

SANTÚ: SYNCHRONIZING RHYTHM, SPEECH, AND POETRY IN THE GONG AND BAMBOO INSTRUMENTS OF PANAY BUKIDNONS

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Abstract

This paper explores the concept of *santú*, or synchronization, in forming gong and bamboo music from rhythmic, speech and poetic sources among the Panay Bukidnon, the highland people of Panay in the Philippines. Building poetry from speech patterns, which involves rhythmic play, feeds into the basic understanding of the connection between speech/language, chanting, and instrument playing. Furthermore, the linkage between language and instrumental sounds and playing depends on understanding the nuances of *limog* – sound and tone colors. The linkage to tone nuances helps in determining points where music and dance can synchronize and eventually realize *sibod*, an ideology rich in meanings that points toward balance and transcendental connections to other realms. *Santú* is one of the key concepts in *sibod* and its meaning relates to connectedness as well as to performing in time together. Given its essentially musical and rhythmic meanings, this concept forms a keystone upon which gong and bamboo instrumental performance balances.

Feliza Castor, a Panay Bukidnon elder, demonstrates the act of synchronization and indicates the fulfillment of it when she says “*Ga-Sibod*” (It’s working), sometimes adding “*Da!*” meaning, “There you are!” She puts the rhythm into action, but she would first enunciate its rhythmic basis through linguistic mnemonics, speech fragments serving as the rhythmic basis in Panay Bukidnon music and dance. Even after achieving *santú* individually one must consider, “How does synchronization happen when