s contemporary, the Spanish colonial bibliophile Wenceslao Retana contested the latter’s account: drawing upon an anonymous account of a 1637 festival celebrating the successes of General Hurtado de Corcuera against Muslim pirates in Mindanao, Retana wanted to locate the origins of Philippine theater in the first century of Spanish rule.<sup>5</sup> The festival in question featured a *comedia* written specifically for the occasion, entitled *Gran comedia de la toma del pueblo de Corralat* [the Muslim Sultan of Mindanao] y la *conquista del Cerro* (Retana, *Noticias historico-bibliográficas del teatro en Filipinas* 17).<sup>6</sup> Although no record of the *comedia* exists, an anonymous writer relates the following:

*[C]ontaré lo que pasó en este puerto de Cavite el mismo día 7 de junio; el sábado en la tarde 6 de junio, habiendo salido temprano de las dos escuelas los muchachos se fueron a jugar al fuerte que esta comenzado al fin de este pueblo. Allí comenzaron a entretenerse haciéndose unos moros y otros cristianos, defendiendo unos el fuerte y otros acometiendo a tornado, quedaron picados y concertados para el día siguiente para hacerlo mas a propósito; previnieron banderas, espadas de palo y de cañas; el que se hizo Cachil Corralat enarboló la suya en el fuerte, ánimo a sus soldados a la defensa y aun afrentó a los cristianos llamándolos vinagres españoles y gallinas. Estos se animaron al asalto y arremetieron con denuedo, pero fueron rebatidos con coraje de los moros, y tanto que quedaron heridos y maltratados algunos, con que entrando en cólera arremetieron al fuerte a manera de furiosos sin desistir hasta entrarlo y echando mano de Cachil Corralat lo precipitaron de la muralla abajo (Noticias historico-bibliográficas 34).*

[Here I will relate what happened in the port of Cavite this past June 7; the Saturday afternoon prior, June 6, some boys who had been dismissed early from two different schools went to play in the fort under construction on the outskirts of this town. There they began to amuse themselves, some by playing the role of Moors and others [the role of] Christians, with some defending the fort and others laying siege to it, keeping themselves excited and tense in anticipation of the following day; they made threats with flags, stick swords and spears; the one who played Kachil Kudarat (sultan of Joló) planted his flag in the fort, roused his soldiers to its defense and even insulted the Christians by calling them thin-skinned and cowardly chicken Spaniards. The latter were provoked to assault [the fort] and lay siege to it

with relish, but they were courageously rebuffed by the “Moors,” and some ended up so bruised and ill-treated that they became enraged, besieging the fort without quarter and with such fury that they entered it; and laying their hands on Kachil Kudarat they cast him down from the top of the wall].

What is significant about Retana’s account is that while the children’s reaction to the *comedia* appears to be entirely spontaneous, the *form* of play by the children and perhaps even the *comedia* follows a well-known set of motifs and performance traditions generated between Spain and Mexico in the aftermath of the conquest of the Americas; and which scholars commonly refer to as *morismas* or the festivals of *moros y cristianos*. The underlying import of Retana’s contention, then, is that those very aspects of native theater that we are anxious to identify *as* native (as is the case of the war dance practiced by Alimudin’s retinue, or the spontaneous children’s game in Cavite) were prefigured and partially determined by a history of intersecting cultural practices that spanned the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.<sup>7</sup> In these “contact zones” of cultural interchange or transculturation, questions of origins and roots tell us less about the past than the historical configurations or constellations that emerge out of the first sustained period of Iberian-Amerindian and transpacific indigenous contact; and the routes, ramifications, and offshoots of translation and interpretation that take place between local communities throughout the world in this period.<sup>8</sup>

The *moros y cristianos* theme is one such example. Cultural anthropologists refer to it variously as a set of dances and courtly practices (Warman; Tiongson), a category of religious festival (Harris), or a form of theater (Ricard; Wachtel), all the while recognizing the practical difficulty of clearly separating any one development from the others. “Stripped of all adventitious elements,” writes Robert Ricard, “the *morismas* [in Spain and Latin America] are tied together by a simple theme.... they consist essentially in a simulated military battle, the duration of which varies, and whose principal task it is to represent a battle between Christians and Moors, separated into two groups of antagonistic dancers. The festival ends with the victory of the Christians and the triumph of the Cross” (*The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico* 53: see also Warman 23; Trexler 189-227). On the one hand, medi-

eval Spanish court traditions commemorating or celebrating the Reconquest had waned by the sixteenth century, and their descent into popular Spanish folk tradition seems to have largely taken place on the Mediterranean side of the Iberian Peninsula (particularly the region of Alicante); on the other, in contrast to Spain, these mock battles became a central feature of religious festivals in New Spain (Mexico and Central America), the Caribbean, and the viceroyalty of Peru.<sup>9</sup> In fact, their prevalence was so widespread that they indiscriminately mixed with other festival practices, from bullfights and cockfights to the pre-Hispanic ritual dances and songs (called *areitos* in the Caribbean and *mitote* in New Spain), to the recitation or dramatization of popular Spanish ballads and romances.<sup>10</sup>

The malleable and schematic character of the drama they portray, not to mention their flexible and open availability to reinterpretation, make the *moros y cristianos* theme difficult to track in terms of its origin and development.<sup>11</sup> As Ricard, Warman, and Harris all make clear, the early festivals celebrated in the viceroyalty of New Spain (or Mexico) explicitly dramatized the Christian-Moor conflict as an archetype available for dissemination and elaboration by the conquistadors and friars, during a period when Spanish institutions outside the city of Mexico had yet to be established. Yet the degree and manner in which this archetype took root on the frontiers of colonial missions and industrial and commercial routes varied enormously. This explains why, for example, certain *danzas de moros y cristianos*, such as the *matachines* (also spelled *matlachines*) in the regions around Zacatecas and the US Southwest, bear a resemblance to Andalusian fandangos, while others clearly owe some provenance to Native American war dances from the Chichimecs to the Puebloans, Apache, and Comanche.<sup>12</sup>

In the aforementioned episode related to us by Retana, a similar kind of ambiguity arises: did the children arrive at the central elements of the so-called tradition on their own; did it arise from the spontaneous expression of rivalry between two colonial boarding schools; did they learn about Muslim raids on Christian coastal settlements in the southern archipelago from their teachers; or had the children themselves seen dances and theatrical performances, or read or heard the recitation of a romance, which involved

the occupation of castles and the exchange of religious epithets? The answer may be all of the above; this confusion in fact constitutes the central paradox of the tradition. On the one hand, the courtly and later, religious and even ritual, function(s) of these representations in Spain appear at first glance to be anchored in the commemoration and celebration of a historical series of events *specific* to Spain—the so-called “Reconquest” of the Iberian peninsula by the imperial Christian authority of the Catholic kings. Yet this historical reference obtains only insofar as the Reconquest *itself* remains a nonspecific and open, floating signifier for a variety of historical events—from the medieval Crusades to conquer Jerusalem to the establishment of Manila in 1571, to the “spiritual conquest” of the friars and the attempted “conquest of the sea” [Pacific Ocean] against rival European powers; to the creation of a Holy League of Christian powers dedicated to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire throughout the Mediterranean.

As Rafael Bernal explains in his posthumous work *El gran Océano*, the reconquest of the Iberian peninsula under the Catholic monarchs was understood by Spaniards as not only an historical feat, but a totalizing one: its relationship to the Crusades and the salvation of the world was inevitable.<sup>13</sup> For this reason, it would be incorrect and shortsighted to say simply that the Reconquest provided the historical and perhaps psychological *context* for the discovery and conquest of the Americas and the Pacific. On a greater level, it preemptively claimed or presumed to represent the *content* of the conquest from the very beginning, endowing it with the same mythical character as the Reconquest itself—a narrative of fulfilled prophecies, centered around the dramatic unfolding of a universal conflict against a Universal Enemy that slowly proceeded from the Old World to the New, and back to the Eastern regions of the Old World under the sway of pagan religions and the Muslim infidel. That we reject such a view as mere ideology and millenarian claptrap obscures the totalizing manner by which it explained, justified, and motivated the protracted colonization of the Americas and Philippines.

The Manichean duality of the Christian-Moor archetype(s) expressed itself in the conquistador’s self-comparisons to knights of the Crusades and their legendary feats; or in the self-characterization of Franciscan missionary

priests as agents of millenarian apocalypse; or Dominican missionaries as prophets of international law [*jus gentium*]; or Jesuit missionaries as spiritual warriors in the service of God [*pro Deo militans*].<sup>14</sup> From early on in the dissemination of the Moor-Christian conflict, the racial or ethnic character of this binarism was applied to other peoples, whether it was Africans or Chichimecs playing the role of Moors in New Spain and the Caribbean (Warman, *Las danzas de moros y cristianos* 86-87 and 99-100; Jáuregi and Bonfiglioli, 14). Other times, the conflict was used to illustrate biblical apocrypha, as witnessed in the *danza de Migueles* in Cuetzalan (as immortalized in Miguel Sabido's 1995 film *Santo Luzbel*; see also Brisset, cited in Jáuregui and Bonfiglioli, *Las danzas de Conquista* 16-17). Perhaps of greatest importance, the interpretation or identification of groups to represent Moors and / vs. Christians did not remain the exclusive privilege of either the conquistadors or the missionaries. Whether one ultimately agrees with Max Harris that the festivals featuring dramatizations or dances of Moors and Christians in the Americas contain "hidden transcripts" of subversive meaning and intent, one must nevertheless admit that the proliferation of traditions incorporating the eternal war between Moors and Christians throughout the Americas owed itself as much to the *lack* of control missionaries had over their Christian subjects as to their promotion of an ideological theme.<sup>15</sup>

The motif of *moros y cristianos* serves as a translating or transculturating device, in a manner akin to Foucault's notion of a *dispositif*, or apparatus.<sup>16</sup> To identify a "Moor" is to identify a "Christian"; and in doing so, lay the groundwork for the translation of not only languages but values in juxtaposition (good vs. evil, pure vs. corrupt, north vs. south, city vs. countryside, and so on). On the one hand, through the celebration of dances, theater, poetry, and art, Spanish conquistadors, missionaries, officials, and merchants and laborers reinvented the Crusades and the role of the Reconquest in them; on the other, they also set in motion a process of proleptically determining the meaning of the future's relationship with the present among Amerindian and Filipino peoples, whose understanding of the future did not necessarily or always intersect with that of the colonial power.



## Detours and Returns of Trans-Pacific Culture

When we begin to think of the *moros y cristianos* device less in terms of one practice, derived from one origin, and following one path of articulation or development, we arrive at a comprehension of it as a floating signifier and technology specific to the work of the missions. It anticipated and coordinated the transculturations taking place across the Americas and the Pacific. The central channel of these sustained encounters was the Manila Galleon (also called *naō de China*), which sailed between the port of Acapulco and Manila Bay twice a year. Both terminals, however, served in turn as commercial and cultural hubs that radiated throughout the Americas and Asia. On the economic plane, the Manila Galleon brought local and regional economies into a single global economy for the first time in history.<sup>17</sup> But of equal importance is that the exchange of goods and silver from the mines in northern New Spain and Potosí created regional economies that had never before existed—between New Spain and Peru, in the case of the Americas, and between the Philippines, China, and Japan in Asia.<sup>18</sup> And these economies, as Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez remind us, reciprocally influenced and were influenced by the ecological and technological transformations taking place on both sides of the Pacific, whether these concern the demographic expansion in China due to the transplanted American sweet potatoes; or the demographic collapse of the native Indian population forced to work in the silver mines; or the depopulation of the Philippines due to Western diseases like smallpox.<sup>19</sup>

Of more immediate interest to our study, however, is the degree to which the early modern globalization of ecologies and economic values through the trans-Pacific trade also provided the context and space of experience of the “spiritual conquest” or evangelization of the Philippines and other islands in the Pacific from the beginning. By the time the evangelization of the Philippines had begun in earnest, the early millenarianism of the Franciscans and messianism of the conquistadors had experienced almost a century of evangelization efforts in the Caribbean and the western hemisphere: a century of experiments, trials, martyrdoms, and atrocities, in which missionaries alternately sided with the expansion of viceregal

authority in the Americas or with native communities against the intrusion or intensification of demands on their lives and labor.<sup>20</sup> This means that by the time Spanish culture and institutions had arrived in the Philippines, it came refracted through the prism of experience conditioned by a century of Spanish rule in New Spain and Peru. In this respect, Rainer Buschman, et al., argue that rather than discussing the “Hispanization” of the Philippines as John L. Phelan famously did, it would be more correct to speak of the “Mexicanization” or “archipelagic Hispanization” of the Philippines—meaning of course that the culture transplanted across the archipelago came not from Spain but rather from Spain’s overseas territories.<sup>21</sup> It is no coincidence, for example, that the bishop who convened the first council or synod of religious leaders in the Philippines in 1582, Dominican priest Domingo de Salazar, O.P., is often called the “Bartólome de Las Casas” of the Philippines: the occasion of the synod concerned the Church’s denunciation of the abuses practiced by *encomendero* or royal grantees upon their native subjects; and Las Casas (also a Dominican) was quoted in the synod’s deliberations.<sup>22</sup> Many religious and royal officials traveled to the Philippines only after an extended residence in New Spain: prior to serving as admiral and first governor-general of the Philippines, *Adelantado* [Frontier commander] Miguel López de Legazpi served as the civil governor of Mexico City. Among the consequences of this calibration of colonial occupation and government in the Americas, colonial authority manifested itself outside Manila primarily in the form of the missionary or parish priest rather than the *encomendero* and mayor or *alcalde*.

D. M. V. Irving’s fascinating account of the history of Philippine music in the colonial period illustrates the degree to which missionary methods developed in the New World had become formalized by the time of their transplantation in the late sixteenth century:

Essentially, there was a threefold process of adoption: the missionary adopted or accommodated enough indigenous culture (language, dress, and daily customs) to allow his acceptance or toleration by a community. Then the celibate Father effectively “adopted” the children, who lived in close proximity to him, and began teaching them the catechism and rudiments

of reading, writing, arithmetic, and music. In turn, the children adopted what they learned into their own forms of artistic expression and eventually passed on hispanized cultural practices to their own offspring (Irving 111).

Franciscan missionaries in New Spain became “important disseminators of European music in the early days of the encounter with the New World” which led to their early success and decision to “follow [*sic*] much the same pattern [in the Philippines] as those in Mexico” (*Colonial Counterpoint* 112-113). Jesuits in the Visayas (central Philippines) followed the lead of the Franciscans, and “ensured the incorporation of Visayan song into church music alongside music introduced from Europe . . . Filipino and European styles coexisted and flirted with each other’s form and structure in a type of intercultural courtship” (123). Instruments were brought from Europe, until native artisans began to make them. Jesuits invited singers and musicians from the Tagalog region to other parts of the archipelago, to teach and share their musical skills with Christian neophytes (127). In other words, while the goal remained an idealized vision of Hispanization, the methods and techniques were “New Hispanic,” i.e., American.

As the missionaries did with music, so did they with dance and theater. The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century missionary and chronicler of the Jesuit mission Pedro Chirino, S.J., attested to the incorporation of dances of pre-Hispanic origin in Christian festivals. In his account, an early recorded festival that took place in 1595 (some 25 years after the founding of Manila) included the representation of various dances “*que fuera[n] de las que hicieron nuestros indios, los chinos, y japonés con la variedad*” [that were among those that our Indians, Chinese, and Japanese did with great variety].<sup>23</sup> The festival in question celebrated both the arrival of the Jesuits and their delivery of “various relics,” apparently including one involving Saint Potenciana, patroness of Manila and the first girls’ orphanage and school in Manila (in 1589).<sup>24</sup> Another festivity included a “poetic joust,” apparently of a religious nature.<sup>25</sup> In 1611, on the occasion of the beatification of Jesuit founder Saint Ignatius de Loyola, a *comedia* dedicated to the patron archangel Michael took place; in fact, a *comedia* is still staged on the occasion of this festival in Iligan

today.<sup>26</sup> Several years later (in 1619), Retana notes, the Company [Jesuits] staged a celebration of the inauguration of the Immaculate Conception doctrine with various poetic-literary jousts; and the dramatization of the play *Príncipe de Transilvania*, which concerns the struggle between Christians and Moors on the Ottoman frontier in the Balkans.<sup>27</sup> Finally, an interesting anonymous account of a festival featuring “*toros y cañas*” [bullfights and mock battles] in 1623 illustrates in great detail the mock battles or *escaramuzas* that served as the basis for the *moros y cristianos* festivals in Spain and the Americas.<sup>28</sup> At the center of the festival was a “burlesque joust” involving Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, written as a derivative episode of Cervantes’s novel for the exequies of Spanish king Philip III.<sup>29</sup>

In the vernacular transformation of Church doctrine and liturgy to religious festival and *comedia*, the Christian-Moor archetype brought objects and traditions into translation or transculturation—romances, theater props, and cockfights, yes, but also musical counterpoint and polyphony, hand-to-hand combat techniques, ritual sacrifice, and political organization. Obviously, unlike in the Americas, the *moro* was not a complete fabrication.<sup>30</sup> But neither were *moros* fixed in the imaginary and symbolic matrix of Spanish Christendom as they had become in the century after the Reconquest. In both material and imaginative ways, then, a veritable palimpsest of meanings around the figure of the Moor entered into sustained engagement in the trans-Pacific world. This explains, for instance, how the production of Philippine masks used in festivals like the St. James the Apostle festival in Paete, Laguna as well as the Moriones festival in Marinduque drew their inspiration from masks and masquerades featured in festivals throughout New Spain (see figures 1-3).<sup>31</sup>

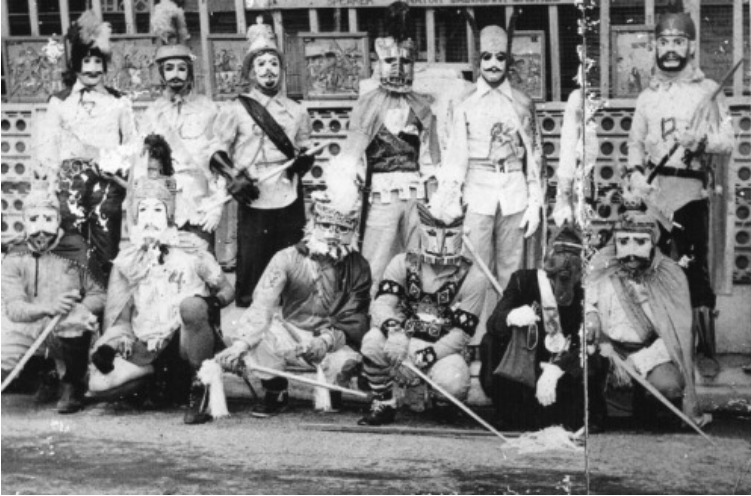


Fig. 1. Moro-moro dancers and arnis practitioners of the Garimot Arnis Training International in Paete, Laguna, Philippines; <https://fmasd.com/garimot/>



Fig. 2. Moriones festival masks in Marinduque; [www.alamy.com](http://www.alamy.com).



Fig. 3. Puebla masks at the Rafael Coronel Museum, Instituto Zacatecano de Cultura Ramon López Velarde, in Zacatecas, Mexico; [www.poblenarias.com](http://www.poblenarias.com)

Perhaps not coincidentally, the aforementioned town of Paete is known for not only paper-mâché masks and images, but also for possessing a long tradition of the Philippine martial art *arnis* (from the Spanish *arnés*, harness or military gear), which is practiced with long sticks akin to short wooden swords. This practice was common to both Spanish conquistadors, who engaged in friendly *escaramuzas* (skirmishes) with one another as a form of sport and training in swordsmanship; and many pre-colonial cultures of the South and Southeast Asian regions. Yet while many claim *arnis* to be a pre-Hispanic tradition, it seems conspicuous that this tradition was particularly rooted in the town whose Church features a bas-relief of the apparition of St. James Matamoros, fighting the Moors during the Reconquest of Spain; and in which a *moro-moro* of colonial origin is still held today (see figures 4 and 5).<sup>32</sup>





Fig. 4. St. James Church in Paete, Laguna. While the original church was built in 1646, it was destroyed in 1717; a new church was begun that same year but was left incomplete until 1840; copyright by author.



Fig. 5. Detail of bas-relief of the apparition of St. James the Apostle against Moorish soldiers; copyright by author.

### ***Mestizaje amok:***

#### **The Drift of the Christian-Moor Archetype in the Colonial Romance**

Understanding the translation and transportation of the Christian-Moor archetype or device from America to the Philippines under the tutelage of the friars and Jesuits also helps us trace the parallel dynamics in which cultural intermixing or *mestizaje* ventures out from beyond the control of the religious. As early as 1585, the Mexican Church called for the strict regulation and examination of practices around the celebration of feast days, including the official approval of songs (cited in Irving 312). Throughout the latter half of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Church sought to curtail or control the abuses that, paradoxically, proliferated around religious practices like the nightly masses or processions [*misas de aguinaldo* or *misas de gallo*] that took place before Christmas; or the recitation and chanting of the rosary in private homes; or the playing of instruments outside the church or without church supervision. In 1701, Archbishop Camacho y Ávila attempted an outright ban on *comedias*, *coloquios* (poetic dialogues), and *entremeses* or farces (cited in Irving 210). Abuses included drinking, illicit unions, and otherwise indecent behavior.<sup>33</sup>

The inefficacy of the Archbishop's attempt can be seen in a description of *comedias* by Augustinian priest Fr. Joaquín Martínez de Zuñiga, O.S.A., between 1803 and 1805. Among the many observations he makes on his journey throughout the archipelago, he pauses to describe the popularity of vernacular plays performed throughout the Tagalog region:

These *indios* . . . are very much given to *comedias*, and the most elite among them are those who have the privilege of being actors; and since they usually don't know the Castilian tongue, they ask that they be permitted to act in their own language, and no one has the least reservation about allowing these *comedias* in the Tagalog tongue in all the towns of this province [of Tondo], even in Binondo, where *only a river* separates it from the city; and still the [Spanish authorities] debate [whether or not] priests should preach in Castilian!<sup>34</sup>



Perhaps not surprisingly, the focus of *comedias* Zuñiga had the occasion to watch was the Christian-Moor archetype: but one in which the didactic value of the device as a sign of Divine Providence and the universal struggle against a Universal Enemy has all but disappeared. “The *comedias* of the *indios*,” Zuñiga writes in an oft-quoted passage,

are composed of three or four Spanish tragedies, the passages of which are intertwined with one another, so as to form a seamless web. Christians and Moors always become involved, and the entire affair [*enredo*] consists in the Moors wanting to marry Christian princesses and the Christians wanting to marry Moorish princesses. (*Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* 2: 73).<sup>35</sup>

Zuñiga’s description of a typical Philippine *morisma* here seizes on one curious aspect of their dramatization, which is the amorous relationship between Moors and Christians. Zuñiga compares the two most common romances—one between a Moorish prince and a Christian princess, the other with the Moorish princess and the Christian prince, as follows:

One does not usually encounter much difficulty in arranging a marriage: a war is declared at the right time, wherein the Moorish prince achieves extraordinary feats, and his baptism and conversion to the Catholic faith facilitates the marriage . . . [But] the greater difficulty lies in untying the tangled web between the Christian prince and Moorish princess; insofar as he can never disavow the Catholic religion, he finds himself in many a tight spot—they put him in prison with his companions, the smitten princess frees them, which at times costs her her life; [the prince] finds himself as a captain in various wars, with some of his companions, and the affair falls apart, or the Moorish princess becomes Christian and escapes [her country], or the prince dies tragically, but can sometimes be revived (*Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* 2: 73-74).<sup>36</sup>

This “greater difficulty,” of course, reflects that of the medieval renditions of Charlemagne’s exploits, and the later prosification of these tales in Nicholas de Piemonte’s 1524 *Historia de Carlomango y de los Doce Pares de Francia*. Irving Leonard’s well-known history of books transported to the Americas from Spain during the colonial period (*Books of the Brave*) notes

that a copy of Piemonte's romance had appeared in Manila as early as 1583, barely twelve years after the founding of the Spanish colonial capital Manila by Admiral Miguel López de Legazpi (in 1571). In the eighteenth century, the versification of various episodes included in Piemonte's *Historia* (ascribed to Juan José López) appeared in cheap and more perishable versions of print, as an example of the popular *pliegos del cordel*—sheets of folded paper bound with a string.<sup>37</sup> In the Americas, the *Historia de Carlomango y de los Doce Pares de Francia* became arguably the most popular and widespread parent text of the many *danzas de moros y cristianos* in the Philippines as well as in Mexico, Central and Latin America.<sup>38</sup>

The story of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers of France was adapted in verse-form into Tagalog as *Salita at Buhay ng Doce Pares sa Francia na Kampon ng Emperador Carlo Magno Hanggang Ipagkanulo ni Galalon na Nangapatay sa Roncesvalles* [*Words and Deeds of the Twelve Peers of France, Followers of Emperor Charlemagne Until They Were Betrayed by Galalon and Killed at Roncesvalles*, hereafter referred to as *Doce Pares*]. Yet a brief comparison between the Spanish texts and their Tagalog versification (probably in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century) illustrate just how far afield the Christian-Moor archetype had gone. While most of the anonymous Tagalog author's romance follows faithfully much of Piemonte's text, the slight changes to the latter's retelling completely refocus the action and outcome of the story. In the Piemonte version, the Muslim admiral Balán conquers Rome, captures various holy relics, and, accompanied by his son the giant Fierabras, proceeds to France to conquer Charlemagne's kingdom. While one of Charlemagne's knights Oliveros manages to defeat Fierabras in battle leading to the latter's conversion to Christianity, Oliveros along with four of his companions are captured and placed in a tower. The Peers are rescued by Balán's daughter (and Fierabras's sister) Floripes who reveals that she has fallen in love with one of the Twelve Peers, Gui de Borgoña, upon seeing him in a tournament. Juan José López's versification of the moment, which the Tagalog author would have likely read, is as follows:

*Que lo vide en los torneos  
 Y en las justas de mi prima  
 Hacer valerosos hechos,  
 Y desde entonces quede  
 Que no duermo ni sosiego  
 En pensar en su persona;  
 Y si lograra mi intento,  
 Y quisiera ser mi esposo  
 Reununciara de mis reinos  
 Y me volviera cristiana,  
 Por tener tan dulce dueño.--*  
 (Durán, *Romancero General* 234).

Lest we see Floripes' actions as forecasting a life of Christian virtue, Gisela Beutler's illuminating study of Floripes in the Piemonte text (from which the López versification was probably derived) suggests otherwise: at the end of the cycle, when Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers defeat Balán, the latter still refuses to abjure his religion and become baptized a Christian. Floripes calls for his death, upon which her brother Fierabras berates her:

*En esto veo, mi buena hermana, la poca virtud de las mujeres, que por cumplir sus deseos, ninguna cosa dejaron de hacer. Por traer a efecto tus carnales placeres con Guy de Borgoña, vendiste a tu padre y todo tu linaje, y fuiste causa de la muerte de mas de cien hombres, y no contenta con esto, y después de vendido el cuerpo, quieres que se pierda el ánima, rogando que le maten sin recibir el bautismo.<sup>39</sup>*

The aspersion cast upon Floripes by Fierabras, while gendered, also casts doubt on Floripes' capacity to be truly capable of Christian virtue. Her sexual weakness thus stands in as a metonymical substitute for her racial incapacity as a *conversa*, or even *marrana*, which has come to be a colloquial expression for "slut" or "pig."

The Tagalog version overturns this line of thought completely, beginning with a recounting of Balan's trip to Rome accompanied not by Fierabras but rather his daughter Floripes. It is on this journey that Gui de Borgoña first catches sight of the Moorish princess. Noticing the glitter of the diamond ring on her hand which she rests on the edge of the carriage, he proceeds to

lift her ring from her finger by “poking” [sundot] his sword into it, attracting her attention and causing her in turn to fall in love with him:

*Dulo ng espada ay hindi nalihis  
ang nasa ng loob nangyaring sinapit,  
nang sa maramdaman ng sa ganda’y labis  
dumungaw na bigla nagtama ang titig*

The end of his sword did not go astray  
and was able to reach right inside,  
when she definitely felt it she gazed out  
and suddenly [his] stare pierced her.

*Dili nagpamalay sa irog na ama  
ginapos ang puso ng malaking sinta,  
may simang palaso ang siyang kapara  
na di maiwasa’t buhay mapapaka*

She hardly took notice of her father’s love  
her heart became chained with a great love,  
it was like a feathered arrow  
she could not evade it from entering her.<sup>40</sup>

The sexual connotation may have been a common one. Lumbera’s analysis of the poetry of another Tagalog poet of the period, José de la Cruz, highlights the same metaphor and its erotic undertones.<sup>41</sup> In either case, the theme of penetration in these two stanzas transforms a language of violence and subjection into one of desire and seduction.

This theme continues in the Tagalog writer’s development of the narrative: when Gui is later assigned the task of leading an attack on the Turkish occupation of Rome then discovers that the commanding general of the defending army is his beloved Floripes. He instructs his army not to attack and instead goes out to meet her. When Floripes sees Gui, she gives him a “wounded look” [*tamaang titig*] before becoming enraged that he is leading an attack on Rome.<sup>42</sup> Yet instead of fighting her, Gui throws away his sword, offering her his life:

*...oh bayaning Judit sa rikit mo’t kiyas  
libo mang gerero’y pawang mabibihag...*

oh warrior-hero Judith in your beauty  
are thousands of soldiers captured...

*...sa rikit mo’t kiyas  
ang patay mang puso’y pilit na liliyag  
kaya ang buhay ko ay handog sa yapak  
laan ang dibdib ko’t tabak mo’y itarak.*

...owing to your great beauty  
I will go on deeply loving your murderous heart  
So my life is offered up to [your] embrace  
My breast, destined for the stab of your cutlass.

(Doce Pares 12-13, stanzas 75 and 78)

The allusion to Judith is significant here: she is also mentioned in the *Pasyon Henezis*, in comparison with the Virgin Mary; and it is likely that the two works were written around the same time.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, it may not be entirely coincidental that we find an extended panegyric of Judith's virtues in the description by the famous Jesuit chronicler Pedro Murillo Velarde, S.J. regarding the celebration of the return of the image of the Virgin Mary of Antipolo from her journey to and from Mexico in 1746 to the highlands of Antipolo.<sup>44</sup> Comparing the lavish display of gratitude, generosity, happiness, and praise among Philippine residents from every part of the world, in celebration of the image of the Antipolo Virgin's return to her native town, moves the author to compare the festive occasion to the Biblical story of the lifting of the siege of Bethulia by the Assyrians under Holofernes. In the biblical story, the pious Judith enters Holofernes' camp by promising him information on how to defeat the Hebrews; when Holofernes falls under her spell and becomes drunk, she decapitates him. After seeing the head of their leader mounted on a pike the following morning, the Assyrians, dismayed, withdraw their siege of the city. A longer paper would explore the association of Floripes, the Moorish princess, with Judith; and Judith with the Virgin Mary, or an avatar of the Virgin Mary as *mulier fortis*.<sup>45</sup> In any case, Judith became a permanent fixture in colonial society as well as Orthodox Christianity: even today the May processions of the *Santacruzán* (celebrated in honor of Mary) include her, carrying a sword in one hand and the head of Holofernes in the other.<sup>46</sup>

Back on the battlefield, as Floripes looks into Gui's eyes, a feeling of "mercy and love enters" into her, causing her to spare him.<sup>47</sup> Once again, the stanza makes use of a sexual innuendo: "*nunuwi sa Roma ang puso'y hilahil / parang sinasaka nang sa sinta'y hinggil*" ["she went home to Rome, her heart full of grief / as if *planted* there, as it is in matters of love"] (stanza 80). Instead of waging the war of *moros* and *cristianos*, Floripes returns to Rome, "her heart made captive by [Gui de] Borgoña" (stanza 81a).

The remainder of the text for the most part comprises "a faithful metrical rendering of...the Spanish *Historia del Emperador Carlo Magno*."<sup>48</sup> Yet the opening scenes inserted by the narrator at the beginning of the text

effectively initiate a now *underlying* subplot of the Christian-Moor romance (within the larger frame of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers): a subplot that proceeds by way of metaphors around the theme of both willing and unwilling capture, penetration, and servitude.<sup>49</sup> With Floripes' insertion into the first part of the Charlemagne cycle, her gendered portrayal as a deceptive and somewhat ruthless schemer for the Christian knight Gui de Borgoña cedes to her representation as a valiant warrior and leader. Her later rescue of those Peers captured by her father Balán, her journey with the Peers to France to be baptized, and her subsequent marriage to her beloved Gui de Borgoña, all follow the Piemonte and López versions of the story cycle; yet their meaning has completely changed. Floripes' new identity as a commanding officer of the Turkish army highlights *her* sacrifice to the Christian Peer, *her* decision to short-circuit the Christian-Moor device, render it inoperative. According to this reading, the role of Floripes parallels the role of the Virgin Mary that one sees in the Tagalog *Pasyon Henesis*, in which love for the other becomes translated into subjection to the law. By her own free will, Floripes sacrifices her warrior's gear—and with it, her identity as the dark half of the Christian-Moor binarism—in order to surrender to Christian desire.

This resignification of the Moorish princess has the paradoxical effect of diminishing to the point of superfluity the stakes behind her conversion to Christianity. For instead of surrendering to Christianity because of the weakness of her will against the force of love, she actively *bargains* for it, promising in exchange the lives of the Twelve Peers and a treasure-chest of holy relics. This active negotiation on the part of the woman to earn the recognition of the king reappears in another famous *awit* of the period, *Salita at Buhay na Kahabag-habag na Pinagdaanan nang Pitong Infantes de Lara at nang Kaabaabang Kanilang Ama sa Reinong España* [*The Pitiful Words and Deeds Told of the Seven Princes of Lara and Their Wretched Father in the Kingdom of Spain*, hereafter referred to as *Siete Infantes*]. In most of the Spanish versions of the epic, the bastard son Mudarra González, son of a Christian knight and a Moorish noblewoman who grows up in the Arab kingdom of southern Spain, at the age of maturity discovers his Christian birthright and travels

to Christian Spain in search of his father and in order to avenge the death of his seven brothers. In the Tagalog version, Morada Gonzalo goes to Spain not only to seek out his birthright as a Christian noble through his father, Busto de Lara, but also to ask his father to marry his mother, so that he will be a legitimate child instead of a bastard son. Busto de Lara agrees on the condition that she is baptized, whereupon Morada returns to the Turkish kingdom and convinces his mother (Hismeña) to become a Christian. Out of a mother's love for her son, she acquiesces. In order to do so, however, she must escape the Turkish kingdom as a fugitive, which forces her to don a knight's armor and leave with Morada disguised as a man.

When Almanzor discovers his daughter Hismeña's escape, he declares war on the Christians. In the course of battle, Busto de Lara is surrounded and about to die, when Hismeña dons her armor and fights "like a fierce lioness" [*leonang mabangis ang siyang kapara*"), saving his life from certain death.<sup>50</sup> After Almanzor's defeat, the Turkish emperor is baptized, his daughter Hismeña is converted to Christianity and married to Busto de Lara (Morada's father), and the couple inherits Hismeña's father Almanzor's empire. Finally, Morada inherits both a Christian patriarchal lineage and a legitimate noble birth; then he becomes heir to the Turkish Empire.

While the details of the plot cannot be discussed in full detail here, the preceding summary shows that, like the *Doce Pares*, the *Siete Infantes* has woven the Christian noble-Moorish princess romance into the *awit* or metrical romance. This romantic theme, similar to the case of *Doce Pares*, ties together the other plots of conquest, defeat, surrender, captivity, and freedom on the Christian-heathen frontier. Perhaps not surprisingly, these themes come to a head when Hismeña, who has escaped from her father Almanzor's kingdom by disguising herself as a man, confronts her lover Busto de Lara in a scene that both dramatizes a challenge and a surrender to the Christian prince and the law of patriarchy:

*Tugon ng prinsesa marangal na konde  
nagpasasalamat sa dikit mo't buti  
ako'y siyang bukod sa ibang babai  
kaya naparito'y naglako ng puri.*

Replied the princess: "Honorable Count,  
I thank you for your radiance and goodness;  
of all women I am different  
in coming here to hawk my honor like merchandise.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Sa lagay tang ito ay nagkapalitan<br/>lalaki ang siyang may kapanganiban<br/>sa mga babai ako'y bukod lamang<br/>tumawid ng bundok at naglakbay bayan.</i></p> | <p>We have exchanged places; the man is<br/>the one who should encounter dangers;<br/>but of all women I alone am the exception<br/>having crossed the mountains to go to another<br/>kingdom</p> |
|--|---|

(cited in Eugenio, Awit and Corrido 395, stanzas 394-395).

Hismeña's proud stance—as well as her later rescue of her husband from a Turkish general and his soldiers by fighting at his side—create an important variation of the “woman warrior” motif that we saw in the *Doce Pares*. Whereas the *Doce Pares* employs the narrative of the woman-warrior surrendering herself to a law of desire that becomes tied to the desire for law (through Christian baptism and marriage), *Siete Infantes* forces the Christian prince Busto to recognize Hismeña's sacrifice and dignity before her surrender. The “warrior-princess” motif counterbalances the Moorish princess's sweet surrender to the law; instead, the unbaptized subject first demands recognition as an *equal* participant in the creation and maintenance of relations and representations between the Christian and heathen worlds. That both attitudes toward Hispanization through Christianity could coexist within the same narrative, even the *same word*, can be demonstrated in a passage taken from the *Siete Infantes* in which Busto de Lara and Princess Hismeña both apologize to one another: “*ang hingi ko'y tawad na malaki*,” he says; “*ang hingi ko ako'y patawarin*,” she responds (*Awit and Corrido* 395-396, stanzas 400-401). The root word is *tawad*, which in this context means “to forgive” but in other contexts can mean “to bargain.” The first Christianized meaning implies the absolution from an abject state; the second, the process of working toward a mutual agreement regarding the value(s) of the object of exchange. The writer of the Tagalog versification of *Siete Infantes* is careful to place the phrase “*ang hingi ko*” [“it is my plea”] both times before “*tawad*”: failure to do this would result in a grave misinterpretation of the forgiveness scene, toward the language of the marketplace.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, this ambivalence of meaning resonates with the cited passage above, in which Hismeña arrives



in Spain “to hawk my honor like merchandise” (“*naparito’y naglako ng puri*”). Does Hismeña come as a supplicant in need of Christian grace or does she come to stake a claim to Christianity on the basis of what she has to offer it in return? Does she dramatize her submission to the king as an act of sacrifice; or does she come to cut a deal with the father of her child, an offer too good for the latter to refuse?

### **Floripes and the Efflorescence of Tagalog *Awit* and *Komedya***

The Tagalog Floripes in the *Doce Pares* and Hismeña in *Siete Infantes de Lara* portray on the level of colonial romances what was clearly happening in the field of the native *comedia* or *komedya*, as witnessed by Fr. Martínez de Zuñiga and others.<sup>52</sup> While remaining in a Christian universe, organized around the providential role of the Spanish conquest, the once and future victory over a Universal Enemy (characterized as either the Devil or the Moor), the conversion of pagans and infidels to the one true religion, the Christian neophytes had nevertheless succeeded in introducing and elaborating a field of reflection, investigation, and activity that missionaries were hard put to prohibit or control—illicit forms of courtship, the performance of music and dance outside Church supervision, and the performance of plays whose references and underlying concerns no longer conformed to Church orthodoxy. Perhaps not surprisingly, these new expressions of freedom just outside Church supervision also reflected ceaselessly on the powers and limits of free will and judgment in a world governed by the right of conquest, the obligation of servitude, and the persistence of slavery.<sup>53</sup> Christian neophytes did so by employing the same language, rhetoric, techniques, and devices they learned from the missionaries. Once in play, divergent practices threatened to establish themselves as new traditions; and spawn further heterodoxies. Ultimately, in the Philippines as in the Americas, the Church found itself incapable of corralling an imagination it had unleashed.

Further research would pursue many unanswered questions about the transformation of the Moro archetype from Universal Enemy to converted Christian queen—an idea that was certainly latent in the early modern Spanish books of chivalry, but had yet to be fully exploited by the “New

Spanish” kingdoms of Mexico and the Philippines. Was it pure coincidence, for example, that one of the main obstacles to the establishment and maintenance of Christian conversion persisted in the form of the *babaylan* or *catalonan*: female or men who dressed as women shamans who presided over the traditions and rituals of those frontier communities outside or on the margins of the sphere of religious administration?<sup>54</sup> Or that one of the most significant revolts against the Spanish government in 1762 had been led by the wife of a slain leader in Ilocos, Gabriela Silang?

Finally, do we see in figures like Floripes and Hismeña a “drift” towards the kind of reversals and outright parodies of the *moro-cristiano* theme that populate Francisco Balagtas’ famous *awit*, [Ang] *Pinagdaanang Buhay ni Florante at ni Laura sa Cahariang Albania* (1838) [*The Life Saga of Florante and Laura from the Kingdom of Albania*]? Can it be mere coincidence, for example, that the plot appears to be diametrically opposed in every respect to the tensions that propel the narrative of a romance like that of *Doce Pares*: a Christian prince (Florante), who depends upon a Muslim prince (Aladin) to rescue him; after which both are saved by two princesses? A blossoming friendship between a Christian (Laura) and Muslim (Flerida) princess, after the Muslim princess saves Laura just as Aladin has saved Florante? Balagtas’ transgressions to the conventions of the genre in each case amount to blasphemy: while the poem casually mentions as an afterthought that Aladin and Flerida receive baptism before returning home to the[ir] kingdom of Persia, one suspects that Balagtas included it either to evade the censor, or as a perverse joke. For, having disarmed and dispatched the *moro-cristiano* device or *dispositif*, the component parts of the narrative no longer serve their original function, and frolic in the play of inversions, reversals, repetitions (Florante / Flerida), analogies, apostrophes, parody, and bathos. Are Floripes and Flerida, then, so different?

## Notes

1. Much of the research on comparative Mexican and Philippine customs in this essay was spurred by a visit to Zacatecas in 2014, to witness the 3-day celebration of the town's patron saint (actually the patron saint of Bracho, an outlying suburb) St. John the Baptist. There residents host the largest *morisma* in the world, with participation in the dramas featuring the beheading of John the Baptist, the story of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers of France, and the 1571 Battle of Lepanto, reaching upwards of 13,000 people. Special thanks goes to Jánea Estrada and her husband Juan Carlos for their help and generosity.
2. See Damiana Eugenio, *Awit and Corrido: Philippine Metrical Romances* 16-17. In her landmark study, Eugenio notes that *Doce Pares* "has been retold in six of the major Philippine languages," more than any other romance (xviii).
3. [(*los corridos*) llega(ban) a los indios desfigurados y desfigurándolos ellos a su vez, ya por lecturas mal hechas en lengua exótica, ya por recitos incompletos o monstruosos, fueran el origen de sus Corridos, cuyo nombre no significa en puridad otra cosa que papeles volantes que de mano en mano corren . . . ].
4. Barrantes gives primary credit to the Jesuits, although Irving's more recent work has rightfully emphasized the importance of the Franciscans in the transculturation of music and the performing arts overseas: see *Colonial Counterpoint* 110-115.
5. See Wenceslao Retana, *Noticias histórico-bibliográficas de el teatro en Filipinas desde sus orígenes hasta 1898* 17.
6. Also cited in Donoso and Gallo, *Literatura hispanofilipina actual* 106.
7. Rafael Bernal's *México en Filipinas* represents the first book-length study of transplanted cultural traditions or transculturations (language, food, tools, musical instruments, and so on) across the Pacific during the colonial period. More recent evaluations of his thesis appear in Nicanor Tiongson, "Mexican-Philippine Folkloric Traditions"; D. M. V. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint*; Serge Gruzinski, *Las cuatro partes del mundo*; the aforementioned Bernal's own *El Gran Océano*; and the recent anthology of essays edited by Thomas Calvo and Paulina Machuca (*México y Filipinas*).
8. The idea of "contact zones" was developed by Mikhail Bakhtin to describe the space of representation in the novel: see *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* 345. It was Mary Louise Pratt who recognized the value of Bakhtin's idea to describe colonial arenas of conflict and negotiation, in a manner that foregrounds the frontier character of colonial relations and what Fernando Ortiz called the anthropological process of transculturation. See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: travel writing and transculturation* 1-12; Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* 86-90.

9. In Europe, these dances survive throughout the former Hapsburg empire, although they were known to have existed as a courtly tradition in England, (present-day) Belgium and Germany, Croatia, and France as well as Italy and Spain. For an overview of this tradition in Perú (treated in this essay somewhat less centrally than the case of New Spain), see Milena Cáceres Valderrama, *La fiesta de moros y cristianos en el Perú*.
10. Janea Estrada's editorial on the Morismas de Bracho celebrated in Zacatecas around September 8 every year, mentions the unorthodox custom of the native inhabitants of hosting a "*Corrida de Moros*" along with the more conventional bull-run; and in which characters dressed up as "*Moros*" played the part of the bull being assailed on all sides by the populace. See editorial, *La Gualdra* (La Jornada Zacatecas), no. 163, Sept. 1, 2014, 2.
11. Concerning the parallel and overlapping traditions of the *danzas de conquista*, or dances of the conquest performed in Latin America, Laëtitia Mathis has emphasized the importance of a written manuscript, handed down from generation to generation and re-copied by hand when the manuscript deteriorates, as one of the only ways of preserving a tradition that otherwise depends primarily on oral retellings from memory. See Mathis, "*La danse de la Conquête au Mexique: signification, origine et évolution*," *Escritural*, no. 2. Dec. 2009 (web).
12. For a comprehensive catalog and analysis of these dances, see Jáuregi and Bonfiglioli, *Danzas de Conquista*. See also Sylvia Rodriguez, *The Matachines Dance: Ritual Symbolism and Interethnic Relations in the Upper Rio Grande Valley* 17-42; Warman 156-157; Arthur L. Campa, "*Los Comanches: A New Mexican Folk Drama*."
13. "...A falta de las grands cruzadas en Tierra Santa, España sostiene durante siete siglos lo que pudiéramos llamar su "*cruzada propia*" en contra, no tanto del islam en sí, sino de la ocupación islámica de su territorio...esa obsesión de siete siglos forja el carácter español...al extremo de que cuando vive la nueva epopeya de la conquista de un imperio, sigue con su pensamiento nostálgico repasando todos los episodios de la terminada gesta de la reconquista" (*El Gran Océano* 115).
14. In addition to Irving and Warman, see Jacques Lafaye, *Mesias, cruzadas, utopías*. As Arturo Warman explains, in its original transplantation, the *danza de moros y cristianos* appeared to serve primarily the conquistadors: "*La función primordial de las fiestas [para los conquistadores]...se convierten en una declaración de unidad frente a un ambiente hostil; una reafirmación de la continuidad de las tradiciones originales; una reiteración del papel de los conquistadores como parte del pueblo elegido, depositarios de una santa cruzada sucesora digna de la que realizaron sus antepasados*" (71). For Franciscan millenarianism, see John L. Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World*.
15. Max Harris, *Aztecs, Moors, and Christians* 3-17.

16. On the term *dispositif*, device or apparatus, see Giorgio Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays* 1-24.
17. See Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez, "Born With a Silver Spoon" 220-221.
18. This is the thesis of Mariano Ardash Bonialian's book, *El pacífico hispanoamericano: Política y comercio asiático en el imperio español (1680-1784). La centralidad de lo marginal*. See in particular 259-365. See also Margarita Suárez, *Desafíos transatlánticos. Mercaderes, banqueros y el estado en el Perú virreinal, 1600-1700* 208-219; Bolívar Echeverría, *La modernidad de lo barroco*.
19. Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez, "Cycles of Silver: Global Economic Unity Through the Mid-Eighteenth Century." Warman argues that the discovery of silver mines in northern Mexico, which corresponded with and hastened the precipitous decline of the native Amerindian population, was decisive in accounting for the survival and dissemination of the *moros y cristianos* archetype. On the one hand, missionaries like the Franciscans and Jesuits became the primary intermediaries between native peoples and the Spanish population, beginning with the prohibition against the "intervention" of Spaniards in the frontier towns without express approval of the colonial government and religious orders. See Nicholas Rangel, *Historia del toreo en México. Época colonial [1529-1821]* 325.
20. See Robert Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico* 239-295.
21. Rainer Buschmann, et al., *Navigating the Spanish Lake* 13-16.
22. See José Luis Porras, *The Synod of Manila of 1582*. Translated by Corita Barranco et al. 234-245.
23. "[The Augustinians] sponsored many kinds of music and dances; which were from among those [dances] that our Indians, as well as Chinese and Japanese, would do; all in great variety, they went very well, and adorned and enlivened the festival greatly" Chirino, *Relación de las islas Filipinas* (cited in Leonicio Cabrero Fernández, "Orígenes y desarrollo del teatro en Filipinas" 84. Colín's 1663 work *Labor Evangélica* describes a "warlike and passionate" dance executed with such grace and elegance that "the dance is not unworthy of accompanying and solemnizing Christian feasts" (cited in Retana 34).
24. See Cabrero Fernández, "Orígenes y desarrollo" 83.
25. Audiences of the *danzas de moros y cristianos* and the romances of chivalry will recognize the association of these jousts with the *parlamentos*, *embajadas*, or *coloquios* spoken by Christian and Moorish knights prior to and intermittently during the long battles. These *parlamentos* arrived in the Americas and the Philippines through *libros de caballería*, "Books of the Brave," which were in turn derived or inspired by French medieval *chansons de geste*, which featured dialogues between parties concerning diplomatic, amorous, and / or religious negotiation pertaining to Christian conversion. In the Philippines, this tradition built on native versions of riddles exchanged among grieving family members of

- a deceased relative, and were called *dupluhan* (from *duplo*, a Tagalog “loan-word” probably from the Spanish *doble*) in the colonial period.
26. See Steven Patrick Fernandez, *The San Miguel Fiesta. Rituals of Iligan City: a study of form, function, and value*.
  27. Audiences of the colonial *danzas de moros y cristianos* and the romances of chivalry in New Spain and Peru will recognize the association of these jousts with the *parlamentos*, *embajadas*, or *coloquios* spoken Christian and Moorish knights prior to and intermittently during the long battles. These *parlamentos* built on native versions of riddles exchanged among grieving family members of a deceased relative, and were called *dupluhan* (from *duplo*, a Tagalog “loan-word” probably from the Spanish *doble*) in the colonial period.
  28. See *Toros y cañas en Filipinas en 1623*.
  29. See the recent article of Miguel Martínez, “*Don Quijote, Manila, 1623: orden colonial y cultura popular*” 143-159.
  30. “Among the Mexican Indians,” Rafael Bernal writes, “the Moor was an imaginative fiction... But when the dance arrives to the Philippines... the people knew what a Moor was; they were familiar with Mohammed and had suffered from the Islamic invasions, as well as the great corsair and pirate campaigns... When the story [of Christians fighting Moors] is based in reality, as it is in Filipinas, it takes on a new life and becomes transformed with each new generation” (*México en Filipinas. Un estudio de transculturación* 122-123).
  31. These masks were imported at least as early as the 1623 festival studied by Miguel Martínez (“*Don Quixote, Manila*” 144-146).
  32. D. R. M. Irving notes that this colonial martial art was banned by Governor Don Simon de Anda y Salazar in 1764, “allowing its use only in comedias as a performative act by arnis veterans selected by the parish priests” (211-212). Felicidad Mendoza traces the roots of indigenous martial arts not to the Spanish *escaramuzas* but *kali*, a fighting technique akin to “the ‘sword and dagger’ style of fighting in England” (Felicidad Mendoza, *The Comedia [Moro-Moro] Re-Discovered* 58).
  33. On the Santa Cruz festival, or *Santacruzán*, Fr. Agustín María de Castro (OSA) wrote at the end of the eighteenth century: “*los principios comenzaria con buena intencion y con buenos modales de los cristianos antiguos, pero en el dia todo se reduce a bailar los mozos junto con las mozas, y esto de noche, cantándose letras muy profanas en tonadillas poco honestas y poco conformes con la santidad que piden los misterios sacrosantos de la Cruz...todo viene a parar en beber mucho vino de coco y otros peligros y excesos.*” See Castro, in Manuel Merino, “*La provincia filipina de Batangas vista por un misionero a fines de siglo XVIII*” 210.
  34. [*Estos indios...son muy afectos a comedias, y la gente más principal es la que hace de actores; y como éstos no suelen saber la lengua castellana, piden que se les permita representar en su propio idioma, y no se tiene el menor reparo en permitir las comedias*

- en lengua tagala en todos los pueblos de esta provincia, aun en el de Binondo, que sólo está separado de la ciudad por un río; ¡y se trata de que los párorocos prediquen en español!...] (Zuñiga, *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas* 1: 301).
35. [*Las comedias de los indios se componen de tres ó cuatro tragedias españolas, cuyos pasajes están entrelazados unos con otros, y forman al parecer una sola pieza. Siempre entran en ellas moros y cristianos, y todo el enredo consiste en que los moros quieren casarse con las princesas cristianas y los cristianos con las princesas moras*]. See also Retana, *Noticias histórico-bibliográficas* 24; Barrantes, *El teatro tagalo* 20ff. While Tiongson asserts that the *komedya* began as the portrayal of stories orally transmitted prior to their publication as metrical romances, it is clear from Damiana Eugenio's study that the writers had some access (however limited) to these romances, at times following the Spanish version to the letter and at other times completely departing from them: see Tiongson, *Kasaysayan ng Komedyang sa Pilipinas 1766-1982* 20; Eugenio, *Awit and Corrido: Philippine Metrical Romances*. As we will see, the most notable departures in which the playwright has recourse only to his own invention are the romances between Christian and Moor.
  36. [*No suele haber mucha dificultad en componer los matrimonios de los moros con las cristianas: una guerra que se declara oportunamente, en la cual el príncipe moro hace proezas extraordinarias, y su bautismo y conversión á la fe católica facilita el casamiento, que desata todo el enredo de este pasaje de la comedia*]. (Zuñiga, *Estadismo* 73-74).
  37. See Durán, *Romancero General* 229-243 [nos. 1253-1260].
  38. See Yolando Pino Saavedra's history of the diffusion of the Charlemagne cycle in "Historia de Carlomagno y de los Doce Pares de Francia en Chile," *Folklore Americas* vol. XXVI, no. 2, Dec. 1966, pp. 1-29. Warman points out that the most concentrated diffusion of *moros y cristianos* festivals that harken back directly to the the Charlemagne cycle are practiced in or around Puebla, Mexico, although the largest *moros y cristianos* festival in the world takes place in Zacatecas, in northern Mexico.
  39. See Gisela Beutler, "Floripes, la princesa pagana en los bailes de 'Moros y cristianos' de México: algunas observaciones sobre las fuentes literarias" 266 (n. 24). Cf. also the critique of Floripes by L. Gautier, in *ibid.* 265-266.
  40. Eugenio, *Mga Piling Awit at Korido* 10, stanzas 56-57.
  41. See Lumbea, *Tagalog Poetry 1565-1896: Tradition and Influences in its Development* 79. This same poet, known as *Huseng Sisiw* ['Chick' José] by his peers, is widely considered to be the author of the Tagalog *Doce Pares*, although no scholar has established anything but the most circumstantial evidence to prove his authorship.
  42. Eugenio, *Mga Piling Awit at Korido* 12, stanza 70.
  43. "Siya rin nganing totoo / ang Arca nang testamento, / at Judit na mananalo, na pumugot niyong ulo / ni Olofernes na lilo" (*Casaysayan nang Pasióng Mahal* 2472)

["She is also truly / the Ark of the covenant / and Judith the conqueror / who cut off the head / of the traitorous Holofernes"]. As Margarita Stocker's work on the legend of the biblical heroine Judith shows, Judith's rescue of Israel from destruction at the hands of the Assyrians provides us with a remarkable analogue to Floripes. Both figures take on the qualities of both sides of the gender divide, thus calling into question the order that allegedly sustains them in their dependence on patriarchal law and their condition of negativity within it. Their anomalous position within the structure of patriarchy is reinforced by both their material independence and their capacity to transgress or question the conditions of their violation, captivity, or allegiance to the law (Stocker, *Judith, Sexual Warrior: Women and Power in Western Culture* 3-23). According to Stocker, Judith forms the basis of a counter-culture and alternative to "the Oedipal myth, and to all that it signifies about the ordering of Western culture" (23). One may also add that the story of Judith strongly resonates with the mythical proto-nationalist figure of Gabriela Silang in the Philippines. Gabriela Silang was the wife of Diego Silang who led a revolt in Ilocos in 1762 that called for the abolition of the tribute and forced labor, the replacement of various government positions in Ilocos, and the banishment of the Spanish bishop and all Spanish *mestizos* from the province (Renato Constantino, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* 109). Upon his death, Gabriela became the head of the rebel army but was captured and hanged four months later (112). As Jaroslav Pelikan has pointed out in his study of the Virgin Mary, this motif of Mary as *Mulier fortis*, woman of valor or woman-warrior goes back to the medieval period. See Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries* 90-91.

44. Pedro Murillo Velarde, S.J., *Historia de la Provincia de Philipinas, segunda parte* 220-221.
45. As Jaroslav Pelikan has pointed out in his study of the Virgin Mary, this motif of Mary as *Mulier fortis*, woman of valor or woman-warrior goes back to the medieval period. See Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries* 90-91.
46. See *Casaysayan nang Pasingong Mahal* 151.
47. Damiana Eugenio, *Mga Piling Awit at Korido* 13, stanza 80.
48. Eugenio, *Awit and Korido* 15.
49. "From these slight allusions," Damiana Eugenio writes in her landmark study of Philippine colonial romances, "the Philippine poet built, in 49 stanzas...one romantic episode in a work primarily concerned with the series of battles fought by Charlemagne and his peers. He rejects as the occasion for the first meeting [between Gui and Floripes], the commonplace tournament mentioned in the *Historia* and substitutes for it more romantic circumstances" (Eugenio *Awit and Korido* 15).
50. Eugenio, *Awit and Korido* 397, stanzas 416-418.



51. See Vicente Rafael's landmark *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule* for a historical reflection on the politics of (mis-)translation in the early colonial period.
52. Eugenio points out that awits and corridos "are generally read, but there is evidence that they were once also sung, chanted, or at least recited" (xxiii).
53. The continuity of slave trading throughout the Philippines and Mexico is the subject of Tatiana Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*.
54. Carolyn Brewer's *Shamanism, Catholicism and Gender Relations in Colonial Philippines, 1521-1685* provides the best introduction to the gendered nature of spirit mediumship among Philippine indigenous groups that refused or remained outside the isolated areas of the Spanish presence: see especially 83-142. In his account of the Tapar or Malonor rebellion, which took place on the island of Panay (central Visayas), eighteenth-century missionary priest and chronicler Fr. Gaspar San Agustín, O.S.A., refers to babaylanes as "priestesses of the Devil" [sacerdotes del demonio], who were responsible for abhorrent sacrifices and "abominaciones, que todo cedía en perdición de sus almas" ["abominations, which ceded everything in the perdition of their souls"] (see San Agustín, in Casimiro Díaz, editor, *Conquistas de las islas Filipinas: la temporal, por las armas del señor don Phelipe Segundo el Prudente y la espiritual por los religiosos del orden de nuestro padre San Agustín, y fundación y progresos de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de la misma Orden. Parte Segunda* 641). The leader of this rebellion, Tapar, "andaba en traje de mujer, por ser más propio de este sexo el oficio de Babaylan y sacerdote del demonio" ["went about dressed as a woman, as was befitting the office of Babaylan or priest of the devil"]. (On Gabriela Silang, see note 43 above.)

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