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ADAPTING CHRISTIAN TEXT TO ATI INDIGENOUS MUSIC: SOME PROPOSED SAMPLES FOR USE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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**Submitted to the College of Education, Graduate School
De La Salle University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of**

MASTER OF ARTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

December 1995



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I -	PAGE
Dedication	5
Acknowledgment	6
CHAPTER I - THE PROBLEM AND A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Setting of the Study	8
Review of Related Literature	10
The Negritos	11
The Current Situation of the Atis of Dingle-Anilao	12
Nature of Ethnic Music	15
Ati Ethnic Music	17
Ethnic Musical Instruments	21
Nature and Evolution of Ati Ethnic Music	22
Statement of the Problem	24
Hypothesis	25
Scope and Limitations	25
Significance of the Study	26
Definition of Terms	27



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CHAPTER II - CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Conceptual Framework	33
Methodology	
Research Design	35
Research Interview	35
Structure in Research Interview	36
Interview Guide	37
Sampling Procedure	40
Sources of Data	41
Data Gathering Procedure	42

CHAPTER III - FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Ati Ethnic Music	45
Analysis of Melodic Structure	45
Analysis of Musical Instruments and Rhythm	50
Tone Variation Analysis	52
Improvisation	52
Oral Tradition and System of Notation	54
Data Analysis and Findings	55
Response to Christian Songs Set to Ati Musical Patterns	65
Ati Contemporary Music	68



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CHAPTER IV - SAMPLES OF ATI INDIGENOUS MUSIC

WITH NOTATION AND
TRANSLATIONS 73

PROPOSED HYMNS 79

Compositions

Translations

Notations

CHAPTER V SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary 95

Conclusion 101

Recommendations 106

REFERENCES 109

APPENDIX 113



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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to find out the adaptability of Christian text to Ati indigenous music and the proposal of some samples for use in religious education.

The specific questions this study intended to answer were:

1. What is the tonal scale of Ati ethnic music?
2. What are its rhythmic patterns?
3. What are its modes of rendition?
4. How can the knowledge about the tonal scales, rhythmic patterns and modes of rendition of Ati indigenous music be used to develop Christian music for Ilonggo Atis of Dingle and Anilao?
5. How do the Atis see the Ati Christian music developed in this study in terms of:
 - 5.1. its melodic-textual adaptability.
 - 5.2. ease of rendition.
 - 5.3. irregularity of rhythmic patterns.



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5.4. suitability to Ilonggo moods and aspirations.

The study used the *descriptive - normative method of research*. The subjects were the Atis found in the low mountains of Dingle - Anilao, Iloilo. The study used the *incidental sampling procedure* in selecting respondents. It covered only those Atis who were around when the researcher went up the low mountains of Dingle-Anilao, Iloilo to interview them.

To obtain data the following sources were employed:

1. interviews were conducted with anybody available during those moments when the researcher was around;
2. observations of their musical activities were made;
3. audio-cassette recordings enabled the researcher to get a first hand experience of their ethnic music. This facilitated the transcriptions and analysis of the music in its original form;
4. available audio-cassette recordings were also used as data resources. Through these, the researcher was able



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able to differentiate and compare the original Ati music with the Ati music which has been influenced through the use of Western notations and technology.

Findings revealed that:

1. Ati ethnic music features can be used to develop Christian music for Ilonggo Atis and that even a limited note-scale of Ati ethnic music can be used to compose a Christian music;
2. there was only one tonal scale: a pentatonic scale which was equivalent to the first five notes of the well-tempered scale; the presence of microtones was also observed;
3. the rhythmic pattern was free because of its recitative-like features;
4. the songs were freely ornamented with melodic lines of trills, glides, guttural sounds which were half-sung-half-spoken.
5. generally the songs were sung in solo with improvisations and embellishment.

In the light of the findings and conclusions drawn in the study, the following recommendations are offered:



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1. to develop an increased academic awareness on the part of the religious educators regarding the existence of small minority groups in the Philippine society;
2. to strengthen the secondary and tertiary course offerings on ethnic music and ethnic religiosity through exposure to nearby ethnic groups in order to interact with them;
3. to encourage music composers to create scripturally based songs using ethnic models, so as to ensure the continuity of the uniqueness of a certain religious tribal customs and traditions;
4. to allow ethnic musical experiences in Christian Living classes as a form of vertical articulation integration;
5. to let the students develop an ethnic rhythmic feeling through the use of ethnic tribal percussion instruments interpreted through bodily movements;
6. to train religious choir masters and members on ethnic music ;
7. to allow ethnically based religious songs to be sung in the different churches and parishes during services;



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8. to form organization whose membership and goals will cater to the preservation of ethnic groups and their religious practices and traditions;

9. a departure from the traditional harmonic practices in order to pave the way to newly emergent trend in sound phenomena;

10. students should be provided with an ethnic vocabulary listing with which to analyze, interpret and verbalize non-Western musical concepts.

