## Contents

**Chapter 1: Introduction**
- Statement of Purpose .................................................. 1
- Need for Study .............................................................. 1
- Research Question ....................................................... 2
- Limitations of the Study .................................................. 2
- Assumptions ................................................................. 3

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**
- Introduction ............................................................... 4
- History ........................................................................... 5
- Relevance of the Group .................................................. 7
- Personal Connections ..................................................... 7
- Little Scholarly Research on Naga Music ......................... 8
- Christian Music As a Point of Social, Cultural and Political Contestation .................................................. 14
- Theoretical Position ....................................................... 31
- Conclusion ................................................................. 37

**Chapter 3: Methodology**
- Descriptions of Research Tools ........................................ 39
- Participants in the Study .................................................. 46
- Methods for Data Collection .......................................... 46
- Fieldwork Procedures .................................................... 52

**Chapter 4: Research Findings**
- Overview of Christian Worship in Nagaland .................... 56
Naga Composers 81

Fusing Naga Folk and Western Music for Congregational Worship 109

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations 134

Summary 134

Conclusions 136

Recommendations 139

Bibliography 145

Appendix 149
### Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Jubilee” by D. S. Zhasa. Soprano line</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Jubilee” by D. S. Zhasa. Alto Harmony</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Jubilee” by D. S. Zhasa. Additional Harmonies</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excerpt of “Ma Sen” by Gedion Thono</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Naga Folk Song motif from “Haleluya” by James Swu</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>First excerpt from “Haleluya” by James Swu</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Second excerpt from “Haleluya” by James Swu</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>First folk melody of “Ampeu Shelo He-o” by James Swu</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Second folk melody of “Ampeu Shelo He-o” by James Swu</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Excerpt of slow section from “Ampeu Shelo He-o” by James Swu</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Excerpt starting at measure 74 of “Ampeu Shelo He-o” by James Swu</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Beginning of “Pano Nilhoke Wa!” by Hojevi Cappo</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of Purpose

Christian worship in Nagaland has a rich history and occurs in various styles. Naga Christian’s have composed music for worship in a variety of different styles. An overview of these various styles and personal interviews with Christian composers provides insight into the current state of Christian worship in Nagaland. Christian worship in Nagaland is shaped primarily by the generational divide in preference for hymns or praise and worship, the unique use of revival songs and advocacy for Naga folk music inspired compositions in worship.

Need for Study

This study is needed for several reasons. First, this study is needed because little scholarly research has been conducted on music in Nagaland. While some attempts have been made to document Naga music for preservation’s sake, no ethnomusicological research of music in this region has been published.¹ Any existing discussion of Christian music in Nagaland is from a predominantly theological or historical perspective. A study of Naga music used in Christian worship from an ethnomusicological perspective would fill a gap in scholarly knowledge of the region. Second, this study is needed to increase global awareness about the existence and practices of Nagas. As a minority tribal people group in Northeast India, Nagas are often forgotten by both Indian and foreign scholars. Many people in the world are ignorant of the Nagas’ existence. This study will educate others about this unique people group. Thirdly, this

¹ Since the time of this research Jaremdi Wati Longchar electronically published the article “They Shall Hear Us Sing: Tribal women explore the power of songs to fight patriarchy in the northeastern state of Nagaland,” StoriesAsia, 2020, Accessed December 17, 2020, https://longform.storiesasia.org/they-shall-hear-us-sing
study is needed to assist Naga Christians with further developing music for use in worship. In several sources, Nagas express a desire to create and develop Christian worship music that more fully reflects their cultural heritage and contemporary context. This research would provide Nagas with a better understanding of the current compositional trends and the factors that are hindering or facilitating this development. Therefore, this study is needed to fill a lacuna in ethnomusicological research, bring attention to the Naga people, and assist Nagas in developing their Christian music for worship.

Research Question

This research seeks to answer the questions; what music is used in Christian worship in Nagaland and why? What music are Nagas composing for worship? Why are they composing it? How are Naga compositions being used in Christian worship? What is the relationship between Naga folk music and worship? And finally what are the greatest needs in Christian worship in Nagaland? I intend to investigate Naga taxonomies of music within the Christian context. Michael Bloor defines taxonomies as “systems of classification used by collectivities to order and make sense of everyday experience.”

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the individuals and gatherings included. The Naga tribes primarily included are Sümi, Ao, Lotha, Angami, and Rengma. The major tribes Chekesang and Tangkhul are given only a cursory mention and the vast number of smaller tribes throughout Naga inhabited regions are not included. Research took place in the cities of Dimapur and

---

Kohima as well as on the campus of Patkai Christian College (Autonomous) Seithekema-Chumukedima. The church associations included are the Western Sümi Baptist Church, Ao Baptist Church, Angami Baptist Church, Rengma Baptist Church, Lotha Baptist Church and Christian Revival Church, though small mention is made of a non-denomination mixed tribe church in Dimapur. The composers included are all male and of the middle or older generation and the researcher was not introduced to any female composers. There are both male and female participants.

Assumptions

In conducting this research I assume that participants give honest and truthful responses. I assume the inclusion criteria of the sample is appropriate and participants have the same experience of the study. Participants in the study include students of the researcher, fellow faculty, and friends. However, I assume despite these outside relationships with the researcher that participants do not have any ulterior motives for participating in the study.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

In the mountainous hill states of Northeast India, diverse tribes have lived for thousands of years. In the last century and a half, the term Naga has come to refer to an agglomeration of tribes living in the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Nagaland and the provinces of Sagiang and Kachin in Myanmar. The tribes include Tangkhul, Mao, Maram, Kabui, Kachha, Koirao, Koireng, Maring, Nocte, Wancho, Jeme, Rongmei, Liangmei, Sumi, Ao, Angami, Chakhesang, Chang, Chirr, Khiamnungan, Konyak, Lotha, Makware, Phom, Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Tikhir, Yimchungre, and Zeliang, sixteen of which reside in Nagaland. They are part of the South Mongoloid ethnic group and are presumed to have migrated to their present area from northwest China and southeast Asia thousands of years ago.

The Nagas are ethnically and socially mixed “there being no unique origin for any of the tribes separately or for the Nagas as a whole.” While Nagas share certain socio-cultural components that distinguish them from the other tribal constellations, the Naga tribes themselves are all greatly varied with distinct customs and languages. Indeed, “all the major Naga tribes speak a language that is unintelligible to the others.” According to the 2011 census, the current population of Nagaland is 1,978,502. Though

---


5 Vivee Kenileno Peseye, "Developing an Indigenous Hymnody for the Naga Baptist Churches of Northeast India with Special Reference to the Angami Church" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 16, accessed October 3, 2016, URL #.

Nagas still compose the vast majority of the population, significant numbers of people from the plains have migrated into the state especially in the low lying city of Dimapur.

History

Nagaland and many of the other northeastern states were all part of the territory of Assam which became part of the British Raj in 1824. Frequent Naga raids of cities and British encampments led the British to conduct ten militaristic expeditions into Naga territory between 1835 and 1861, burning villages and killing several hundred tribesmen as punishment. The Naga Hills district was formed in 1866 but “no written agreements were made with the Nagas.”

British attempts to pacify the Naga tribes generally failed and frequent uprisings led the government to assume a non-interference policy which was later ratified into law under the Act of 1919 which proclaimed the Naga hills an “excluded area” exempt from constitutional arrangements and protected from “possible economic exploitation.”

During the British Administration, Christian missionaries from the America Baptist Foreign Mission Society were welcomed into the area. The first missionaries to the Nagas, Rev. Miles Bronson and his wife arrived among the Konyak Nagas in 1839 and left in 1841 after toiling with no success to convert and educate the tribe. Dr. Edward Clark and his wife arrived in Assam in 1871 and immediately felt the desire to evangelize the Nagas. An Assamese Christian, Godhula, who worked closely with Clark learned the Ao language and made several trips into Ao territory leading to the conversion of the first Nagas to Christianity. In 1876 Clark established a

---


8 Rizvi, 12.

9 Ibid., 13.
missionary school and Christian village. Many Ao Naga villages converted to Christianity at that time. Christianity continued to spread as more missionaries joined in evangelizing and translating the Bible into the many tribal languages. Missionaries were responsible for the building of hospitals and the organization and administration of education was left entirely in their hands. A century after the mission to the Nagas had begun, scripts were developed and used in each tribal community and the Christians were networked in “the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC).”\textsuperscript{10} Today, almost all Nagas identify as Christians.

British administration and the arrival of American missionaries in the nineteenth century, marked only the beginning of many significant social, political, and cultural events that would shape Naga history. The twentieth century saw Naga involvement in the World Wars and the incorporation of the Naga Hills into the nation of India. First, 2000 Nagas served in the Labor Corps in France during WWI. During the second World War, a Japanese invasion was averted by the valiant efforts of Nagas and Allied forces at the Battle of Kohima, April 3-4, 1944.\textsuperscript{11} The Naga National Council formed immediately after the war to petition for the autonomy of the Naga Hills. Upon independence in 1947, the new nation of India gained control of the area. Nagas attempted to gain independence themselves through political protests and eventually armed rebellion against India, but these political aspirations were thwarted by internal conflict and division. Nagaland, with a population of only 108,924 at the time was declared a new state on December 1, 1963.\textsuperscript{12} Statehood and administrative autonomy satisfied many Nagas, including the Naga Baptist Church Council which advocated for peace. The Naga National Council and its

\textsuperscript{10} Lakshmi Bhatia, "Contradiction and Change in Mizo Church," in \textit{Margins of Faith: Dalit and Tribal Christianity in India}, edited by Rowena Robinson and Joseph Marianus Kujur (New Delhi: India Sage Publishing, 2010), 175.

\textsuperscript{11} Rizvi, 16.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 22.
underground army however were not appeased. At the time of this research, freedom fighters still conducted insurgent operations led by Naga national leaders living in exile.

Relevance of the Group

Today, Nagaland continues to develop and grow. Dimapur, its largest city has a population of 378,811 (2011 census). While the rest of the state is divided into districts usually dominated by one tribe, Dimapur is a multi-ethnic hub with Nagas from most tribal communities as well as non-Naga immigrants from the plains. This makes it an excellent location to research Christian music among several different tribes and to interface with Christian composers and leaders from a variety of different backgrounds. The faculty, staff, and students at Patkai Christian college also represent a decent sampling of the various Naga tribes as well as a broad age group to be included in the study.

Personal Connections

I arrived in Nagaland on August 12, 2016 to begin a teaching post at Patkai Christian College. Patkai is one of the largest and most prestigious liberal arts colleges in all Nagaland. Its campus includes parts of both Seithekema and Chumukedima villages about 12 kilometers from Dimapur. I worked as a lecturer and voice teacher for the Margaret Shishak School of Music and lived on campus in faculty housing until May 23rd, 2017 when I returned to the United States.

---

Little Scholarly Research on Naga Music

Research on the music of Nagas is needed because little scholarly research on this topic exists and that which does has limited applicability. First, very little has been written on music in Nagaland. Barthakur’s *The Music and Musical Instruments of North Eastern India* argues that music and musical instruments in the Northeast are the undeveloped predecessors of Hindustani music. Naga music and musical instruments appear to have no relationship with the Hindustani tradition and are therefore completely omitted from the book except for a brief mention of a few festivals. Other publications on music and culture in Northeast India usually take a state by state approach, covering Nagaland as a single unit among all the northeastern states. This approach limits coverage and makes broad generalizations. It also fails to include Naga tribes that live outside Nagaland state lines. Some published works address Nagaland individually but none are dedicated entirely to the music, rather musical instruments, songs, or dances are peripheral topics that are added into books with an alternate focus. For example, *Naga Cultural Attires and Musical Instruments* dedicates only 19 of its 132 pages to musical instruments. *The Arts and Crafts of Nagaland* adds brief discussion of wooden musical instruments to a chapter on carpentry and literary analysis of “freely translated” song texts to the chapter on literary arts.\(^{14}\) Nothing has been published which addresses Naga music culture in a comprehensive or systematic way.

Not only is there very little written on the music of this people group but that which is written does not apply the accepted theories and practices of ethnomusicology. First, the research is all written using solely Western or Indian terminology rather than locally determined wording.

and taxonomies. John Henry Hutton labels voice parts Soprano, Contralto, Tenor and Bass and transcribes two songs with western staff and meter. A Naga author, Mongro gives instruments western names like trumpet or violin, as well as makes comparisons with Indian music and musical instruments. Some of the Indian authors make biased comparisons between Naga and Indian music and culture. For example, Sharma claims that one festival is “just like Holi, festival of Hindus” and refers to a Naga orchestra without explaining the term. Finally, Sen likens Naga music to peasant songs in other parts of India but without sufficient support.

These comparisons and references indicate the intended audiences, Western and Indian respectively, but they also convey the general tone with which Naga music is discussed. The authors seem to be trying to prove to their audiences that this “folk” music, a term weighted with low value judgement, is actually respectable and interesting. For example, Hutton writes “though the melody has a monotonous effect…. there is often something undoubtedly attractive and even haunting about the cadence.” Phukan describes music of the northeast saying, “though simple, the melodies on these drums and flutes and simple stringed pieces are attractive and quite often complex.” This characterization of Nagas as “simple” and “folk” is common for many of the tribal people groups of the northeast.

Thomas writes about the Garos that they are “a simple, happy, carefree people.” She makes similar conclusion as Barthakur about the evolution of Indian classical instruments from

---

15 Manorma Sharma, “IX: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura,” in *Folk India: A comprehensive study of Indian folk music and culture* (New Delhi, India: Sundeep Prakashan, 2004), 64.


folk instruments of the northeast saying, “many of the traditional instruments, in spite of their simplicity prove to be extremely effective musical instruments and in them we can see the origin of many of the sophisticated instruments of today.” Ethnomusicologist Richard Wolf critiques this evolutionary assumption which “is expressed even more transparently by the award winning radio broadcaster and musicologist Amalendu Bikash Kar Choudhury, who wrote in a sympathetic if musicologically thin book, the *Tribal Songs of Northeast India.*” By far Barthakur’s comments are the most revealing of this engrained bias. He writes, “folk music is the product of unsophisticated people… the village folk are generally ignorant about the technical aspect of music,” and “their dances … are rather dreadful for those who have very little knowledge of their life and culture.” The connotation of inferiority expressed by Indian scholars reveals Indian ethnic bias as well as the vestiges of outdated Western classification systems and systems of inquiry. Research on music in the northeast which breaks free of this “folk” and “simple” ethnocentric mold is desperately needed.

More research is also needed because much of the current research on Naga music is not informed by the rigorous methodology of ethnomusicology. Barthakur describes his methodology as including field observations and interviews but these are not adequately cited and the majority of the text seems to rely on archeological evidence. Hutton documents his methods and fieldwork, but his work is limited to a few tribes and not focused on music. Mongro says he draws from his experience as the Cultural Officer in the Academy of Music and Dance in

---

19 Thomas, 62.


22 Ibid., 57.
the Department of Arts and Culture, but doesn’t cite specific methods of gathering data. Sen draws conclusions from his interpretation of song texts from the northeastern hills, but his sample size is small and unrepresentative of the diversity of the region. No other author offers any explanation for their research methods or significant citations or argumentation for their conclusions.

Currents research also lacks dedicated attention to current musical practices. Most of the published works aim to preserve musical traditions as they existed in the past. While this is an admirable goal, there remains the need to look deeper into the existence of these traditions today. Many scholars mention contemporary music off hand. Mongro mentions how traditional instruments have been replaced by guitars and electric instruments. Phukan mentions that western compositions and rock and pop bands flourish in the northeastern hills, specifically saying that Mizoram, Nagaland, and Maghalaya all “boast of a high quality of church and choir music, with rich vocals raised in melodious harmony.” However, none of these scholars go in depth to look at the existence of these popular or contemporary styles.

Lastly, more research is needed because current publications utilize a very informal writing style. The language and syntax is often colloquial and the organization of these books is unsystematic. The writings of Sharma, Mongro, Alemchiba, Sen, and Barthakur exemplify this writing style which leads to some erroneous conclusions. Take for example the obscure meaning of this sentence describing a bamboo flute: “these small holes are made for putting fingers blocking the air while playing. These are known as staff notation.” The scholars tend to interject tangential details and the writing lacks extensive editing. While many of the works are

23 Phukan, 26.
organized around the song, dance, festival, and instrument taxonomy, this division conflicts with the reality of fully integrated Naga musical culture leading to frequent repetition. Mongro frequently abandons his instrument by instrument organization, by including random interjections of various cultural practices and inconsistent analysis of which tribes use the instrument. Systematic research utilizing more precise terminology would greatly aid in sharing comprehensible information about this topic.

Published research on Nagaland is limited in breadth and depth, characterized by Western and Indian bias, uninformed by ethnomusicology and utilizes informal writing. However, two unpublished doctoral dissertations begin to address some of this lacuna and deficiencies. First, Sentienla Toy’s dissertation “The Politics of Affect and Acoustemology in Nagaland” poses unique theories for the current perception of Naga music or its affective qualities in relation to the complex social, cultural, and political environment of Nagaland. While the dissertation succeeds in contemporizing the discussion of Naga music, it is devoid of any musicological analysis. Instead, Toy offers his own theoretical perspective on the “box,” paradigmatic constraints on the voice, gender, consciousness, and more. The dissertation is also methodologically thin from an ethnomusicology standpoint. Toy relies solely on interviews to collect data and he does not describe how interviewees were selected or why their opinions should be considered valuable or reflective of the entire Naga population. Despite these limitations, as a Naga Toy’s work contributes significantly to this review by articulating his own views as well as providing interview transcripts that record some contemporary musical beliefs and practices that would benefit from further investigation, such as the use of translated hymns and Hillsong praise songs in Christian worship.

The second dissertation “Developing an Indigenous Hymnody for the Naga Baptist Churches of Northeast India with Special Reference to the Angami Church” is by Vivee Peseye, an Angami Naga and the current dean of Patkai Christian College Margaret Shishak School of Music. Peseye presents a report on current worship practices and an investigation into their relationship to Naga folk music. She gives a thorough analysis of the Angami song genres systematically describing the performance context and key musical elements. Her chart with the names of similar musical instruments among different tribes, clearly communicates which tribes use which instruments. She classifies and discusses musical instruments using the Hornbostel and Sachs system. For this and her analysis of current beliefs about using music in worship, Peseye relies on personal and group interviews, questionnaires, and scholarly research, all of which are well cited and explained to demonstrate the use of a representative population. Finally, she concludes with theologically supported reasons and practical methods for incorporating more Naga folk music in the church.

Peseye’s dissertation makes the greatest contribution to understanding current worship practices in Nagaland and their relationship to folk music and also poses questions for future study. First, she mentions the work of a few composers and analyses their songs briefly but not thoroughly. Second, she identifies that “these indigenous tunes are yet to be incorporated, on a regular basis, in the actual worship services of the people” but offers no statistics on this incorporation and little explanation as to why they have not been incorporated. Lastly, Peseye conducted her fieldwork in fall of 2000 and spring of 2001 among predominantly Angami tribe

26 Vivee Kenileno Peseye, "Developing an Indigenous Hymnody for the Naga Baptist Churches of Northeast India with Special Reference to the Angami Church" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 16, accessed October 3, 2016, URL #.

27 Peseye, 194.
members. Significant changes in the beliefs, perceptions, and practice of worship among Nagas may have occurred in the subsequent fifteen years. Also differences may exist among the Naga tribes. Peseye’s dissertation is an excellent start but further investigation into the forces impacting the incorporation of music by Naga composers into the church is needed. Finally, while current secular music practices in Nagaland have not been studied, this research focuses on Christian music because of the important social, cultural, and political role of Christianity in Nagaland.

Christian Music as a Point of Social, Cultural, and Political Contestation

Christianity plays an important social, cultural, and political role in Nagaland and in the construction of Naga identity. Its ability to do so, however, is hindered by Christianity’s historic suppression of Naga traditional culture and music and the lack of sufficient incorporation of Naga culture and music in Christian worship.

Historically Christianity has an important role in Nagaland because conversion to Christianity provided the Nagas with a constructive response to socio-cultural trauma. Naga and non-Naga scholars recognize the historical significance of the Nagas’ conversion to Christianity, but they debate why the Nagas converted. Some scholars believe that Naga conversion to Christianity was motivated by materialistic gain. As missionaries introduced Western education and medicine conversion seemed “the only route to a better life.” The materialistic argument holds that Nagas like many other non-western peoples who encountered colonization and

Christianity simultaneously were “dazzled by the prestige of the white man” and the money sent by Western missions to pay pastors and teachers.²⁹

Furthermore, this materialistic motivation for conversion is closely related with a political-imperialistic explanation, which argues that conversion was a direct result of Western social, cultural, and political hegemony that resulted in psychological undermining of Naga cultural practices and values.³⁰ Missionaries whether consciously or unconsciously were instrumental in strengthening foreign administration of the region and proselytizing was part of the imperial strategy. The political-imperialistic argument claims that Christian education and proselytization colonized the minds of the Nagas leading to conversion. Frederick Downs critiques this explanation, however, because it does not take into account the culture and history of the people themselves but rather views them as “‘simple’ people who were no match for the well-educated and well-funded representatives of either the British government or the foreign missionary societies.”³¹ Moreover, by claiming conversion was the result of solely Western brainwashing, this argument fails to recognize the rapid church growth of the 1950s which occurred “when indigenous evangelists and leaders took control of the church after the Indian Government expelled all American Baptist missionaries from Naga Hills.”³²

Another common explanation for Naga conversion to Christianity gives the Nagas much greater self-determination taking into account ways their pre-Christian spiritual beliefs may have led to conversion. First, several spiritual beliefs are common to both Naga animistic religion and


³⁰ Thong, 602


³² Joshi, 189.
Christianity. Most commonly cited is the Naga’s belief in a supreme spirit or Creator not identified with any idols. The Ao tribe even believed this supreme deity came to earth in human form, called Lijaba.\textsuperscript{33} This supreme spirit differs from the God of the Bible in that in some tribes he is believed to punish “wrong-doers in the present life, but this punishment is inflicted by the harmful spirits.”\textsuperscript{34} These evil spirits and their necessary appeasement characterized Naga traditional religion creating an environment of constant fear. Ritual sacrifices to appease evil spirits and garner the blessing of benevolent ones were very expensive. This fact led to a second spiritual motivation for conversion to Christianity: freedom from the fear of spirits and these costly rituals. Peseye recognizes how at the time of conversion “the Nagas were going through a crisis of faith: they were beginning to question the effectiveness of their age-old religious beliefs and practices.”\textsuperscript{35} Christianity was welcomed because Nagas desired to “escape superstitions, bad omens, [and] evil calamites.”\textsuperscript{36} Christianity which “preached freedom from sins, fear and evil, and a promise of a heavenly mansion afterlife” was readily accepted for these spiritual reasons.\textsuperscript{37}

The last argument for conversion takes Nagas’ particular socio-political context into account, claiming that conversion to Christianity was a constructive response to socio-cultural trauma and a form of political resistance to Indian hegemony. In general, “large scale conversion movements take place when people face a crisis.”\textsuperscript{38} Moreover tribal cultures, like the Nagas, are

\begin{itemize}
\item[33] Takatemjen [Ao], \textit{Studies on Theology and the Naga Culture} (Jorhat, Assam, India: Barkataki & C., Pvt. Ltd., 1997), Chapter 3.
\item[34] Peseye, 31
\item[35] Ibid., 47.
\item[37] Ibid.
\item[38] Downs, 386.
\end{itemize}
orally transmitted and holistic (a distinction cannot be made between religious, social, cultural and political aspects of life). A change in one area leads to a change in every other. The Nagas suffered social, cultural, and political trauma in three main ways: the dismantling of their social system and organization, exposure to the World Wars, and external aggression by both the British and Indian governments. Furthermore, increases in conversion to Christianity accompany each historical event of socio-cultural trauma.

Initially, Nagas suffered trauma as their social and political systems were challenged and forced to conform to British administration. Inter-village raiding and headhunting, a central feature of tribal social and political structure was banned. The authority of the Chief and royal hierarchy was challenged by the appointment of a village council and new chiefs by the British and the upward mobility available in a cash economy. The turmoil of these socio-political changes only worsened with Indian Independence and the creation of separate northeastern states and districts irrespective of Naga tribal lands. Downs explains how for the Nagas “nothing has undermined the traditional polity, and the traditional values associated with it, more than state politics.”

Second, Nagas suffered trauma through their involvement in the World Wars. For the Nagas that served in WWI had become conscious of their identity and existence in relation to the wider world. Independence movements can be traced back to the founding of the “Naga Club” in 1918, which “officially represented this new generation that sought solidarity and identity.”

---

39 Downs, 387.


41 Downs, 395.

The terrors of World War II reinforced this pan-tribal identity. Large-scale growth of Christianity occurred after each of these wars.\(^43\) Peseye cites World War II as a direct cause for the subsequent spiritual awakening “which resulted in healthy church growth that was self-supporting and missions-oriented.”\(^44\)

Finally, Nagas suffered the most trauma from British and Indian aggression. British attacks on villages and military domination caused “tremendous political, cultural and psychological stress.”\(^45\) British aggression was however limited in comparison to the atrocities committed against the Nagas by the Indian government. The Nagas “have consistently protested what they believe is India’s ‘illegal and immoral’ control over and occupation of their land.”\(^46\) The Indian government sent military to Nagaland in 1955, and “since then Nagaland remains one of the most militarized regions in the world.”\(^47\) At the time of this research, Nagaland still had “three parallel underground governments run by three nationalists groups.”\(^48\) Armed conflict with India caused huge trauma to the Naga community especially at its height in the 1950s and 60s. These years are known as the grouping period because Naga civilians were grouped and confined to villages by the Indian government. Some scholars also claim systematic rape and torture was used to “intimidate and elicit information.”\(^49\) Naga material culture also suffered a serious blow as “the houses with king pillars, house horns, snail horns, wind chimes and


\(^44\) Peseye, 5.

\(^45\) Thong, 596.

\(^46\) Ibid., 597.

\(^47\) Ibid.

\(^48\) Joshi, 29.

\(^49\) Thong, 598.
decorated ceremonial posts were all burnt down during the ‘grouping period.’”\(^{50}\) Furthermore, many of the original log drums, an important ceremonial instrument “were burnt by fire when the Naga villages were forcibly burnt by the Indian forces during the 1950s to 1960s throughout Nagaland.”\(^{51}\) Several scholars cite that “the increase in the number of converts during the Christian revivals in the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s does in fact coincide with the marked strengthening of the Naga nationalist movement and the brutal Indian Army action against villagers to quell or curb the armed insurgency in the area.”\(^{52}\) To be precise, the Christian population of the Northeast grew from 600,000 in 1951 to 2,511,039 by 1991.\(^{53}\)

These statistics are not simply coincidental, rather conversion to Christianity was the Naga’s self-determined and constructive response to social, cultural, and political trauma. Nagas equated Christianity with education and saw the later “as a useful instrument to cope with and take advantage of the changing social and political situation.”\(^{54}\) Christian education as well as the stability of the Church organization “provided the people with the skills necessary to function in the new world British administration had thrust upon them.”\(^{55}\) Later, Christianity gave Nagas not only tools to cope with modernity but also “a defense against the greater threat of dominance by and absorption into the more advanced plains Hindu communities.”\(^{56}\) Vibha Joshi explains how Nagas have “adopted Christianity in preference to Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and

\(^{50}\) Zhimo, “Culture, Identity and Change,” 42.

\(^{51}\) Mongro, 127.

\(^{52}\) Joshi, 10.

\(^{53}\) Downs, 391.

\(^{54}\) Joshi, 4.

\(^{55}\) Downs, 390.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., 392.
Jainism, and so expressing their distinctiveness as a political, ethnic and linguistic grouping who stand apart from the various South Asian mainstreams.”

The missionaries and Nagas understood that religious “change could bring positive benefits without destroying that sense of distinctiveness that is central to a people’s identity.” In fact, “Christianity persists as an integral part of the Naga identity” because it created an unifying distinctiveness of all the diverse Naga tribes in opposition to the Indian aggressors.

The Naga tribes which are distinct culturally and linguistically used Christianity and even Christian music as a rallying point. Joshi explains how the very diversity of the Naga languages puts into perspective “the special circumstances of a people conscious of themselves as a singular political grouping aiming for secession and even independence from India.” For the Nagas, conversion to Christianity was a form of political resistance. While it may have identified them with their former Christian Western colonizers, it was a statement of clear “opposition to their immediate non-Christian colonizer, that is India.” The Christian music taught by Western missionaries contributed to this unification and formation of Naga identity. The Western hymns and gospel songs became and remain “a common medium of communication in the context of differences in music and language of the Nagas.” These songs also provided affirmation of Naga unity in the body of Christ. Multiple translations of the same hymn allow all the Nagas to

57 Joshi, 2.
58 Downs, 388.
59 Thong, 601.
60 Joshi, 43.
61 Thong, 599.
gather in one place and “sing *We Praise Thee, O God* or *How Great Thou Art*, each in one’s own tribal tongue or in English.” In this way Christian conversion was motivated by the social, cultural, and political trauma the Nagas collectively experienced. Christian hymns and gospel songs even became a powerful expression of Naga identity.

However, Christianity’s function as a positive socio-cultural force and expression of Naga identity is hindered by Christianity’s historic suppression of Naga traditional culture and music. The desire to identify as a Christian and Naga to heal from the social and cultural trauma of the past is in constant tension with the reality of the dramatic social and cultural changes Christianity brought, especially in the realm of music. Scholars generally agree that Christianity “resulted in a total transformation among the Nagas in the area of education, health, style, and interaction with other communities and more importantly in their religious thinking.”

Substantial research on the exact ways in which Christianity transformed Naga culture, citing specific customs and practices that were ended and new ones that were introduced is available. Downs explains how “the Baptist and Presbyterian missionaries of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not give high priority to the preservation of the tribal cultures” because they saw many of those cultural practices as religious and incompatible with the new faith. They forbade Christian converts from participating in practices perceived as sinful, pagan “or not compatible with Christian living, such as indigenous dances, songs, festivals and drinks.”

---

63 Peseye, 63.


65 Downs, 388.

66 Thong, 600.
example, the drinking of rice-beer which was a staple food was forbidden and replaced with tea.\textsuperscript{67}

The most significant social and culture change brought by Christianity was the prohibition of Naga songs, dances, and festivals all of which were considered evil. Peseye critiques this unilateral banning of Naga musical life arguing that the missionaries did not have “an in-depth understanding of several of the tribal customs.”\textsuperscript{68} Many Nagas recognize that “with the coming of Christianity, the changes that the Naga culture underwent were in most cases for the better.”\textsuperscript{69} However, any gratitude Nagas may feel towards Christianity is tainted by deep sorrow at the loss of much of their traditional culture. Western hymns and Christian holidays supplanted Naga tribal songs, dance and festivals because the later “seemed to the missionaries as devilish and animistic.”\textsuperscript{70} Naga folk music was considered dangerous because it was perceived to encourage “enmity, war and was associated with spirit worship.”\textsuperscript{71} It is recorded that early Naga Christians had difficulty “separating the association of their songs from their pagan practices.”\textsuperscript{72} Moreover, many Nagas today believe early Christians rejected Naga traditional music because it reminded them of old practices and tempted them to lose their faith. In fear of this back sliding and syncretism “Naga Christians were taught to express their faith musically in the Western idiom while, at the same time, holding suspect or even despising their own folk

\begin{itemize}
  \item[67] Takatemjen, 15
  \item[68] Peseye, 150
  \item[69] Peseye, 56
  \item[70] Jamir, 17
  \item[71] Ibid, 35
  \item[72] Peseye, 151
\end{itemize}
idiom.” The missionary couple the Supplees lived in Kohima among the Angami and taught choir singing, translated hymns, and even formed a Naga student band.

This historic unilaterally banning of Naga music has a few exceptions. Scholars document the few instances in which Naga folk music was used in evangelism. A. Temjen Jamir gives excellent documentation of the first use of a Christian Naga folk song in 1871. Dr. Clark and Godhula worked with village elders to set Christian lyrics and the Lord’s prayer to Naga folk tunes. Angami missionaries also composed songs patterned after folk style. These Naga folk inspired songs were “received with mixed feelings as the nationals expressed the view that these types of songs reminded them of their former life.” Peseye suggests that the missionaries may have also discontinued use of these songs because they noticed undesirable results “such as inciting war, immorality, and creating enmity.” Further research is needed to understand the true extent to which these songs were used as well as the reasons why they were discontinued. More evidence indicates that from the early years missionaries, “translated those English hymns into different Naga languages and introduced them to the Christians of the church.”

From this beginning the replacement of Naga music with Western was aided by several factors. First, the Nagas were particularly adept at singing Western music because of similarities between Western and Naga intervals and harmony as well as the shared importance of group singing. Peseye describes how these similarities allowed Nagas to “adapt to the singing of

---

73 Peseye, 5
74 Jamir, 38
75 Peseye, 153.
76 Ibid., 152.
77 Jamir, 35.
Western songs without much difficulty.” Nagas also appreciated the variety in Western tunes and Christian holidays became a comparable substitute for Naga traditional festivals and rituals. The Nagas came to regard Western hymns “as vital and natural expressions of the Christian faith.” Still to this day the hymns and Gospel songs sung in Naga churches “are either direct translations or transliterations of their Western counterparts.”

While these musical similarities and the teachings of Western missionaries explain why Naga music was replaced with Western music at the time of conversion, the dismantling of the *morung* and the establishing of the Western educational institutions explains the high degree to which Western music has supplanted Naga music today. Takatemjan explains that “the *morung* was the Naga traditional institution of learning and the seat of Naga culture.” The *morung* was a bachelor’s dormitory which served as “a guard-house, recreation club, center of education, art and discipline and held important ceremonial functions in the Naga society.” The *morung* had a vital socio-cultural role, especially in the transmission of Naga folk music and dances. However, “with the opening of mission schools, Christian boys refused to sleep in the *morung* in order to study.” As Western education and Christianity spread, the *morung* began to deteriorate and the customary method of passing on traditional songs and dances was ended. The lack of a Christian substitute for the *morung* is critiqued as one of the missionaries’ greatest failures and a direct cause of the disappearance of Naga culture today.

---

78 Peseye, 154.
79 Ibid., 68.
80 Ibid.
81 Takatemjen, 2.
82 Alemchiba, 4
83 Takatemjen, 12
Lastly, it is the suppression and lack of incorporation of Naga traditional music in Christian worship that most hinders Christianity from fully functioning as a constructive socio-cultural force and expression of Naga identity. Naga folk or traditional music “guided and controlled the life and actions of the people and preserved their cultural identity and values.” Temjen explains how Naga “folk songs played a vital role to express and maintain peace and friendship among the people in the society.” Christian hymns and gospel songs were successfully adopted but they failed to replace “the traditional music which was a natural expression related to real life experiences.” By opposing the use of Naga folk music and introducing a foreign musical idiom, the missionaries communicated that Christianity itself was foreign and unrelated to Nagas’ daily life. The Nagas’ conversion to Christianity in turn became an imitation of this foreign Western culture rather than an expression of their own. Many Nagas today fear that if they “forget their own native music, then they have lost their own Naga identity even in their own land.”

In recent years, however, this has all begun to change. Joshi documents how “in the last two decades there has been a definite revival and partly creation of what people have come to identify as Naga culture.” Dances, songs, and festivals that were once considered pagan and “discouraged by the Christian missionaries, have been revived as part of the assertion of Naga ethnic identity- a process which can be directly linked to the Naga nationalist movement for

---

84 Jamir, 11.
85 Ibid., 14.
86 Takatemjen, 17.
87 Jamir, 46.
88 Joshi, 4.
separation from India.”89 Throughout Nagaland, annual festivals flourish as “a way of expressing community cohesion and cultural distinctiveness by a group of people from different villages, who may once have warred against each other but now see themselves as (mostly Christian) members of a single group.”90 This cultural revival can be seen as a political act as Nagas “look to the past to strengthen Naga identity and subject positions in world politics, particularly through music.”91

This revival of Naga culture has spread to the Christian church, but the incorporation of Naga culture and music in Christian worship is still highly debated. Naga traditional attire, decorative motifs, and dances have been incorporated by some tribes into Christian celebrations. For example, wearing traditional dress and performing traditional dances, “an integral part of Naga and Angami identity – were now an essential part of large church functions.”92 While dancing was previously prohibited, now some see dancing as “a healthy and harmless recreation which promotes unity and brotherhood.”93 As Nagas have studied the scriptures themselves they recognize that “all the old practices and cultural values were not necessarily to be considered as evil thing[s], for there were many good things, which could be preserved and practiced.”94 Some hope to have a similar cultural revival as that which occurred among the Garos where,

89 Joshi, 4.
90 Ibid., 117
91 Toy, 3
92 Joshi, 218
93 Zhimo, “Culture, Identity and Change,” 46
94 Jamir, 38
Christianity “the very religion which has been blamed for the disappearance of traditional music” is responsible for reviving interest.95

Indeed, Naga folk music has been incorporated into Christian worship in several ways. For special events of the Sümi tribe, traditional songs have been rewritten. “Lyrics appeasing evil spirits have been omitted and replaced by words befitting the occasion.”96 The recent charismatic movement “use songs in both Western and traditional styles written by their own members.”97 Two Western trained Naga composers, Kughaho Chishi and James Swu, incorporate Naga musical elements into their composition. Peseye analyzed their music identifying imitative entries, yells and shouts, vocables, parallel 4ths and 5ths, and accelerated tempo as Naga components of their music. Furthermore, Saemmeren and Limasungba, Ao composers published a book of Christian folk songs in 1985. Neiwehi, a Chakesang composer collected ten Christian folk songs on cassette. Finally, Rev. Takisüngba Ao composed four Christian folk songs. Though their numbers are few and their repertoire limited, these composers represent the efforts of Nagas to incorporate their folk music into Christian worship. The problem is that even these few folk inspired songs which are available “are not properly used in the church.”98 If they are used at all it is only for special occasions or as the special music in a Sunday service.

Two potential causes exist for this lack of incorporation. First, many Nagas still believe that all “western music is Christian.”99 Some distrust or even dislike Naga folk music and claim

95 Thomas, 81
97 Peseye, 169.
98 Jamir, 1.
99 Peseye, 150.
that it is not right or clean “to be used by the Christians in the church.” This engrained attitude hinders regular incorporation of Naga folk music into the church. The second and more significant reason Naga folk music is not used in Christian worship is the overwhelming preference for Western hymns, gospel songs, and more recently praise and worship music. Peseye explained this overwhelming partiality saying, “if one should ask today what is the heart music of the Nagas, the first response would probably be hymns and Gospel songs, next would be praise and worship songs.” Vibha Joshi states that “hymns are sung in regular Sunday services in all churches.” Though indigenous Naga leaders now determine the worship practices of their churches, they maintained the foreign forms, “imposing them on new generations with little regard for the fact that the forms they impose convey very different meanings to the new generation.” The youth can be seen to have responded to this by appropriating praise and worship songs for their services. Zhimo, Peseye, Toy, and Temjen all document the use of Hillsong and other praise and worship tunes played on guitars in rock style with lyrics projected on a screen. They link these practices with youth services and rallies. The preference for praise and worship songs over traditional music is not only the latent impact of Western missionaries but also indicative of “the influence of modern western and Indian music” in Nagaland.

100 Jamir, 2.
101 Peseye, 158.
102 Joshi, 208.
104 Thomas, 81.
Sentienla Toy analyzes the influence of traditional and modern Western music arguing that Naga folk music has declined because Western perception and production of music has become so engrained that Naga traditional music is no longer experienced in the same way, and Nagas are unable to perform it with the same rhythmic nuance and feel as before. While his argument is not supported by any musicological analysis, it is collaborated by Peseye’s observation that it is “difficult for the nationals to sing their indigenous tunes.”\textsuperscript{105} She recognizes that at this point, Nagas are unfamiliar with their own folk music and will need to relearn it in order to incorporate it into the church.

Despite these challenges several Naga scholars have written urging Nagas to further incorporate Naga folk music into Christian worship. Vivee Peseye advocates for the composition of indigenous worship songs because she believes they communicate more effectively, reinforce cultural integrity, are culturally satisfying and the natural outcome of believers who are growing in their faith, and finally because they enhance evangelistic work. Temjen states that “people can sing and enjoy more meaningfully their folk tune rather than the Western style of music.”\textsuperscript{106} Takatemjen believes Christian versions of Naga dances and songs should be created “so that Christ may be more meaningfully expressed in the culture of the people.”\textsuperscript{107} He urges Naga Christians to stop imitating the Western world so they may know they are “following not a foreigner’s religion but a religion that is rooted in one’s own culture.”\textsuperscript{108} However, whether the opinions of these three authors truly represents those of the general Naga population is unclear. The only substantial indicator of a more widespread desire to incorporate indigenous music is “a

\textsuperscript{105} Peseye, 191.
\textsuperscript{106} Jamir, 45.
\textsuperscript{107} Takatemjen, 18.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 24.
resolution that was passed in March of 1984 “at a meeting of the Kohima Town Baptist Pastors Fellowship to encourage the use of tribal tunes in Christian worship.”\textsuperscript{109}

Christian music and worship practices are highly contested in Nagaland. Christianity and Naga folk music, both of which have become expressions of Naga identity, are often in conflict with one another. This is further complicated by the influence of global media and the lack of established channels for transmitting Naga traditional culture and music. Temjen summarizes that “most Christians think that Western music is the right and essential music, since it has been used for many years. On the other hand, many people have started thinking and opined that the Western music is too shallow and not meaningful at all, only the tune is nice to hear, because it is not their own cultural music and it is foreign to them culturally.”\textsuperscript{110} Though many youth are incorporating rock music into the church some Christians consider it “unclean.”\textsuperscript{111} Scholars document many conflicting opinions but the opinions of the general populous are not known. Incorporation of Naga folk music in Christian worship may indeed allow Nagas to feel they are “following not a foreigner’s religion but a religion that is rooted in one’s own culture.”\textsuperscript{112} It may also resolve some of the tension between both a Naga and Christian identity allowing Christianity to act more effectively as a positive social, cultural, and political force relevant to Nagas’ daily experience. However, it also may not. The complexities of this context, the true relevance and actual practice of traditional culture and its interaction with current global media are currently not understood. The data these authors pulled from is already outdated, and the

\textsuperscript{109} Peseye, 178.
\textsuperscript{110} Jamir, 41.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{112} Takatemjen, 24.
current incorporation of indigenous music in Christian worship is unknown. Further musical analysis is needed to identify musical components that communicate pan-Naga identity as well as understand the meaning and significance of folk music to Nagas today.

To conclude, more research is needed on Christian music in Nagaland because little scholarly study has been done in the region. Since Christian music is such a highly contested and significant social, political, and cultural force in Nagaland, the rigorous academic study of this genre should be extremely helpful as the Naga people make decisions about their future worship styles and the influence of their traditional music.

Theoretical Position

Several theories developed by ethnomusicologists relate to the incorporation of indigenous music in Christian worship in Nagaland. Martin Stokes theories on the construction of identity and the nation-state through music apply to Nagaland. Stokes’ dominant theory is that “music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them.”113 People use music not only to express a preexisting identity but to construct a new one and contest identities that have been placed on them. Nagas do this through both Christian music and Naga folk music. While Naga folk music is highly valued and evokes collective memories for the Naga people, it is also linguistically and stylistically diverse. Naga folk music therefore failed to become a unifying idiom in the nationalist struggle, instead Western hymns and gospel songs were appropriated for this purpose. This is an excellent example of how “musical styles can be made

emblematic of national identities in complex and often contradictory ways.” The inherent contradiction in using a foreign music to construct Naga identity was manageable for a time but has begun to demand a resolution today.

Music in Nagaland is also “used by social actors in specific local situations to erect boundaries, to maintain distinctions between us and them.” The most significant boundary can be found between mainland Indians or plains people and Nagas. Naga folk music and Christian music are “convenient and morally appropriate ways of asserting defiant difference.” The Nagas used Christian music to group together and differentiate themselves from their Indian oppressors. This differentiation became an important argument in support of Naga autonomy. The question remains, however, whether Nagas will desire to make the same distinction with their own folk music when it is generally characterized as simple and an oddity. Music and ethnicity “can never be understood outside the wider power relations in which they are embedded,” therefore consideration and understanding of the social and political power struggle of the Nagas is essential to any research on their musical life.

Lastly, Stokes defends the use of music in the construction of place, both socially and geographically. He argues that the musical event “evokes and organizes collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power and simplicity unmatched by any other social activity.” Naga musical expression ties Nagas to this land where their forefathers have lived for generation upon generation. It also distinguishes this land from the rest of India. In

114 Stokes, 13.
115 Ibid., 6.
116 Ibid, 12.
117 Ibid., 7.
118 Ibid., 3.
some ways Naga identity is dependent on opposition to Indian identity and this can be seen in their resistance to influence from Indian music. Stokes’ theory that “‘places’ constructed through music involve notions of difference and social boundary” can be seen in the music of Nagaland. However, further research is needed to verify these hypotheses.

Carol Babiracki and Richard Kent Wolf are two of the leading scholars in ethnomusicology research on “little” traditions in South Asia. Babiracki analyzes the sastriya-lok, great-little taxonomy of music in India. Satriya sangrit is the cultivated music of classical Hindustani and Carnatic traditions. Lok sangrit refers to folk music, including tribal, devotional and countryside music. This Indian dichotomy was reinforced by the Western classical-folk division and the work of British scholars. Babiracki strongly critiques the current research on these musical traditions for their lack of musicological analysis and ethnocentrism. Today, “musical sound and text/context are still analyzed quite apart from each other and with models derived from different scholarly traditions.” Babiracki and Wolf both urge for improved methodology and greater priority given to little traditions of South Asia.

Babiracki and Wolf’s work focuses on the idea of the tribe and the applicability of this term in India. Babiracki explains the current controversy with his statement that “the word ‘tribe’ was first applied in India by the early British administrators to ethnic groups who were geographically and socioculturally isolated from the mainstream of Indian society. Since then, determining the similarities and differences between tribes and nontribal peasant castes has been a major issue among anthropologists studying village communities in India.” In India today,

---

119 Stokes, 3.
121 Ibid., 72.
tribe is associated with aboriginal claims to the land and tribal peoples are viewed as “exotic, mystical and supernaturally powerful.” Furthermore, tribal peoples are often given special political status or exemption, therefore “a tribe’s perception of itself as a separate social unit and its cultural self-sufficiency remain important” to keeping that special status. Despite this, the term “tribe” remains indefinite and has become almost interchangeable with folk or village in Indian parlance. Because of this ambiguity Babiracki poses the question, “in what sense is it valid to speak of tribal music as a category of Indian music distinct from other village musical traditions?”

Wolf and Babiracki give several reasons for their “yes” answer. First, though the view is popular, tribal, folk, or regional music is not simply an unevolved or undeveloped form of the Indian classical traditions. Wolf critiques the view that “the little is a local variant, a version of what is found in the great tradition” saying “many musical traditions of South Asia cannot be placed in these boxes.” Babiracki confirms this conclusion saying, “indigenous tribal musics do not stylistically resemble the classical traditions, and their song texts, when in tribal languages, show little or no content related to the great tradition, whether it be Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist.” The music of Nagaland would most likely continue to affirm a separate development for these musics especially since their interactions with Indian music began only in the last few hundred years.

122 Wolf, 16.
123 Babiracki, 73.
124 Ibid., 72.
125 Wolf, 13.
126 Babiracki, 76.
Babiracki and Wolf further support a concept of tribal music as distinct from folk or regional music by identifying key similarities among tribal music across India. “Regional folk musics tend to unite diverse populations over a large geographic area, while indigenous tribal musics are confined to one linguistic and cultural group.”127 The linguistic and musical diversity of the Naga tribes affirms this separation. Though further analysis is needed, Naga music also seems to use parallel harmonies and bitonality in responsorial singing like many tribes throughout India.128 Babiracki also lists lack of articulate doctrine, oral transmission, collective performance, connections to agricultural and seasonal rituals and festivals, the functional nature, timeless quality, and undocumented history as similarities of tribal music in South Asia. In his study of the Kota, Wolf isolated asymmetrical rhythmic divisions and the slight offbeat or out of phrase quality of the melody and drum rhythm as possible ubiquitous features of tribal music in South Asia. Further analysis of Naga music is needed to determine whether or not these similarities are true of them or if their music defends the separate grouping their geographic position suggests. This need for further research is well recognized by scholars. Babiracki laments how “the study of India’s tribal musics by Western scholars has been limited in the last twenty years or so by restrictions imposed by the government on their movements in tribal villages, particularly in border regions and politically unstable areas.”129 Most of these restrictions have now been lifted and the opportunity is ripe for ethnomusicologists to explore not only the music of Nagaland but the many marginalized musics throughout South Asia.

127 Babiracki, 75.

128 Ibid., 76.

129 Ibid., 83.
Zoe C. Sherinian articulates a convincing argument for advocate ethnomusicology of these marginalized musical traditions in South Asia. Like Babiracki and Wolf she critiques the Indian musical hierarchy which values classical concert music over folk, devotional, and even popular Bollywood music because they “consider the classical practices more complex, virtuosic, meaningful, and literally cleaner (or purer) than these other genres.”

It is not only Indian scholars but also Western academia that has reinforced, perpetuated, and codified this value hierarchy because of “research and teaching choices of ethnomusicologists, including the standard material in world music textbooks.” Sherinian advocates for bringing “the music of lower caste, outcaste, poor, tribal, and rural people to the center of academic inquiry.”

This musical advocacy will inevitably be involved in the power relations that define India today. Sherinian argues that the politically prominent Hindu fundamentalists are in actuality “more concerned about defending and promoting a unified Indian culture than the religion of Hinduism.” Cultural nationalists recognize diversity within India but “that there is a fundamental cultural unity that cannot be found in the day-to-day practices of the people because those practices have been corrupted by many influences (often constructed as foreign, Muslim or Christian).” This perspective tries to remove corrupting influences from cultural practices in order to preserve the “pure” original form. This philosophy is generally adopted by the current

---


131 Ibid., 354.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid, 356

134 Ibid, 356-357
majority political party in India, the BJP and the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as well as by much of the general ethnically Indian populace. It has had significant impact on the continued use of Naga traditional and folk music as well as Naga Christian music. For example, the North East Zone Cultural Center, located in Dimapur, Nagaland is a branch of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and therefore is influenced by the prevailing cultural philosophy of the majority party. Even, the Department of Tourism in the Government of Nagaland must capitulate in some way to this philosophy in order to attract Indian tourists. Further research is needed to understand if and how these cultural political forces have led to a marginalization of Naga Christian music and impacted the preservation of folk or tribal traditions through government sponsored competitions and festivals. Music’s relationship to these cultural and political dynamics necessitates an activist ethnomusicology that confronts “the local sociopolitical identity of musical style, as well as the contributions of colonial dynamics and scholarship to the construction or reification of these hierarchies.”

All these various forces come to play in Nagaland and the need to support Nagas against Indian cultural and political hegemony can be filled by ethnomusicologists who advocate for and support their music through research.

Conclusion

Further ethnomusicology research in Nagaland is definitely needed. The current research is both limited and occasionally biased. While reputable research of Naga Christian music exists more is needed because conversion to Christianity though a constructive and self-determined response to socio-cultural trauma brought significant socio-cultural changes to Nagaland, especially in their musical life. Tension exists between the Naga’s use of both Christianity and

---

135 Sherinian, 357

---
their folk music to construct Naga identity and difference from the Indian majority. Today, a large group of Nagas encourage the incorporation of Naga folk music in Christian worship, but the exact reasons for this and the extent to which it occurs is unknown. This research seeks to further understand the complex social, cultural, and political context of Nagaland and the incorporation of indigenous music in Christian worship in relationship to it.
Chapter 3
Methodology

Descriptions of Research Tools

This research was conducted through ethnography. This primarily included participant-observation of church services, cultural events, and daily life as well as individual and group interviews. Some musical analysis occurred during events or interviews and a questionnaire was utilized at one cultural event. Ethnography was used because the characteristics, parameters, and outcomes of process, problem, context, and phenomenon of indigenous influence on Naga Christian worship songs is unclear, unknown, or unexplored, but the community can be geosocially bounded. Ethnography helped in fully understanding this phenomenon, the process of its creation, and the potential and real contexts for its use. Ethnographic research methods operate under the premise “music is a system of sound communication with a social use and a cultural context.” Therefore, ethnography “the description and interpretation of a culture or social group” was used to study people’s actions, interactions, and accounts in everyday contexts or their natural setting in contrast to those set up for research purposes. While using this method, data collection was unstructured and the number of participants small “to facilitate in-depth study.” This study seeks to understand how Christian worship music relates to the sociocultural context of Nagaland. As is typical of ethnography, I lived with and among Nagas for a

---


138 Bloor and Wood, 69.

year to become “acquainted with the participants, understand the dynamics of their interaction, understand how they relate to the physical and material environment, and how to elicit the meanings, goals, and objectives that may be important to the participants.”

I lived in faculty housing at Patkai Christian College Autonomous and served as a voice instructor and music lecturer in the Margaret Shishak School of Music from August 2016 to May of 2017. I traveled to Dimapur and Kohima and stayed in Naga homes.

Ethnography fundamentally relies on good fieldwork relationships because “establishing a good rapport with one’s research subjects has an effect on what one is told and allowed to observe.” This research involved building relationships with Nagas in order to understand their perspectives on Christian worship music. Field relationships may be impacted by “the researcher’s age, ethnicity and educational and professional background, but also more subtle influences such as the use of vocabulary or regional accents.” My own white ethnicity, American nationality, female gender, faculty status and relatively young age all impact the data I was able to collect. I was sensitive to these issues while conducting research and sought to mitigate their impact on the authenticity of the data. However, the following examples illustrate a few ways in which the research was potentially affected.

First, my physical appearance as a tall white woman causes me to stick out in Naga church services. While occasionally I was able to mitigate this by sitting towards the back of the church during a service, the majority of the time when I attended services I was scheduled to sing or speak during the service and was therefore seated with the other service participants in the

---

140 LeCompte and Schensul, 117
141 Bloor and Wood, 71
142 Ibid, 86
front of the church. This sometimes made note taking more conspicuous or flat out impossible in order to be polite. On these occasions I would rely on quick notes or recordings immediately after the service concluded or as soon as I was able to get a moment to myself. I will never know for certain in what ways my presence impacted the service overall but based on appearances the services ran like normal despite my presence.

A significant example of my faculty status impacting research occurred at the ICFAI Culture Day event in which some student volunteers helped me conduct a questionnaire on participant and attendees impressions of the event and of folk songs and dances in general. My experience of the event was directly impacted by my faculty status. Upon arrival I was given a tour along with the Dean of the Margaret Shishak School of Music, Vivee Peseye who also attended the event. We were seated in comfortable chairs at the front of the performance area which again impacted my ability to take notes. I was escorted to a conference room for refreshments after the performances concluded and had to rely almost completely on the student volunteers to conduct the questionnaire, though I was able to conduct a few questionnaires after courteously enjoying the refreshments. I also remember feeling distinctly American at this event because I realized upon arrival I had dressed inappropriately. It was a hot day so I wore a Liberty polo and khaki shorts and carried a backpack of recording equipment, questionnaires and other research supplies. Thinking back I realize my attitude was very much to be there as a researcher but in reality my faculty position took much higher prominence. Furthermore, in general I learned through experiences like this that some element of cultural appropriation was not only considered appropriate but expected when I attended such events. Vivee wore her usual long skirt and top accompanied by Naga jewelry, some of which she gave me to wear as well. In the future when I attended Naga cultural events I always wore some of the Naga jewelry, scarves or
skirts I had been given. I was also conscientious to wear more professional attire whenever expected to serve in a faculty role.

I believe my young age rarely impacted my research. My general appearance, particularly my height, and my faculty position led many to assume I was much older than I was. Though many of my students were aware of my age and perhaps this helped me develop better rapport with them despite my faculty status. Similarly, my gender probably impacted my work very little. I experienced no difference in my treatment in comparison to the men around me. While I was sensitive to meet with male informants in appropriate public, or semi-public areas such as a restaurant or living areas in a home, I perceived my gender had very little impact on the study.

The only other impact my particular identity and position had upon the work was its control over the contacts and connections I made. The only informants I was directly acquainted with were James Swu, a fellow Music faculty member, Vivee Peseye, the Dean of the School of Music and Rev. Vichukho Ngukha, the campus chaplain and his wife, Banuo. I relied on these acquaintances as well as my flat mates, friends and students for introductions to all other informants. The majority of the time, these introductions had a positive impact on the study. The individual making the introduction would accurately and positively describe me to the informant opening the door for a respectful and authentic relationship. There was however one instance in which the introduction did not benefit the study and obviously impacted the subsequent interview in negative ways. I had asked the friend introducing me to mention that the informant would have to sign a consent form. Somehow in my explanation of the form to my friend or the individual’s communication of the form to the informant, the informant gained a very inaccurate understanding of the form and was incredibly wary of me personally as well as the study. This friend was also present when I conducted the interview and held significant sway over the
discussion. This so compromised my ability to accurately record the interview and the content of the interview itself that much of the resulting content had to be discarded. I am fortunate however, that a separate individual was able to tell this informant about me bolstering a positive relationship. I was able to interview the informant again, this time privately. One on one the informant was very forth coming and provided lots of accurate and incredibly valuable information.

This ethnographic research is both realist believing “that there is a reality independent of the researcher, and the researcher’s aim is to come to know and produce accounts that reflect that one reality,” as well as relative because it is produced through selective observations and interpretations of a social context in which I am part of constructing. A balance between these two perspectives requires assessing the plausibility and credibility of competing claims acknowledging that “there can be multiple and non-contradictory descriptions of the same phenomena.” Therefore, this research will take a reflexive approach relying on the human capacity for participant observation: “We act in the social world and yet are able to reflect upon ourselves and our actions as objects in that world.” Hammersley explains that “the fact that as researchers we are likely to have an effect on the people we study does not mean that the validity of our findings is restricted to the data elicitation situations on which we relied.” Rather this influence can be exploited to reveal a greater understanding about the context and the people in it. Reflexivity is “an awareness of the self in the situation of action and of the role of the self in

143 Bloor and Wood, 74
144 Ibid.
145 Hammersley, 18.
146 Ibid., 16.
constructing that situation,”147 and it will characterize this entire study. As aforementioned, I tried to be sensitive to my impact on the church services I participated in or attended. I also used reflexivity to consider my impact on interviews with students in which my own personal views were known by the informant because they had received instruction in my classes.

Research was conducted through interviews with key informants, “those research subjects in ethnographic studies who have a disproportionate weight and role in the conduct and outcome of the research.”148 In this study key informants will be composers, church leaders and lay musicians who are “knowledgeable about their own culture, experts in specific areas of their culture, and able to explain the ways of their culture to outsiders.”149 These individuals will also be partners to assist in data collection and interpretation of results. Informants primarily assisted in data collection by providing musical scores, lyrics, lyric translations, and audio recordings when possible. While the majority of interviews were conducted in English, there were a few instances where I relied on the assistance of a translator. I assume that the individuals who assisted in translation did in some way impact the results of the interview through their translating by interpreting both my questions or requests and the informants responses.

This research relied on musical analysis and interviews to understand what musical sounds have been attributed “Naga” identity. Regula Qureshi proposes that there “are generalized systems of sound communication which are used throughout a “musical area,” often transcending linguistic, regional, religious or ethnic boundaries.”150 This research sought to

---

147 Bloor and Wood, 145.
149 Ibid.
150 Qureshi, 66.
isolate some of the sounds that are identified as Naga, some of which transcend tribal boundaries and divisions and some which are bound by tribal groups. My own interpretation as well as the analysis of informants was used to reveal this data.

Finally, this research had an advocatory role simply because it is occurring and I, a foreign music teacher, am conducting it. In the social, political, and cultural context of South Asia where Hindustani and Carnatic musical traditions reign supreme any study of marginalized music becomes advocate ethnomusicology. Sherinian proposes that “studying the people and meaning behind the marginalized music necessitates a participant-activist methodology, not only in fieldwork, but in teaching content and academic/community programming.” 151 My role as a foreigner in Nagaland automatically places me in a position of influence, whereby musicians and composers were encouraged simply by my desire to learn about their music. Furthermore, as a professor teaching courses in world music and ethnomusicology I was able to communicate the value of all musical styles despite the school’s primary focus on Western art music. Ethnomusicologists legitimize “the study of all music (not just Western art music) simply through our presence in the classroom and committee room every day, transmitting and representing our discipline.” 152 Though my research was not participatory-action research, my role and title in this context allowed it to advocate for a marginalized South Asian music.


152 Ibid.
Participants in the Study

I conducted ethnography while attending services and events at churches in Dimapur and Kohima as well as on the campus of Patkai Christian College (Autonomous) Seithekema-Chumukedima. The organizations included are the Western Sümi Baptist Church, Ao Baptist Church, Angami Baptist Church, Rengma Baptist Church, Lotha Baptist Church and Christian Revival Church. The Naga tribes primarily represented are Sümi, Ao, Lotha, Angami, and Rengma. I conducted personal interviews with the following individuals; Nchemo Mozhui, Nzang Odyuo, Avoni Odyuo, Jongshimanen, Talimeren, Razhukhrielie Kevichüsa, Niekemhiezo Yhor, D. S. Zhasa, Kechakoulie, Rokoseno Zhasa, Vilhoubeizo Kire, James Swu, Hojevi Cappo, Gedion Thono, Vivee Peseye, Rev. Dr. N. Paphino, Vikiho Sumi, Vini. K. Chishi, Rev. Vichukho Ngukha and Banuo Ngukha. Abigail Odyuo, Rokoseno Zhasa and Tensinle Lorin assisted in translation.

Methods for Data Collection

Data was collected through observation, participation, interviews, audio-visual recording, transcription, and a questionnaire. First, I observed Christian worship services and gatherings particularly documenting the songs that are used and their classification. I also observed the interactions between individuals who participate in these services and gatherings, including the congregation, musicians, and leaders. In my observations I paid special attention to dialogue and behaviors that indicate “the meanings of these events at the time for study group participants.”\(^{153}\)

Second, data was collected through participation. This research seeks to understand Naga Christian worship songs by gaining “knowledge of people through agreement and lived

\(^{153}\) LeCompte and Schensul, 179.
experience, the analysis of which proceeds through interpretation of shared musical processes.\textsuperscript{154} I learned songs regularly sung by Naga churches to share in this musical process. Ethnomusicologists overwhelmingly agree that “learning to perform and play music is a basic field technique.”\textsuperscript{155} This method of data collection is highly profitable because “participation leads to improved opportunities to observe.”\textsuperscript{156} As a Christian I was able to participate in Christian worship gatherings, especially since many of those gatherings used western hymns and contemporary worship music, idioms which I am familiar with during the service. It was easy to participate in the entire service if it was conducted in English. During the gatherings in other languages, I still participated but had a more observatory role. First, I participated in the service by singing and listening as a congregation member. Translated western hymns were often used in church services and I was able to learn basic pronunciation in the Ao and Lotha languages to sing along with these hymns. Second, I was able to participate in the services by singing a song for special music. I always sang in English but would explain the words of a song through a translator if the service was conducted in a Naga language. Third, I was able to participate in the worship services as a speaker. I was asked to share a message from the Bible at several youth services and one Christmas celebration.

While most of my participation was in church services and musically in the western idiom, I did have the opportunity to learn a few songs composed by Nagas in one-on-one or group interviews. This included hymns composed by Nagas, choral arrangements, and revival songs. Despite the fact that this learning and participation occurred very informally I gained a

\textsuperscript{154} Sherinian, 349.


\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., 96.
greater understanding of melodic, rhythmic and stylistic elements unique to Naga compositions. In learning to perform the music, I also became aware of social norms in the Naga idiom. Finally, participating in the music further enhanced my role as advocate, because I, a western classically trained musician, demonstrated a deep respect for Naga music and musicians by learning their songs. I also advocated for the music by sharing Youtube recordings of Naga compositions via social media after leaving the field.

The third method I used for gathering data is ethnographic interviews. Ethnographic interviews elicit “research data through the questioning of respondents.”157 They are excellent for gathering “in-depth information on selected topics, personal histories, cultural knowledge and beliefs, description of practices” and feedback on transcriptions.158 Ethnographic interviews are fitting for this study because they “have a more informal, conversational character, being shaped partly by the interviewer’s pre-existing topic guide and partly by concerns that are emergent in the interview.”159 I conducted interviews with the composers, musicians, and participants in Christian worship gatherings and participants in cultural events. I also identified and interviewed those individuals who are influential in selecting the music for these gatherings. Ethnographers usually approach interviews with a list of topics or issues to be discussed rather than deciding “beforehand the exact questions they want to ask.”160 Moreover, when they do use questions they are usually non-directive and relatively open-ended “rather than requiring the interviewee to provide a specific piece of information or, at the extreme, simply to reply ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ ”161

157 Bloor and Wood, 104.
158 Lecompte and Schensul, 179.
159 Bloor and Wood, 104.
160 Hammersley, 117.
161 Ibid., 118.
utilized these techniques in my interviews. During this study I also used transcriptions and audio recordings of songs as elicitation materials during interviews to evoke precise responses about which aspects of the music are identified as “Naga.” During interviews I tried to empathize and encourage by regularly repeating what the informant has said, expressing interest and ignorance and by allowing “the informant to expand on what he or she is saying.”\textsuperscript{162} Lastly, interviews occurred one-on-one and in groups. Group interviews are advantageous because they may be less threatening and encourage interviewees to be more forthcoming and they allow me to collect data from multiple people simultaneously. For example, during an interview with a married couple they worked together to remember details and song titles as well as come up with accurate answers for questions. Similarly, a group of students I interviewed were able to aid each other in the correct pronunciation and spelling of Tenyidie words. Group interviews are risky, however, in that the group composition can drastically change the results. This was clear in one interview where the presence of one participant so restricted the answers and openness of the other participants that much of the resulting data had to be discarded. What most surprised me is that this individual had a less prominent position or status in comparison to the other informants. It was in fact entirely the personality of the participant that restricted the conversation. I learned from this experience and did not invite the individual to interview again. I also sought to be more aware of personality types when constructing groups for interviews.

The fourth method of data collection used was audio-visual recordings. These complemented my own field notes and jottings during events or interviews. Audio-visual recording is beneficial because it frees up the researcher from note-taking and improves reliability of data collection. Exact transcriptions of interviews were produced from recordings\textsuperscript{162} Bloor and Wood, 71.
and further musical analysis of musical recordings was possible upon return from the field. The use of technology did present some disadvantages such as, various ethical issues ensuring anonymity and the possibility of “respondents’ reluctance to speak freely while being recorded,” or that “equipment might distract or intimidate the respondent.”\footnote{163} It also was sometimes awkward or difficult to record at church services or cultural events without bringing unnecessary attention to myself or making audience members nearby uncomfortable. Despite these disadvantages audio and visual recording was used when consent was given to aid in data collection.

Lastly, I gathered data using a questionnaire. Using a survey instrument in an ethnographic study provides supplementary information in a rapid manner. The questionnaire is not a formal survey but rather “a search for meaning, and ambiguities of language and of interviewing, discrepancies between attitude and behavior, even problems of non-response, provide an important part of the data, rather than being ignored or simply regarded as obstacles to efficient research.”\footnote{164} No systematic method will be used to select respondents because “systematic sampling requires the existence of relatively clear boundaries around the population, and the availability of a full listing of its members,”\footnote{165} which I did not have access to. For this study, “the aim will often be to target the people who have the knowledge desired and who may be willing to divulge it to the ethnographer.”\footnote{166} The questionnaire allowed me to quickly gather data from a large group of people in a short amount of time.

\footnote{163} Bloor and Wood, 17-18.
\footnote{164} Hammersley, 16.
\footnote{165} Ibid., 106.
\footnote{166} Ibid.
Utilizing these multiple methods of data collection allowed me to confirm and cross-check the “accuracy of data collected from one source with data collected from other, different sources.”\textsuperscript{167} This “systematic comparison of findings on the same research topic generated by different research methods” is called triangulation.\textsuperscript{168} The use of multiple methods of data collection in this study is both additive “addressing different sub-topics” and interactive “the same sub-topic being approached from different angles.”\textsuperscript{169} Triangulation is valuable because different data collection techniques “may produce different and complementary rather than confirmatory information on the same topic.”\textsuperscript{170} For example, the taxonomy of Christian music in Nagaland was discovered through observation of participant dialogue as well as through direct interviews. “Naga” components of Christian music were identified through participation, interviews, and musical analysis. The incorporation of Naga music in Christian worship and the factors affecting it was discovered through observations, interviews, and a questionnaire. The questionnaire will complement the other ethnographic data collection methods by confirming or validating “ethnographically defined participant concepts and patterns,”\textsuperscript{171} and identifying factors contributing to the presence or absence of folk music in worship. Through these methods a comprehensive understanding and definitive answer to the research question was determined.

\textsuperscript{167} Hammersley, 180.
\textsuperscript{168} Bloor and Wood, 170.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid., 117.
\textsuperscript{170} LeCompte and Schensul, 180.
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid., 128.
Fieldwork Procedures

Fieldwork was conducted between August 2016 and May of 2017, with the majority of interviews being conducted between January and May. First, for collecting data through participant-observation I attended the Christian worship services on Patkai’s campus and those to which I was invited. I attended several churches throughout Dimapur and one in Kohima. I took audio recordings and photographs as much as possible without being conspicuous at these events. I also jotted down notes during the services, occasionally asking friends for explanations or translations of service elements. After the event, I set aside time to write more thorough field notes. I scheduled time to write up these field notes “as soon as possible after the events to which they refer” aiming for thick descriptions. When observing events the following components were included in my field notes: “the space or location observed, the objects that are co-present at the location, the actors, the activity observed, the component actions, the wider event in which the activities occur, the sequencing of activities over time, the goal that the actor is striving for, and the feelings expressed.” Brian Schragg offers great suggestions for questions to answer in field notes related to these categories. They are space, materials, participants, shape of the event through time, performance features, content and underlying symbolic systems. I also kept a research diary during my time as “a written record of the researcher’s activities, thoughts and feelings throughout the research process from design, through data collection and analysis to writing and presenting the study.” This diary is only for my private reference, but I hope it encouraged continuous reflexivity which added insight to my field notes later.

172 Bloor and Wood, 83.
173 Ibid., 82.
The second method of data collection, interviewing required the following tasks: identifying possible interviewees, arranging times to conduct an interview, getting consent and contact information from the interviewee, providing food, and asking follow up questions as necessary. I performed these tasks continuously throughout the spring semester. The majority of the time a personal acquaintance would schedule a time for me to interview the informant and make the appropriate introductions. When necessary this acquaintance performed translation as well, though the majority of interviewees spoke English. I provided food for the interviews, occasionally treating the informant to a meal out or providing a meal or snack if the interview occurred at my residence. If the interview was conducted in the informants residence, I would bring a small gift of chips, drinks or biscuits as is culturally expected when visiting someone. When conducting an interview at an informants residence they often provided food. I conducted 19 individual or group interviews with 20 individuals, sometimes interviewing the same person multiple times.

The third method of data collection was through music analysis of songs. This method of data collection was achieved in three different ways. First, music was analyzed through quick personal observations while it was performed at events and church services or when an informant would perform pieces of a composition, ranging from small snippets to entire songs during an interview. Second, music was analyzed by the composers themselves during personal interviews. In some instances I was able to ask specific questions about musical elements in an interview and receive detailed analysis from the composer. Interviewees however varied in their musical backgrounds and insights about the music of a piece. All interviewees provided translations and interpretations of the song texts. Third, music was analyzed after returning from Nagaland by

175 Bloor and Wood, 151.
listening to audio recordings collected and occasionally making transcriptions from the recordings. Musical analysis of songs is only included when audio recordings or transcriptions are available. Several composers gave me personal copies or published transcriptions of their music, a few provided audio recordings or directed me to professional recordings available online and finally I gathered some informal recordings of songs during interviews and events. My own personal musical analysis is very limited in this paper. I felt the breadth and depth of my exposure to Naga compositions and the audio recordings procured was too limited for any substantial generative analysis on or off the field. Any musical analysis that is included relies heavily on analysis of songs by the composer to corroborate my own observations. However, an appendix of song scores and texts is included and available for future study.

The last method of data collection used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was only used at a ICFAI University Nagaland Culture Day on March 7th, 2017. Student volunteers assisted in conducting the anonymous interviews with faculty, staff, students and members of the public that attended the event. 16 questionnaires were completed focusing on the respondents opinions and views of the events of the day, culture songs and dance, and their use in the church. The exact wording of these questions was developed with the help of Naga consultants in order to ensure construct validity, that the “meaning intended by the researcher and the meaning assumed by the respondent” are the same.176 While the questionnaire was anonymous, the demographic information of age was requested to confirm the generational divisions previously observed or reported. Finally, the questionnaire was only conducted in English, meaning all respondents were fairly well educated. Literacy did not affect the

---

176 LeCompte and Schensul, 100.
questionnaire as volunteers asked the questions verbally and wrote down the participants' answers.
Overview of Christian Worship in Nagaland

Several different styles of music are used in Naga church services. The most common by far is western hymns translated into Naga tribal languages. The younger generation and some mixed tribe churches use contemporary Christian worship. Lastly, choral music sung by church choirs or groups for special events in a variety of styles is used but most often southern gospel or classical. While the majority of the songs used in Christian services are western compositions, a few pioneering Naga composers have written music for the church in all three styles occasionally incorporating Naga traditional music into their pieces. The Nagas have also composed songs in a style unique to them. Spiritual songs are inspired by the Holy Spirit and gradually learned by a congregation. The original composer is rarely known. These songs are most common in the Revival Church denomination, and therefore are also often referred to as revival songs.

Hymn Singing

The Nagas have a deep love for the hymns and credit them as one of the reasons for the quick spread of the gospel among the Naga people. Nchemo Mozhui explains “we had only four notes but we suddenly started hearing songs with so many different notes…and they would sing in four parts, five parts, beautiful!”177 The hymns so enthralled the Nagas, “they started asking the Christians to teach them those songs that they were singing, that’s how the message of the

gospel you know the love of God spread.”\textsuperscript{178} The music was such an effective tool of evangelization among some tribes, “within a few decades the whole population became Christians.”\textsuperscript{179} Mozhui shares this story to explain how captivating the hymns were to the Naga.

In one village, an old man he went it was after the harvest, post-harvest, and the patty rice had to be brought home from the fields, far from fields, and he was coming with a heavy load of rice, and that time that Christianity had entered his village but very few and he was still a pagan, non-Christian, so as he was coming with heavy load, now when will I reach home, when will I reach home and un-burden myself but as he entered in one house he heard singing and the singing somewhat you know captivated him, so he stood there listen listen listen listen listen he stood for long time carrying heavy load, later on I don’t know how long he waited but later on when his legs you know couldn’t hold him any longer he went home. See the influence of music, the influence of hymns sung by the new converts taught of course by the missionaries.\textsuperscript{180}

Informants cite several reasons hymn singing was such an effective tool in the spread of Christianity among the Naga. First, the Naga have a “musical culture.”\textsuperscript{181} Music and specifically group singing had a very significant place in Naga life. In the Naga animistic religion, they didn’t worship evil spirits but paid them off or bribed them off “with chicken or with egg don’t come to disturb us,” but they also prayed to the god of heaven and the god of the land “for blessings, abundant rain, abundant sunshine, abundant crops, things like that” and all these things were “musically conveyed to the god of heaven and god of earth.”\textsuperscript{182} Furthermore, Naga singing

\textsuperscript{178} Mozhui.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
is almost “always community singing” so gathering together to sing hymns with parts was a “big interest” to the Naga people because they were already familiar and fond of group singing.183

Since their arrival, hymns have been an important part of Naga Christian worship. In some churches people will arrive well before the service begins and sing songs randomly from the hymn book together. Specific hymns are selected by the pastor or song leader to be sung during the Sunday morning service. A hymn may also be sung by a small group or an individual for special music during the church gathering. Hymns are also often sung before the Wednesday and Saturday evening prayer and bible study services.184 Kevichusa explained to me how the translated hymns have become part of our “upbringing.”185 Talimeren commented that growing up he “thought hymns were just the product of our own people” and only later did he learn they were translated from the American hymnals.186 A missionary named George Washington Supplee was instrumental in spreading the hymns by systemizing music education among the Angami. He taught students to read staff notation, sing the hymns and even formed a brass band. He taught the oldest generation of Nagas living today and their parents and since then the hymns have been passed on as part of the Naga heritage. Many Nagas believe the translated Christian hymns helped unify the Nagas or give voice to the unity that was already there. Kevichusa explained the diversity of the Naga tribes to me, emphasizing how there are not only several different languages but multiple dialects of each language. Moreover, the music and songs of the

183 Mozhui.
184 Talimeren, interview by author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 10th, 2017.
186 Talimeren.
tribes are all “quite different” but everyone began translating the church hymns and these became the one thing “that brings us somewhat together.”

The hymns are still a unifying force today in the ever changing multi-lingual Naga society. For example, at the Rengma Baptist Church in Kohima, both the Nzokhwe and Nthinyi dialects are used. Though they are the same language, Gedion estimated Rengma can generally only understand 70% of the dialect they don’t speak. The hymn book has translations of the same hymn in both dialects printed side by side. The song leader will alternate leading the hymn in one dialect and then the next in the other and individuals in the congregation will follow along in whatever dialect they choose. This is an example of how the hymns have become a vehicle by which urban church congregations can worship together despite linguistic diversity.

Most of the Naga tribes have translated the hymns into their tribal language. Mozhui shares of the Lotha tribe, “our hymns were collected from different sources like the redemption, sacred songs and solos and then the Sankey and so many other hymn books.” Vivee mentions, Sankey’s Sacred Songs and Solos as well as Alexander Hymns as sources for the translated hymns. Different people over the years would translate the hymns, most translations dating back to the 40s. Some of these early translations did not match the natural speech rhythm, or “twist of the tongue,” and would break up words into different phrases. Nzan Odyuo also commented that the hymn books have “mostly literal translation” but the translation “should be

187 Kevichusa.
188 Gedion Thono, Interview by author, Kohima, Nagaland, India, February 20th, 2017.
189 Mozhui.
190 Vivee Peseye, Interview by author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, January 28th, 2017.
191 Mozhui.
poetic…. We should not lose the theology of the song.”¹⁹² Some of the earlier translations did not consider “sing ability” and placed syllables with consonants rather than vowels under sustained pitches, “so it doesn’t sound good.”¹⁹³ For example, the phrase “it is well” in Lotha uses a nasal sound which is difficult to sing. Furthermore, the early hymn books often had no notation or only tonic sol-fa notation which was taught in the missions schools (Appendix 1.A).

Mozhui felt notation was needed because “the way we were singing was far from what actually the tune should be” especially the tempo. Mozhui joked that even in “a marching song our singing would be so slow we would all be dead” by the end of it.¹⁹⁴ The need for notation became even more pressing as more people learned to play piano and wanted to accompany the hymn singing. These two factors; lack of notation and errors in translation led Nchemo Mozhui to take on the monumental task of notating and retranslating the Lotha hymnal in its entirety.

He was commissioned by the Lotha Baptist Association to work on the hymnal in 1997 and many thought the task would be impossible. Donating his time and using personal composer software he purchased in England, Mozhui manually transcribed all the songs in the Lotha hymnal. Mozhui would go to work very early to use the computer there to work on the hymnal. He spent many long hours working on the hymnal, often working on Sundays and holidays. It took him two whole years to do the translation alone, and at that time before the internet was wide spread it was very difficult to track down copies of the hymn notation. Mozhui reflected fondly that his time spent translating the hymns was a time of devotion for him where the love of God touched his heart. Sometimes he even felt that the Holy Spirit would inspire him and the

¹⁹² Nzan Odyuo, interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 31st, 2017.
¹⁹⁴ Mozhui.
appropriate words would just flow out. Mozhui generously sacrificed his time to complete this hymn book commenting that “when you have the passion for something nothing is impossible you can put in all the labor and it becomes a joy.” He first finished a small collection of hymns called Fountain of Joy or “Longshi Tjünhyo.” The complete hymn book was printed in October of 2006 by the Lotha Baptist Association.

The Lotha Baptist Association hoped having printed hymn books with notation would motivate people to learn to read music. In recent years, more people have shown interest in learning to read music and a few churches have even begun to offer classes. Mozhui himself teaches classes to the Dimapur sector churches and is encouraged by 35-40 people turning out including some older members of the congregation. Since the distribution of the hymn books the congregational singing has greatly improved. People sing the song with the correct tempo and some have even begun to learn the other parts and sing harmonies. Mozhui comments that “we are used to singing in harmony even with the folk songs and also singing in harmony more or less comes naturally.” Now that we have the notation the Lotha Baptist Church in Dimapur has four song leaders singing each part into a microphone so that “whichever part you want to follow you can follow.”

Many Nagas emphasize how the hymns still have an important spiritual impact in the Naga churches today. Mozhui shares, “You go to church and then you listen to prayer, you listen to the sermon, the word of God but you participate when it comes to singing.” People look

195 Mozhui.
196 Ibid.
197 Ibid.
198 Mozhui.
forward to community singing. Once the hymn books were printed with notation people began showing up even 30 minutes before the service’s start to sing hymns together. Whether with the congregation or in personal mediation hymn singing “touches us” and “edifies us.”

Mozhui concludes “the gospel is preached through sermons but it is also preached through the hymns.” The hymns were used to evangelize the Naga and they still use these hymns to share the hope of Christ with their Indian neighbors. The preface of an English version of Mozhui’s hymnal printed by the Naga Christian Fellowship in Delhi includes this story of a Hindu coming to Christ through the hymns.

A young Delhi University research scholar, giving testimony at a Naga Christian Fellowship worship service one Sunday morning, related how desperately he sought in vain for the Truth in his own religion. At his first ever Christian worship service at NCF Delhi six months earlier, his soul was touched by the hymn ‘Only A Sinner Saved by Grace’. This was his introduction to Jesus Christ, whom he came to know as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I’ll conclude with one of my own experiences ministering through hymns in Nagaland. While staying at a friend’s home, I was asked to sing and pray for a sick relative. We sat on stools near the cooking fire where a frail woman dying of cancer had huddled for warmth. I began by singing “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” a favorite of mine and my friend translated the words for her aunt. Next, I sang the hymn “What a friend We Have in Jesus” but struggling for words, my friend brought me the Lotha hymnal. I had already become familiar with the pronunciation and was easily able to switch and sing the hymns to this dear saint in her own language. He face lit up with so much joy hearing the words to these hymns. She asked us

199 Ibid.
200 Ibid.
201 Mozhui reading from the *Naga Christian Fellowship Hymnal*. 
to sing “It is Well with my Soul.” Adding her voice to ours, we worshipped the Lord in that kitchen and watched as He used the hymns to bring comfort to this dying woman. Thanks to the work of translators and musicians the hymns continue to minister to the church and bring glory to God in Nagaland.

**Generational Divide Between Worship Styles**

There are three distinct generations in Nagaland, each with differing musical preferences and views on traditional or folk music in Nagaland. These differences in musical preferences can be linked to the socio-economic impact of the political unrest and modernization/urbanization of Nagaland throughout the 20th century. The three generations are the older generation, persons born between 1930s through the 1960s, the younger generation born in the 1990s or later, and a third generation caught in the middle born in the 1970s and 1980s.  

Each generation has different musical preferences and this divide is present in both the revival church and Baptist church denominations.

The older generation grew up in the village. They sang the songs in the field and participated in the various traditional celebrations, so traditional music and dance “became part of their life, it was a normal thing for them to know.” The Christian missionaries taught the parents of this generation the hymns and they grew up singing translated versions in church all their lives. Their education was more sporadic and may have started later in life. They lived through Indian independence and the subsequent Naga-Indo war. The older generation grew up in a Nagaland with borders closed to foreigners and Indians alike, without access to the internet.

---


203 Ibid.
and limited exposure to new music. However, it is this same older generation that saw massive
revival in the late 1950s, 60s and early 70s and the composition and wide spread use of the
revival songs. The older generation “loves the hymns and … revival songs.”

In contrast, the younger generation find the hymns “boring” and are “very much into
praise and worship.” The terms praise and worship and contemporary Christian music are used
almost interchangeably throughout this paper, however praise and worship refers more broadly
to all modern worship music in contrast to traditional Christian hymns and includes choruses and
anthems popular in the 60s, 70s and 80s as well as more recent additions to the genre. In general,
contemporary Christian music or CCM has come to replace the term praise and worship as the
name for the genre. Among the Naga, however the term praise and worship was much more
common though a few informants would use CCM to refer to the songs and compositions
popular today. The younger generation greatly prefers contemporary Christian music and also
has less exposure to the traditional hymns. Talimeren shared “Sunday morning service not many
young people turn up,” nor do they attend the mid-week evening services where the hymns are
also sung. The younger generation primarily attends the youth services where mostly praise and
worship is sung, and only a few hymns. James Swu explains, “the revival songs are to the older
generation what the praise and worship songs are to the younger generation.” It is the music
they came to know the Lord through. The younger generation grew up in a radically different
Nagaland then their grandparents. The cease-fire with India was signed in 1997, and slowly the

205 Ibid.
206 Talimeren.
207 Ibid.
various Naga underground army factions loosened their grip on economic development.

Education has continued to advance and many of the younger generation pursue college degrees. Furthermore, children “up till grade 12 they will just go to their Sunday School programs.” After high school graduation, they will attend the regular services where they sing hymns in the tribal language and youth services where only praise and worship is sung in English. Among the Naga, the term “youth” also has a more loose definition. It primarily refers to college age students. Youth services have mostly older teens and young adults. Technically, a person is considered a “youth” until they marry, though perhaps an unmarried person in their 30s or older would probably not be considered a youth. This distinction between children and youth and more specifically youth and adults is very important to the socio-economic structure of Naga culture. Married individuals have very different expectations on their behavior than youths. Talimeren explains, “It’s quite a different life in Nagaland here especially, when you are youth…you have your own personal freedom, but when you get married you are bound by the society, whether you like it or not you have to participate.” Married individuals are required to participate in the church and in social work organized by the village society, or the village men’s and women’s organizations. Talimeren explains, “For example, I just tell you one, if one person dies from our village community I have to go and the whole night I have to be there in their family that’s my village rule… as a married man I have to contribute my service to that family because [it is] not only their mourning but it is the villagers’ losing of a life, so we participate,

---

208 Vivee Peseye, January 28th, 2017

209 Ibid.

210 Talimeren,
helping others. So it is out of compulsion I have to go [and] out of compassion I have to go."\textsuperscript{211}

An older married person’s contribution to the society in this way “is much more” than a young persons.\textsuperscript{212} “Young people service to community is a little lighter, even though you don’t fully participate you are somehow excused, because you are young, but when you are married whether you like it or not unless you ask permission or ask leave from the village authorities you are bound to do it or if you have not informed earlier you are either fined or called for explanations that’s what people expect.”\textsuperscript{213}

I have only begun to scratch the surface on this concept but the little I did learn made me recognize that this social structure either creates or perpetuates the generational divide in the worship music of Nagaland. I discussed the abrupt switch from one service to another with Talimeren and he replied that people “know the system of our community that’s why they don’t feel awkward they don’t feel uncomfortable” when they switch services.\textsuperscript{214} Because so many expectations change upon marriage or adulthood, I hypothesize that it is only natural that the worship service you attend and music you sing would change too. This long established social structure coincidently reinforced a generational divide in music that naturally occurred from other causes. However, it is important to note that social constructs are not permanent, but continue to change and adapt over time. The experiences of the middle generation are a perfect example of that fact.

\textsuperscript{211} Talimeren.

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{213} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{214} Ibid.
The middle generation is “caught in the middle.” More of them grew up in the cities, received normal education and may have even studied outside Nagaland. They grew up singing “singspiration” songs or… inspirational songs like ‘Seek Ye First’… ‘Create in Me a Pure Heart’…not the CCM as the younger generation knows it.” This generation was not taught the Naga traditional songs and dances. Talimeren shared he is “more close to hymns than other traditional music.” While the older generation grew up in the more traditional way of life, they migrated to the cities and “did not pass on what they knew about cultural songs and dances to” their children. Perhaps, “they did not feel it was important enough to be passed on, at that time.” The older generation were not only taught that Naga cultural practices were pagan and should be done away with but they also lived through massive social upheaval that prevented the practice and transmission of culture to their children. During the war, their homes and villages were burned to the ground. An agricultural lifestyle was left behind for jobs in the city. Education in English was pursued and modernization and globalization brought a variety of other influences into their lives. With all this change and upheaval, I hypothesize it is only natural that the older generation would cling to one of the few things that has stayed the same; Christianity, specifically singing hymns in the church together every Sunday.

---


216 The term singspiration is used by Nagas to simultaneously indicate a song genre, service style and a variety of music publications from the 70s and 80s. Webster defines singspiration as “a song service featuring the group singing of hymns conducted especially by revivalistic churches and often followed by a sermon.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “singspiration,” accessed November 10, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/singspiration.


218 Talimeren.


220 Ibid.
The older generation of Nagas don’t particularly like the “electric guitars and loud
banging drums, this praise and worship thing,” but they recognize that the young people like
it. Kevichusa explained, “if they want it I have no objection…I’m not like some of those in the
movies you used to see in America when they started singing some songs, they said it is from the
devil and the pastor condemning… I suppose I don’t think that.” The older generation wants
the young people to worship God, but still find it hard to relate to the new praise and worship
music. Informants gave several possible reasons for this. One, “we don’t use the band on Sunday
morning” because “the senior generation they are of the view that church music should always
be solemn and such.” James explains “the theologians themselves working in the church
council and all some they think these are not appropriate, some feel no its alright as long as it is
done for the glory of God.” Second, it is generally assumed that the older generation does not
want to learn new things. Jongshimanen for example attempted a master class for his choir
masters but they did not want to come; “they are all mature and therefore there receptivity and
their learning capacity is already narrowed down. They are fifty five plus or sixty five plus
therefore they cannot learn much new things they are just comfortable in the little knowledge
that they have.” Third, “the older generation were brought up with conservative Baptist
worship system; Call to Worship, Prayer, Hymn, Offering, Special Number, Hymn, Sermon,

---

221 Kevichusa.

222 Ibid.


Hymn,”226 and still want to use this system today. Fourth, the “older generation doesn’t have exposure to this new music, even in our days we found it very difficult to find even one piece of good music.”227 In contrast, new is normal for the younger Nagas. New songs, new styles, new ideas are constantly coming to Nagaland now that the borders are open to tourists and the internet is readily available. The older generation has lack of exposure to these things and “it’s exposure that matters.”228

**Contemporary Christian Music**

Nzan Odyuo is a leader and pastor in the Lotha Baptist Church denomination who lives in Dimapur. He has served in a variety of roles in the church such as choir director, and preaches often. In 2002, he founded Golden Crown Christian College located in Dimapur, primarily as a theological school to train church leaders. He emphasized the four things necessary for ministry are scripture knowledge, spirituality, effective communication and music and formed the college curriculum around these topics. Nzan went to Bible college himself in Singapore, spent time studying in the United States and working with Literacy and Evangelism International. One of his most significant contribution to Nagaland however, is the promotion of contemporary Christian music or praise and worship.

Nzan Odyuo spent several years in the United States during the late 90s. During that time he encounter praise and worship music and charismatic preaching; “I got a lot of this spirit movement so I came back fully back with the Holy Spirit, with inspiration and started this


227 Ibid.

228 Ibid.
movement teaching praise and worship in Baptist churches.”  

Most likely the first time praise and worship was heard in Nagaland was in 1992 when despite the heavy restrictions on foreign entry to Nagaland a worship team from America was able to come perform in the Lotha Baptist church. The impact of this team and Nzans time in America led him to form a team of musicians trained mostly at Patkai to go around promoting praise and worship music. They would lead praise and worship sessions at functions, singing and teaching from the Bible that this type of music was ok saying; “there is nothing wrong for Baptists to clap hands, let us clap hands and sing, No?... I would teach from the book of Psalms.. nothing wrong in using cymbals and all these drums in the church, nothing wrong with using all these musical instruments in the church.” Nzans would bring drums and electric guitars and other contemporary instruments into the church; “that was quite revolutionary in those days, that’s why they called me charismatic pastor.”

While praise and worship was steadily growing in popularity there were still many who didn’t like it or were opposed to its use. Nzans even translated praise and worship songs into Lotha to sing in the main church service. However, “it went only for 3 months, after 3 months pastor say ‘it’s not for us’ so I concentrated on the youth services and in the youth meeting it was very successful.” Some of the main issues older Nagas have with praise and worship is that it

---

229 Nzan Odyuo, March 24, 2017.

230 Ibid.

231 Ibid.

232 Ibid.
is “too loud,” \( ^{233} \) “wild,” \( ^{234} \) or “sometimes whether they are singing or they are yelling or they are shouting we don’t know.” \( ^{235} \) One of the biggest issues however, is that many can’t understand the language because the songs are mostly sung in English, “we have very few songs translated.” \( ^{236} \) Other than these aesthetic and linguistic issues with praise and worship, some of the older pastors were influenced by fundamental Baptist theology, which taught it was wrong to clap hands in church. Though that view is not common today. “My Pastor really don’t like the drums so I installed the drum just next to the pulpit and then we start playing and then my pastor one day say ‘I think if you play softly it sounds very good.’” \( ^{237} \) Despite growing acceptance, the relegation of praise and worship to youth services is still the norm today.

Nzan described praise and worship as a team playing “contemporary music and a full orchestra.” In the early days, they sang a lot of Michael W. Smith songs with all the instruments. Today, most praise and worship bands are comprised of keyboard, guitars, drums, bass, and singers with other instruments only occasionally being added in. “It’s part of life now… anywhere you go you’ll find it,” \( ^{238} \) and “most of the towns have praise and worship.” \( ^{239} \)

Many church leaders recognize that praise and worship is here to stay. Some sort of blending of the two genres in Sunday morning services is likely to occur, and in some places already has. The Angami church in Kohima has translated some praise and worship choruses and

---

\( ^{233} \) Rev. Vichukho Ngukha, Interview by author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, January 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.

\( ^{234} \) Ibid.

\( ^{235} \) Banuo Ngukha, Interview by author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, January 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.

\( ^{236} \) Ibid.

\( ^{237} \) Nzan Odyuo, March 24, 2017.

\( ^{238} \) Ibid.

\( ^{239} \) Kevichusa.
sung them in the regular service. “They are trying to do that every Sunday maybe they will introduce one praise and worship song.”

Good song leadership is key. Vivee explains, “When you present it well and when you know lead well then [the old folks] do enjoy.”

It helps to lessen this association of praise and worship with young people if an older person leads the songs. Members of the older generation “want a mature person to be leading songs.”

Youth Pastors play an important role in bridging the gap between the youth and older generation. They help lead the music for youth services but are also mature and respected enough to lead songs in the regular service.

**Why Praise & Worship Gained Popularity with Youth**

Nagas cite several reasons why praise and worship music gained popularity. Nzan was so passionate about teaching them because “there is so much life there…. When we started this praise and worship now I could express my feelings to God.” He sang “As the Deer” sharing “I cried many times singing those songs… because now I memorized the song and then I was talking to God as I sing so that makes a lot of difference.”

He reflected that when singing the hymns in comparison, you are “confined to the hymn book” and while singing the song “you don’t have much time to concentrate on God.”

---

240 Vivee Peseye, January 28th, 2017

241 Ibid.

242 Ibid.


244 Ibid.

245 Ibid.
simply the format in which the lyrics are read. Now, many use hymns in praise and worship sessions with contemporary instruments and lyrics projected on a screen in this format one is free to just read the words, sing and raise their hands if they wish.

Praise and worship also became popular because it was lively. Because there is a lack of musical training, many churches will sing the hymns with incorrect rhythms and “you will find them dragging most of the time.” When the singing is rhythmically correct “hymns also become very powerful….Hymns can be as good as contemporary music. You can make the hymns very lively… Hymns are like Lazarus in the tomb and you are Jesus Christ, you have to raise them.” Using drums and other musical instruments as accompaniment, helps to accomplish this goal.

The most important thing Nzan explained is that it is not hymns versus praise and worship, but rather making sure people are “singing with understanding.” Nzan loves to teach the hymns because “there is so much theology there.” He also uses hymns stories to explain the meaning of the hymn; “Singing the hymns without really knowing their origin they are not really getting what the hymn is trying to communicate to them and when you tell the stories people cry….When you sing I think it is important to know what you are singing, singing with understanding that makes a difference.” In order for people to engage in authentic heart worship they need to understand the words they are singing completely. Moreover, the words

---


247 Ibid.

248 Ibid.

249 Ibid.

250 Ibid.
need to be natural to them. Therefore, the issue of language in modern Nagaland becomes critical to worship and helps us understand the generational divide between hymns and contemporary music.

Nzan explains the “students don’t know hymns when they come here, they hardly know ‘What a Friend We have in Jesus.’” The bible college students may have attended Sunday morning services where hymns in their local dialect were used but “you will see most of them not singing.” They do not sing because they do not fully understand. Nzan explains.

You see it is a very transitional period in Nagaland. My children speak our dialect but they really don’t know our dialect, so when they go to our church they don’t get anything…. They speak the dialect but preaching they don’t get it, because they don’t really know our dialect even though they are speaking. So they don’t enjoy because the language of the heart is English not our dialect.

While Naga children are brought up speaking their local dialect at home and in church, they have no formal training in the language. “They were brought up with English as their first language, in the schools all English.” If not speaking in English than Nagamese is the common language used in the market place and in casual conversation between members of different tribes. Nzan taught his children how to read the Lotha language but “most of [the younger generation] will not know how to read.” Even though his children can read “they don’t know the real language” and may mix up similar sounding words or use the wrong gender.

---

252 Ibid.
253 Ibid.
254 Ibid.
255 Ibid.
256 Ibid.
Furthermore, there is a difference between formal and informal language, while a young person may be able to speak fluently in their language in casual conversation they may struggle to understand some of the more formal language used in a sermon.\(^{257}\) There are also more Nagas intermarrying from different tribes, in which case no tribal language would be taught to their children because English would be used at home. Some mixed tribe English churches are forming for this exact reason. I attended one such church, Covenant Baptist Church in Dimapur.\(^{258}\) There were mixed tribe Naga families in attendance as well as non-nagas from outside Nagaland, who had moved to Dimapur. They sang hymns in English and had a small band that led praise and worship in English as well.

I believe the implications of this are huge. If young people attend the Sunday morning services they sing hymns from hymn books in their local dialect and listen to sermons in their local dialect but “they are not really into it, they cannot go deep into it.”\(^{259}\) This combined with perhaps poorly performed dragging hymns, makes them far less appealing for worship. Youth don’t dislike hymns in and of themselves but simply cannot relate as deeply to hymns sung in their own language. The praise and worship in contrast is almost always sung in English, a language most young people can understand more deeply and sing more freely in. This is true of all the tribes I interviewed. Gedion explained of the Rengma church, “we speak in English in our youth service because many of the youth members they do not speak our own dialect.”\(^{260}\) There are still some youth that speak their dialect more fluently than English, and some youth

\(^{257}\) Avoni Odyuo, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 31\(^{st}\), 2017.

\(^{258}\) September 11, 2016, Covenant Baptist Church

\(^{259}\) Nzan Odyuo, March 24\(^{th}\), 2017.

\(^{260}\) Gedion Thono.
departments translate choruses in their dialect to reflect this. My study was limited to urban areas. These language issues may be divided on urban versus rural lines or limited to a particular group of young people by some other factor. Further study is needed.

History and Use of Spiritual Songs

The Nagaland Christian Revival Church denomination is the most prominent denomination apart from the tribal Baptist organizations. The emergence of this denomination and the emergence of revival songs or spiritual songs is intricately intertwined. In the late 1950s a great spiritual revival began in Nagaland. The first outpouring of the Holy Spirit “like on the day of Pentecost took place in 1957 at Wokha.” On that day, “people are confessing their sins, people are crying, people are praying” and “people are singing the spiritual songs.” There was no official name for this group of people experiencing revival, “some people say it’s a cry group, some people say it’s a foolish group, some say it’s a lazy group since they are crying for hours and hours and some are praying for hours and hours, some are just simply praying in the church for a number of days.” Finally, in 1961 this group experiencing revival calls a convention in Keruma, now called Zhadima. They have a second convention in 1962 during which “the leaders give a direction to all the congregation to go one by one, not even two together... almost a thousand people are gathered together and all the different people went to the different places and they pray…” and then they bring whatever revelation they have received from the Holy

261 Vichukho Ngykha.
262 Rev. Dr. N. Paphino, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
Spirit back to the group; “some people saw a vision, some people heard a voice, some revelation came from the Bible.” When they came back together they decided on the name Christian Revival Church on January 9th, 1962. They received a prophecy for the revival to expand all over the world, but “those who are gathered at the initial period seems most of them are illiterate, most of them are poor people, they were not able to understand, they were not able to believe, in their own position how could we go all over the world? As Matthew 19:25 says ‘with man this is impossible but with God all things are possible.’” Now 55 years later, there are around 300 revival churches in Nagaland, whereas outside Nagaland they have more than 1300 churches, in almost all 24 Indian states and in several neighboring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The Revival churches are primarily different from the Baptist churches in their use of the spiritual gifts; prophecy, speaking in tongues, and casting out demons. The denomination has very similar theology to the American Assemblies of God denomination. It is the working of the Holy Spirit and active engagement in spiritual warfare that sets the revival church apart. Every service, they specifically pray to confess sins and cast out demons that may be there to “to stop us from worshipping God in truth and spirit.”

The popularity and vibrancy of the Revival Church from its conception in 1957 to today is evidenced by the continual outpouring of revival songs or spiritual songs during its services and from its members. The name “kecha tsali” in Tenyidie means “Spiritual songs.”

---

265 Rev. Dr. N. Paphino
266 Ibid.
267 Ibid.
Holy Spirit is moving and people are led to sing in the spirit it is called roupfū tsali. Occasionally, these roupfū tsali may develop into kecha tsali which everyone will learn and sing. The songs are almost never written down but learned and passed along orally. These songs are accompanied by a drum, tambourine or occasionally even guitar and piano depending on the church and availability of musicians and instruments. The Revival Church service order isn’t as rigid and set as the Baptist’s so the spiritual songs can be sung during the middle or end of the service. Few revival churches have trained musicians so the service leader, a layperson who is in charge of the service that Sunday will often lead the singing. The service leader will choose one or more kecha tsali for the congregation to sing. The congregational singing usually devolves into individuals praying or singing in the spirit, roupfū tsali. It’s during this time that revelation comes, speaking in tongues or prophesying. Three Angami students, Kechakoulie, Rokoseno Zhasa, and Vilhoubeizo Kire who attended Patkai Christian College at the time of this research and grew up in the revival church sang me some examples of kecha tsali in Tenyidie. Both examples consisted of one short repeated chorus which referenced the Holy Spirit. (Full text and translation Appendix 1.B).

D. S. Zhasa was able to share with me a song sometimes sung as a kecha tsali but that is written down and translated from an Assamese tribe. The text is printed in the Ketshe Tsali, “praise song” song book from the Angami Revival Church. (pictured Appendix 1.C) The song is a great example of how Naga worship has begun to appropriate music from non-western sources as well. This is especially true among the Revival Church since the denomination has spread all over India and other parts of Asia.

---

While the Christian Revival Church led to the creation of revival songs, most of the Baptist churches also sing revival songs though not during a typical Sunday morning service. The songs are only sung at revival meetings or may be used by other ministries. For example, in the Dimpaur Ao Baptist Church when the home evangelism and counseling ministry leads songs in a service they usually sing revival songs using a local doubled headed drum only for accompaniment. 

The Sümi church also has revival songs. Hojevi Cappo explained that the songs are “lively,” very repetitive and “not syncopated.” They are inspired by dreams or revelations. For example, the people are all praying and the Holy Spirit used them to prophecy then they start singing and someone writes the song down. The songs have become so popular most people do not need notation to sing them because they have memorized the whole song. The songs are accompanied by dancing, not uniform but as the spirit leads; “everyone can dance along with the tune.” In Sümi churches, the songs are accompanied by clapping and a drum, a variety of drums are used. The songs are primarily used at revival meetings. They are “occasionally sung in morning worship” but very rarely. The revival songs are printed separate from the hymn book because they have no notation, “they came much much later” than the hymns and “they keep updating.” Hojevi made a compilation of Sümi revival songs in 2011 because he wants “all the

---

270 Jongshimanen.


272 Ibid.

273 Ibid.

274 Ibid.
songs to be preserved.”\(^{275}\) The revival songs often talk about heaven “the second life not much about on this earth” or they talk about sin and “moral sickness.”\(^{276}\) “The spiritual songs reminds us how we keep ourselves away from the Lord… we need to keep going with the Lord that’s what the revival songs talk about we need to repent from our sins.”\(^{277}\) Furthermore, “the revival songs are very straightforward…telling very frankly.”\(^{278}\) Text and translation of one popular Sümi revival song from \textit{Xükithe Le Kaku}, the revival song booklet is available in Appendix 1.D. Hojevi also printed some of the revival songs in the children’s hymnal because he wants “children to also sing revival songs.”\(^{279}\)

\(^{275}\) Hojevi Cappo, May 15\(^{th}\), 2017.

\(^{276}\) Ibid.

\(^{277}\) Ibid.

\(^{278}\) Ibid.

\(^{279}\) Ibid.
Naga Composers

During my time in Nagaland, I was able to meet composers from several different tribes who compose in a variety of styles. The first two are Angami composers whose hymns are included in the Tenyidie hymnal although their songs are not regularly sung in Sunday morning services. They are mostly used for special music or for a special occasions. However, these hymns by Kevichusa and Nie kemhezo do stand out from the translated hymns because they are composed by Nagas. Patkai Christian College Chaplain Rev. Vichukho Ngukha and his wife Banuo shared that the words of their songs are “very nice” and “beautiful” because they are written “in the context of our people” and you can tell the gospel “motivates them to compose.” Furthermore, while some of the meaning of the western hymns is often lost in translation, Banuo explains of the Naga composers “what they are really feeling, what they really think they can put out and then write” and that makes the songs more impactful.

R. Kevichüsa

Though an engineer by profession, Razhukhrielie Kevichüsa is an accomplished musician and prolific song writer. He studied violin under a French tutor in Shilong during his primary schooling developing a knowledge of classical music. Later while attending college in Pune, Maharashtra he became friends with people from Africa and the West Indies, who shared Calypso and Caribbean music with him which he soon came to very much enjoy. All this layered on top of Kevichusa’s Naga heritage which included tribal or folk music but also translated

---

280 Vichukho Ngukha.
281 Banuo Ngukha.
282 All direct quotations in this section are from Razhukhrielie Kevichüsa, interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 4th, 2017.
Christian hymns. These various influences emerge in the music Kevichusa writes. For example, as he played some of his songs for me on guitar they all had a similar slow swing to them reminiscent, he said of the Weezer song “Island in the Sun” harkening back to the musical influence of his college friends.

One of Kevichusa’s songs “Lie Me Re Vi Zhüte” meaning “The Field is Ripe for Harvest” is included in the Angami hymnal and is occasionally sung in Sunday morning services. (Appendix 1.E) He was kind enough to play the song for me and give me the “sort of free translation” below.

“Lie Me Re Vi Zhüte”

1st Verse:  
As you gave us living water  
I thought of loving you too  
But I did not take your words seriously  
Burdened by the worlds worries  
But when I considered your words again I looked up  
Just like you told me the field was ripe for harvest  
Lord send workers into the field

2nd Verse:  
Lord the days are passing by quickly  
We will not be here for long  
Times are becoming very hard  
Night will come soon Maranatha  
Lord therefore send the good news like a might river  
Just as you told me the field is ripe for the harvest  
So send me also to the harvest field

3rd Verse:  
If they do not believe him how will they come to him  
If they don’t hear about him how will they believe in him  
And if no one is sent who will go and tell about him  
Just as he told me the field is ripe for harvest  
So You send workers into the field
He remarked that the third verse “comes mostly from this Romans chapter eight” but the rest of the song just came to him. Both the Tenyidie and English translations use the Aramaic word “Maranatha” which means “come our Lord.” Kevichusa learned this word from a footnote in the NIV English translation of the bible which is popular in Nagaland.

Kevichusa has no official recordings of his music but has composed around 30-40 songs, even a “cantata of sorts.” He is still regularly asked to compose today. Despite all this, Kevichusa insists that he is not a professional and music is “just a hobby.” This humility probably comes from his prayer filled compositional process. He told me many stories of times he was asked to compose and the song would not come. Then, his wife would pray and he would ask others to pray and then “suddenly it came.”

This song ‘Out of Darkness into Light’ this also it was not coming, I was told to compose…. then the chairman of the celebration, all the time he was reminding me have you written have you written he came one day and I said it is not coming out you also pray for me I told him. He said I will also pray, then they were praying then it came out, so in maybe in one sitting I completed it, the words the music everything.

(Score Appendix 1.F)

In everything he said about his music, Kevichusa’s desire to “edify the church and bring acceptance of Christ” was paramount. This desire is apparent in the lyrics of his songs and in his continued commitment to train the next generation of Naga musicians. He teaches violin himself and is a supporter of the School of Music at Patkai Christian College. Kevichusa emphasized to me that Christians should “take over the arts,” just like Bach and Handel composed world class music and dedicated it to the Lord, Naga musicians today should excel to the world’s standard and when people are applauding them “they should say ‘I thank Jesus Christ” and “that opens the eyes of people, who is this Christ?” He hoped that someday some “world class Naga musician” would take the world stage and give glory to God.
Niekemhiezo Yhor

Niekemhiezo Yhor is a retired Inspector for the School of Education Department. He began serving in music ministry at a very young age and continued through most of his life. He studied music with his brothers in a Sunday school class. As early as class 9, he was involved in translating songs from English into Tenyidie and was a church choir director for ten years. Niekemhiezo composed a few songs over the years; “In class 9, later part of the year I received the Lord Jesus Christ, I received the assurance of salvation so out of the joy of salvation and together with concern for other unsaved friends, I composed one song in 1973 when I was in class 10.” Later on he composed a song for Mother’s Day “in remembrance of my mother… every mother’s day it is sung in my church.” (Appendix 1.G) He also compiled a devotional song using Naga folk tunes because his daughter was asked to produce a folk song for music class. “The melody is adapted from one Angami drama” and the words were from another source. The title is “Terhuo Ukhrie” meaning “In God’s Love” and the song should be accompanied by the Tati, an Angami stringed instrument. (Appendix 1.H) Lastly, he wrote the song “Jisu A Ki Kevor Ze” meaning “When I Let Jesus Come In.” (Photo of original Score Appendix 1.I, Text and Translation Appendix 1.J) He brought the melody to Madame Margaret Shishak who added the harmony. Niekemhiezo is still asked to compose songs today and relies on the Lord for his inspiration. “For me how I compose one or two song is only through the inspiration of God both the tune and the lyric came together…..I am not a professional I am not trained.”

283 All direct quotations in this section are from Neikemhiezo Yhor, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 24th, 2017.
The last Angami composer I spoke with is D. S. Zhasa. He is a lay leader in the Christian Revival Church denomination. Zhasa has composed a large number of songs, many of which are well known and commonly sung in Revival church services. He shared several of his songs with me. He writes his songs in Tenyidie but others translate them into English, Nagamese and sometimes Hindi since revival church services are held in a variety of languages. The first, “Send me to thy field” was written on April 5th 1987. He says the Lord helped him and he wrote the song in two days. Today almost all the revival churches know and sing this song. His daughter, Rokoseno helped translate this song into English. The song is a prayer asking God to help the worker in the field as well as send the singer. (Appendix 1.K) Another song Zhasa wrote is “Lord Super” [sic] is based off Matthew 26:26-30. He wrote this song in early 2011. It is printed in the Revival Churches Ketshe Tsali (Hymns of Praise) song book using tonic solfa notation. (Appendix 1.L)

Lastly, Zhasa was asked to compose a song for the Golden Jubilee, a celebration of 50 years since the creation of the Nagaland Christian Revival church denomination. The song is inspired from Leviticus 25, and Luke 4:18-19. It was written as the opening song for the celebration to “attract the congregation.” When he was entrusted with composing the Jubilee song, he began asking the Holy Spirit to help him compose. At that time God helped him compose this song. The song was written as a choral arrangement with 4 parts. The sopranos sing the text while the altos, tenors and basses sing “Ho ho ho ho ho.” The song appears to be a conglomeration of both western and Naga folk styles. Zhasa sang both verses of the soprano part for me during our interview which I later transcribed (Figure 1).

---

284 All direct quotations in this section are from D. S. Zhasa, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017.
He sang a harmony line, most likely alto that accompanies the first line of text (Figure 2).

285 Used with the permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017.

286 Used with the permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017.
Finally, he sang three additional parts that are sung concurrently during the first “Jubilee” (Figure 3). However, I’m unclear exactly how these harmonies are arranged in the alto, tenor and bass as none of them seem to match the first harmony line he sang for me (Figure 2).

Figure 3. “Jubilee” by D. S. Zhasa. Additional Harmonies

I’m sure many of these arranging questions would have been answered in his own score, but Zhasa had only saved the lyrics printed in the Jubilee program. The repeating “Ho ho ho ho” vocable is characteristic of the Naga folk style. The “ho ho ho ho” is the “sound of the echo.” Zhasa wanted it to symbolize the sound of Jubilee spreading far and echoing throughout the land. People would “hear the echo and glorify the name of our Lord.” This song was only sung for the celebration but a cassette was made and shared all over.

Zhasa’s most popular song which has been translated into the most languages is “Niep mia puo N lie nu tsuzhie.” Zhasa and his friends sang the song in a service then others would learn it. Soon, people were going and sharing the gospel through the song so it spread all over Nagaland and to neighboring states. The song was translated into Nagamese and Hindi. (Nagamese translation Appendix 1.M) Zhasa’s prolific work is popularly sung in the Revival

---

287 Used with the permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017.
churches. It is not considered a kecha tsali but could be sung before the kecha tsali, or in any other part of the service. His work is emblematic of the convergence of musical influences in Nagaland as well as the multi-lingual nature of Naga society and churches.

Nzan Odyuo

The fourth composer Nzan Odyuo, was not only instrumental in the introduction of contemporary Christian music to Nagaland, but also a prolific composer of hymns, choruses and anthems. Two examples of his work are included here. The first is an anthem Nzan was asked to compose for the 50th anniversary of the Student Federation in 2016. He wrote the song “Kochia” meaning “March On.” (Appendix 1.N) He composed the melody while accompanying himself on the guitar and wrote it down in solfege notation. He asked his nephew Moromo to convert it to staff notation on the computer and add the harmony parts. After Moromo wrote, Nzan “corrected where correction is needed.” There was a problem with the meter when transcribing. Moromo and Avoni, Nzan’s daughter thought the meter should change from 4/4 to 6/8 in the middle of the song, but Nzan did not want the meter to change because he thought it would be too confusing to others instead he said “change the pattern so everyone can just sing.” The song was being sent for another choir to sing at a function Nzan would not attend so he “wanted to make sure anybody can sing without me teaching them.” I have only the final copy with the changes to the rhythmic pattern, but I am so curious what Nzan’s original rhythm may have been and if this problem in transcribing is linked to the potential untranslatability of Naga traditional rhythm to western staff notation. Nzan’s composition uses a sustained female line contrasted by a rhythmic and repetitive male part reminiscent of Naga traditional music (measure 8). However, when I

288 All direct quotations in this section are from Nzan Odyuo, interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 31st, 2017.
asked about it he said it was “nothing special… I just want it to sound like an official anthem.”

He used this musical idiom in this particular part to “reinforce the word March On.” Here is a loose translation of the lyrics:

“Kochia” “March On”

Verse 1
March on Together, March On
March on together march on
Boldly singing the victory song
March On boldly singing the victory song
Taking the banner of God
March on ahead

Chorus:
March On March On
Together March Onward
With boldness of heart March Onward
With the Banner of God

Verse 2
March on March On
We will win the battle
With the power of God
God will give us victory
Sing the victory song

Chorus

Verse 3
March On Together March On
With the Power of God march on
With the Guidance of God
And the presence of God march on to victory

He wrote this song to encourage his tribe to “march on into victory with the power of God with God’s guidance.” He shared that the Lotha “tribe is struggling these days… we are

---

289 Nzan Odyuo, interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 31st, 2017
living a very defeated life as a tribe.” Nzan sees the tribe as very weak politically and spiritually.

He explains, first, despite the fact that the Lotha hold many government offices and have great natural resources including a hydroelectric power plant, oil, and agriculture in the Wokha district (Lotha district) the Lotha are very much afraid. “We need the power of God to make use of all these resources and live with that prosperity that God has given to us.” Secondly, he feels the tribe is very weak spiritually because the Lotha church “went through a storm” where the “church almost divided into two and the hearts are still divided.” He believes this division is rooted in a view of the church as “an organization and people fighting for post,” they are seeking power but in the church “we are called to serve.” This song was written to address these areas of weakness and encourage “the young people to look to God and march forward.”

The second song, Nzan Odyuo was asked to compose for “Tokhfü Emong Khen” the Lotha Post-Harvest Festival or festival of “Thanksgiving and Reconciliation” on November 7th 2016. (Appendix 1.O) During this festival individuals who have had a misunderstanding or argument with another throughout the previous year, perhaps while working in the field will reconcile and start the new year afresh. Young people will have engagement programs and weddings only after this festival. In the old days this festival was also a time to release the spirit of loved ones who had died in the past year. Until this point, family members would have kept the tomb, believing the spirit was still there and provided food for the spirit. During the festival, this ends and they send “off the cost of the spirit of the dead.” It was for this festival that Nzan composed the song “Tokhfü Emong Khen” meaning “Song of Festival” by setting new Christian words to a traditional tune. Nzan explains the song is in “our indigenous country style… more toward the style used in the village in the olden times.” However, this is a “modern
version…normally we have specialized country singers who sing” this style and in Nzan songs some elements of the rhythm and even tonality are slightly different.

Nzan wrote this song because a woman who was singing for the festival asked him to compose a song. Nzan came up with the words and melody in “less than half an hour” because the “phrases are known to me because we were brought up in the village.” Working together, his son Albert came up with accompanying chords. He played me a recording on his phone of his nephew Moromo singing the song with guitar accompaniment. The “words of the song are about blessing for the year, in their field, in their life, in their barns, in their animals. It’s like something like the prayer in Deuteronomy Chapter 28…. if you obey you will be blessed… It is similar to that but in our own concept.” The lyrics are not in the normal Lotha language, Nzan used special idioms “used in the past… when you wanted to bless someone you use those kind of words, to curse someone you use those words in the past.” While his children may not understand these words, “for the older generation it has so much meaning, deep meaning.” This song is a unique example of a new Christian song written in a traditional Naga folk genre for the traditional context of that genre, the Post-harvest festival that is still practiced today.

**Gedion Thono**

Gedion Thono is the choir director at the Rengma Baptist Church Kohima. He attended the Asian Institute of Liturgy and Music in the Philippines from 2011 to 2014. The choir he directs sings mostly western songs in a variety of different languages including, English, Latin or German as well as some songs translated or written in Rengma. He has composed 10-15 songs. He explains his style of choral arrangement is “more 16th century chords, baroque… but I mixed

---

290 Unless otherwise noted all direct quotations in this section are from Gedion Thono, Interview by author, Kohima, Nagaland, India, February 20th, 2017.
it with you know our own style.” He utilized the pentatonic scale. One song he shared with me “Ma Sen” is written in Rengma language with 4 parts (Full score Appendix 1.P, Lyrics and Translation Appendix 1.Q). “In our culture musically we just continue repeating something” so Gedion utilized repetition of the text “ma sen ya lo” in his song to reflect this. The melody, harmonization, and tempo changes of the song are all western. Gedion explains how he moves from the tonic to the dominant in his harmonization where a Naga song would remain in the same tonality for the entire song (measure 28). A Rengma folk song would just keep repeating “do la do mi do la do mi do… the whole song.” Gedion took this repeating melody and shifted its tonal center throughout the song as well as added interest by utilizing different entrances for different voices. He added a counter melody in the bass part utilizing the vocables “ho hi ho” common of the Rengma tribe (measure 3). Finally, the tenors sing the same melody as the sopranos (measure 37).

Figure 4. Excerpt of “Ma Sen” by Gedion Thono²⁹¹

---

²⁹¹ Used by permission of Gedion Thono, Personal correspondence with the author, February 22nd, 2017.
“Ma Sen” was one of many songs Gedion composed following a traditional liturgy. His choir performed this Mass in concert in 2015. It included the Gloria, the Kyrie, the Sanctus, set to music fusing western and Naga traditional style. The text was in both Latin and Rengma. The choir sings songs from Gedion’s mass as special music and when invited to special events. Gedion has many other compositions he wrote in school that he has yet tried with the choir because “most of them cannot read notes or we are feeling it’s a little difficult to do chromatics and these things.”

Sümi Composers

The last two composers in this study, are from the Sümi tribe and I spent a great deal of time with them. They are pioneers in the revival and incorporation of Naga traditional music into Christian worship. Their passion and hard work is inspiring. Their colleague, Kughaho Chishi, spear headed this movement and composed many works incorporating Naga traditional music and even created the Nagaland Choir. I was sadly unable to include Kughaho in my study because he was in the United States for the duration of my time in Nagaland.

James Swu292

James Swu, a professor and conductor of Patkai Christian College choir at the time of this research is a leader in the Naga folk music revival. He has gained a reputation as a “very good choir director,”293 and is known for his use of Naga folk music. James, like most young Naga

292 Unless otherwise noted all direct quotes in this section are from James Swu, Interview by author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.

293 Niekemhiezo.
boys, learned to play guitar, formed a rock band and became very involved in the youth department leading Praise and worship during his teenage years. Though music and serving in the church had always been a part of his life, James chose to study Mathematics in Shillong. While leading worship in the Naga fellowship there, many encouraged him to use his musical gifts to serve the Lord. However, it wasn’t until he attended a special revival service that he felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit in prayer to pursue musical studies. He was accepted at AILM, the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music in Manila. With no formal music training, he struggled a lot when he first began and had to work very hard to catch up to his classmates who were already well-versed in music theory and performance. His studies centered on church music, specifically conducting and composition with the aim of incorporating Asian indigenous music in the church. All students were expected to use original folk melodies and motifs and write liturgical songs and choral compositions with sacred text.

This was challenging for James because he grew up in Kohima, an urban city not the villages and had very little exposure to folk lore, music or dance. As a teen he participated in one cultural event where he learned a few folk songs and one folk dance. Later on, he was able to procure some cassette tapes of Naga folk songs. He pulled from these when composing. AILM was an Episcopal school, so they emphasized composing congregational music for the episcopal liturgy or mass. James also took private composition lessons and composed songs for performance within various parameters set by his professor. James continues to compose in this style setting restrictions on himself, like composing in a single mode because, “it pushes me to be creative with whatever I have.” He earned a bachelors and masters in the Philippines and worked there several years to gain experience. When he returned to Nagaland, James knew that completely “indigenized” compositions would not be accepted in the Naga churches right away,
so he wrote choral music incorporating Naga traditional music but using western compositional techniques.\textsuperscript{294} He explains the songs are more like “classical compositions but the motives are very indigenous.”\textsuperscript{295} A detailed discussion of two compositions James wrote using indigenous Naga melodies and motifs follows.

First, is the song “Haleluya” which I was able to see performed live by Patkai’s choir and conducted by James. For the song, James began with a Chekesang melody comprised of C Eb G and Bb. James began by finding the mode of the Chekesang melody. He explains, “80% of the song comprises of only these four notes.” He added an F later to change the tonality from Cm (measure 43). The middle section starting at measure 51 (Figure 5) showcases this Naga folk melody, keeping it “closer to the authentic sound.”

![Figure 5. Naga Folk Song motif from “Haleluya” by James Swu\textsuperscript{296}](image)

James explains, “this is from the Chekesang tribe, so in lots of their folk songs altos are singing harmony, mostly 4ths 5ths and sometimes 3rds as well.” This type of harmony is used in Sümi songs also. James focuses on using this harmony throughout the song doubling the soprano part an octave lower in the tenor and the alto part in the bass. He joked that though these parallel fifths and octaves are not allowed in western composition “it sounds very natural for us and it

\textsuperscript{294} James Swu, March 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2017.

\textsuperscript{295} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{296} Used by permission of James Swu, Personal Communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
sounds so good to us actually.” For the first section of the song, he decided to use this “native harmony but with a very different time signature which we don’t have in our native songs.”

Naga folk songs do not have meter, they have a down beat but “the phrases are not even.” When composing songs using the Naga idiom James would select a meter in order to conform to western staff notation. For this song, James chose to utilize a 7/8 meter because “I love songs that have challenging rhythms and… I love giving a twist to the song through the use of rhythm.” He also utilized a harmony common to the Sümi tribe in which voices sing in unison and then separate to a fourth (Figure 6).

Figure 6. First excerpt from “Haleluya” by James Swu

He chose to use the word hallelujah for the entire song “to see what kind of different rhythmic motives I could come up with” using only that one word. The spelling “haleluya” is Sümi. He continues, “I wanted to develop it even further by including another traditional aspect which is the question and answer.” James explained traditionally it is “usually divided into two groups one singing one phrase and then the other responds.” He took this response idea and developed it by alternating the vocal entrances of the different parts, “by having voices coming

---

297 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal Communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
and going and coming and going.” Sopranos begin and “altos are doing the same thing but in a different tonality (Figure 7). Sopranos are doing Bb altos are doing the 5th below.” “If they sing alone it sounds very simple but if you intersperse it this way... it sounds richer.” In several parts of the song, “the ladies are more legato and the men are more rhythmic or marcato” making a nice contrast (Figure 7). The male rhythm was of James’s own invention, “in our tribe we really don’t have this syncopated rhythm.” Finally, James expressed he is quite particular about the transition. For example, he had the ladies imitate the men’s rhythm or brought back the first motive but with variation (measure 71 and measure 79 respectively). (Full score Appendix 1.R)

Figure 7. Second excerpt from “Haleluya” by James Swu

---

298 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal Communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
The next song, “Ampeu Shelo He-o” is inspired from one of the few folk song recordings James was able to find (Full score Appendix 1.S). The original song is Angami, but because James did not understand the words he changed the text using a bible verse in Sümi. A loose translation is “oh young people praise Lord Jesus, lift high his name, praise the Lord and then I added this folk element ‘oh hei’” which is a common Naga vocable. The next line starting on measure 12 (Figure 8), “he o ningu Ampeu shipilini” again uses a vocable “he o” and means “we will sing unto the Lord.” “It’s like a call to the listeners” to come sing to the Lord. The melody is a call so these words were fitting. The song “is in the tonality of C major” using the pitches C E G A and D occurs sometimes. The motive is stated and followed by a response (Figure 8).

Figure 8. First folk melody of “Ampeu Shelo He-o” by James Swu

---

299 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
Later, James switches to a melody from a different folk song adding his own harmony (measure 37) (Figure 9). Though the folk melody could be condensed and fit well in 4/4, James wanted to do it differently and add different time signatures “to shake up the listeners.” This ability to play with the rhythm not only adds interest but remains true to the Naga idiom where “the rhythmic flow was based on the flow of the words” and not artistically limited. Each time a new voice enters “the bass have an additional note to sing… just a western idea of development.” James remarked, “some people when they listen they think it’s complicated and all but it’s not. It’s just one melody different entrances.”
James also included a traditional yodel (measure 36). While the yodel is originally in the soprano line, James modified it during performance to be in the men’s part, “free entrance at the discretion of the conductor….Traditionally, sometimes the women do it much better” but James

---

300 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
has not tried it with the women here at Patkai yet, because “it’s a very different sound” many are unable to produce. He included this yodel specifically as part of the transition from one section to another in this piece.

The harmony in the slower section uses an octave with a fifth in the middle, “this one is a strong element in my tribe, the fifth with an octave, very strong with the men” (Measure 58).

James doesn’t reintroduce the main Naga motive again until (measure 67); “I wanted to take time to reach this moment because this is the main melody or motive that I wanted to work with….It’s like the whole thing is an introduction but with variations of the melody and rhythm.” Finally, he mixes both the original motive in the men’s part and a question response style in the female part (measure 74).

---

301 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
James explained his intent with composing songs like this is to “use folk element and develop it according to what I’ve learned through the western system.” The key elements for a song to be inspired from the Sümi folk motive are; “strong use of fifths and fourths is a vital component” in the Sümi as well as other tribes, “the pentatonic mode,” and “use of vocables like hey, ho…different tribes have different vocables but this is common for our tribe.” Lastly, there should be no minor seconds because the “minor second is almost non-existent in my tribe” though other tribes have this interval. James explains the Sümi people find it very difficult to sing accidentals, or the minor second interval when included in the hymns. “For the longest time

---

302 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukedima, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
I was wondering why because other tribes could get it so why not my tribe and suddenly it occurred to me that maybe it is because it is not in our folk song.” Starting with these core elements James develops the song through western compositional techniques. For example, “We have a motive and we develop that by the use of inversions, retrograde inversions and such. I’m not using those compositional techniques the way that Bach has used. I’m using them in a different way. But those kind of techniques are still at the back of my mind.”

James’ composes music this way because he wants to bring “old and new together, ancient plus modern…. I want to retain our folk elements but I don’t want… to use it in the original way it was used by our elders… I want to bring it to our context.” James used sacred text in his songs with the hope that they would be used in the church. He believes these style songs would attract all generations. Simpler versions could even be used for congregational singing, “that is what I’m hoping for.” Congregational versions could use question and response “between the men and the ladies or the men could just be doing a drone kind of thing…like that octave with the fifth kind of thing and the ladies could sing in kind of harmony but the harmony would be… fourths and fifths.”

Hojevi Cappo

Hojevi Cappo is one of the leading musicians and composers in the Naga folk music revival. Much of his life’s work and passion has been to revive Naga traditional culture and music. He also studied at the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music between 1993-1996. He is the director and co-founder of Nagagenous a Naga Folk Music & Arts Performing Team. Hojevi is a frequently requested performer and speaker, and “many a times [he] represented Nagas in an

---

303 Unless otherwise noted all direct quotations are from Hojevi Cappo, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 15th, 2017.
international platform.” He primarily writes vocal music. Some songs are to be accompanied by
the traditional instruments he has discovered or created as well as some he “adopted from other
cultures.” The text of Hojevi’s songs often communicate a specific message from his heart
“according to the situation.”

His song “Khrismas Ye Niphulo Pavi (Christmas is best in my village)” can be seen
performed on Youtube accompanied by a variety of traditional activities. Hojevi used a
western tune, “so that any part of the world they will not feel strange listening to my tune but
they will enjoy because the western tune has become very prominent and very popular around
the world.” His motive in using the western tune was “to reach more people, to be more catchy to
the listener and be blessed, rather than popularizing our own culture.” While the tune of the song
is western there are lots of other elements that Hojevi specifically incorporated to showcase Naga
traditional culture. “I contextualized Christmas in our context….I used for lifestyle, all
traditional dress, decorations all are traditional.” For example, on the 24th or Christmas Eve lots
of people used to pound and grind the rice to make sticky rice in preparation for Christmas.
Hojevi incorporated the rhythmic “Kong kong kong” in the men’s part to imitate the sound of
pounding rice. Hojevi also used a percussion instrument he discovered in the song. It’s made
from the Gulmohar seed pod and he “named it Rasti….I think I am the one who used first. I
discovered in 2011 or something like that.” The text of the song is in Sümi but Hojevi subtitled it
in English in the video so “anyone could understand.”

Hojevi wrote this song to respond to the way people celebrate Christmas in Nagaland
today. He feels “the celebration has become more important than worship.” Christmas has

---

become so expensive there is no place for the poor people. He remarked that “people celebrate with so many gifts with rich.. cakes and kinds of food… but to me I still feel that Christmas is best in my village cause those days whole traditional style but our hearts is really open for the Lord and that is the real Christmas.” The text of the song mentions traditional Naga foods and how “Jesus is born in my village.” Hojevi explains, “I want people to celebrate Christmas that’s why I wrote this song.” Listening to Hojevi’s song and recalling conversations with other musicians I pick up on Naga musical elements such as the call and response between the men and women. The song represents a call for Nagas to return to traditional ways of life abandoning materialism and other trappings of western Christmas celebrations to instead worship the newborn king with a whole heart. When Hojevi has shared this song with others “people were rejoicing” and he had “a very good response.”

Another song Hojevi wrote inspired by the Naga traditional culture is “Knashopapu,” the name for the Cuckoo bird. The song is a call to sow seeds. “In the older days, there was no calendar, and therefore the Sümi people had to depend on the song of Kashopapu to sow the seed at the right time. They will sow the seed in their fields only when they hear Kashopapu singing, so that they will have a good harvest.” This tradition is still alive today. The song exemplifies Hojevi’s passion for incorporating symbolism and sounds from the natural environment in his music.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sümi Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ghixu tsala tova,</td>
<td>1. Sowing season is here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghili kutolo</td>
<td>Prepare for the seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashopapu le iniju lo</td>
<td>Listen to the song of cuckoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashopapu</td>
<td>Cuckoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ghixu tsala tova</td>
<td>2. Sowing season is here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘piti xusū lo</td>
<td>Come now, sow the seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashopapu le iniju lo</td>
<td>Listen to the song of cuckoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashopapu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another song Hojevi wrote is called “Tavelo” meaning “Stop It” in Sümi.

It’s a very simple song but I wrote this song during the war time in Nagaland… There was a time many Nagas were killed… and sometimes who killed who you could not even trust it… Sometimes they die Indian army with soldiers sometimes they say that one faction killed another faction something like that so many killings and my heart was broken. There’s so many killing so one time I witness at least… 11 or 12 dead bodies in a row I witness that! I didn’t even look at it just from the distance I saw cause I didn’t want to look at the killings and all so my heart was broken and from that time I wrote this song Tavelo, stop it.

A loose translation of some of the text; “Stop it Stop it Stop the war. Many have become orphans. Many have become widowers. Many have become poor.” The worst part of the war was in the 90s but it was still going on in the late 2000s when Hojevi wrote this song. Many of the “mothers and all the non-governmental organizations were asking to stop the war. They were just appealing for peace but one of the main leaders of the underground said ‘war will go on’ and that it hurts me so much.”

Hojevi wrote the song “Pano Nilhoke Wa!” meaning “he created us” in 1996. (Appendix 1.T) Hojevi was asked to write a song when he returned from his studies abroad. He thought “if young people come to know the creator then I think.. all the problems will be solved….I wanted young people to know that God has created us and He has saved us and the joy comes from him that was the message I wanted to communicate.” Loosely translated the text of the song means “I cannot keep mum without praising him or I cannot stand still without praising him. He has saved us. He makes us happy or gives us joy.” The women sing this text while the men sing a rhythmic accompaniment. Hojevi added this traditional men’s part; “oh oh hey oh” divided into three parts, an octave with a 5th in between.

---

305 Hojevi Cappo, Personal correspondence with the author, June 9th 2020.
This song was a favorite when Hojevi toured the United States with Kughaho Chichi. He remarked “it’s a simple song but joyful.” Hojevi hopes this song could be used for congregational worship. Hojevi doesn’t think it would be more difficult than any other new song, the parts would just need to be taught one by one. Hojevi doesn’t write complicated music. He tries to make it sing-able because “if it’s too hard they won’t sing,”

Besides directing Nagagenous and composing music, Hojevi also directs a music center. He wants to see more Nagas become famous and accomplished musicians. He explains, “I want to train the young people and prepare them for professional studies…We are not trying to earn money we just want to train the young people.” He was also involved in the translation of the Sümi hymnal. Hojevi included several Asian hymns in the Sümi hymnal. These songs had started to be sung in the Sümi churches and gain popularity. Hojevi explains, “they are more related to our culture than the western hymns… because the western hymns some words we don’t even understand but we sing” but these “songs are in our Asian context only and are more relevant.” For example, the song “Atsalah Ye Ilo Chea” meaning “now the Day is Ending” “talks

---


about the working in the field” which is very common in Asian cultures. A loose translation of the first verse; “Now the day is ending. Darkness is approaching. The birds are going to the nest. Our work is over. Time to rest. Like the day time you protect us even night time you protect us.”

Motivated by his love for God, Hojevi works extremely hard despite suffering a stroke during my time in Nagaland. He often remarks there are “too many things to do….I feel I should be able to do more but still… it’s not enough….God helps me and my wife of course, taking care the whole family… My health is [poor] but I am not giving up.”

**Contemporary Christian Composers**

Many Naga musicians, especially those of the younger generation write songs in the contemporary praise and worship style. However, I was unable to conduct individual interviews with these composers while in Nagaland. Avoni Odyuo told me lots of the young musicians compose their own songs. “Some of them they don’t have formal music training but they have chord knowledge” and they compose contemporary worship songs.  

308 She referenced Tali Angh a worship leader from the Phom tribe as a popular contemporary Christian artist and composer. You can find his music on his Youtube channel.  

309

---

308 Avoni Odyuo, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 31st, 2017.

Fusing Naga Folk and Western Music for Congregational Worship

**Argument For**

In Nagaland today, there is a growing interest and valuing of traditional culture and arts. Vivee Peseye explains how before people were not interested in folk music at all but today there is a revived interest.

We are talking much more about our own culture, identity, we need to preserve that is what the older folks are saying and the older folks they are now dying away and what do we know the younger generation? They are realizing that… we need to be doing more of this research, more of this collection, we need to be preserving.  

The first thing that spurred on this change was exposure through the internet and mobile phones to global music; “they are getting to know what’s happening in the outside world… globally people are singing their own music.” Therefore, Nagas should too. Talimeren explains “only when I grow up, only when I learn the value of music I thought oh I have to go back to my soil and bring up my own traditional music.” Secondly, Naga folk culture has revived because of the annual Hornbill Festival. Young people “are listening more and more [to folk songs] because of Hornbill.” The festival was designed as a tourist attraction to “showcase our culture for the foreigners and all that.. foreigners meaning even Indians” but inadvertently the Hornbill Festival “has had a big impact.. making our young people aware of all these different types of songs and dances.”

---

311 Ibid.
312 Talimeren.
314 Ibid.
and Naga folk songs and dances through the Hornbill festival has inspired the revival and preservation of Naga folk and traditional music and customs.

Out of this revival, there is a growing group of Naga church leaders and music educators who see a desperate need for the incorporation of Naga folk music in Christian worship. Vivee Peseye was one of the forerunners of this movement. Her doctoral thesis “Developing an Indigenous Hymnody for the Naga Baptist Churches of Northeast India with Special Reference to the Angami Church” written in 2013 clearly delineates the need for Naga folk music in congregational worship. She explains, “We have been all these years all these 100 years or so, we have been depending on western songs… it is time now for the Naga people to even learn to incorporate their own songs into worship.”

Hojevi explains, “we are a unique people, unique music has been given to us by God. Why we are special, why we are unique. One reason is our music.” James explains that though “we are a very small minority, we do want to bring back” the folk songs and dances. These informants championed the use of Naga folk music in Christian worship in general, but their ultimate goal seemed to always be the incorporation of folk tunes in congregational worship, hoping the music could become “part of our regular lifestyle.” James envisions a Naga hymnal full of indigenous melodies from all the different tribes and translated into local dialects. These leaders see the church and specifically

318 Ibid.
319 Ibid.
congregational worship as a solution to the disappearance of folk songs because it provides a regular platform for their use in Sunday morning worship services.

Moreover, not only would the use of Naga folk music in Christian worship preserve the Naga culture but it could also make Christian worship more relevant and participatory for several reasons. First, the folk song is easy for many to participate in. Musically the parts are “very simple… for example, there are parts where some people will sing ho—ho---- so everyone can do it.”\(^{320}\) Many of the songs use an echo sung an octave or a 4\(^{th}\) or 5\(^{th}\) below the leader, which is easy for people to learn and follow. The leader uses his arm to direct people “so it is very easy for anybody to just follow it.”\(^{321}\) Jongshimanen explained how the folk songs encourage participation through spontaneous exclamations that anyone can add during the song.

Whenever I go attend some cultural functions I find that when our people sing our folk song, people ultimately participate. They just participate even if nobody ask them to join. They will just start yelling. They will say “Sade sade” which means, come on! Do it! We are there! Just like the African spiritual songs where they say “Amen” “Go Ahead” exactly even our people when we sing our folk tune then people participate… they say “yes,” “We are with you” “Be strong” “Be courageous” something of that kind of thing. Everybody will just do it and they are not ashamed because they can relate better in the folk tune.\(^{322}\)

Secondly, the western songs in comparison are sometimes more difficult to sing and less participatory. The western songs are more difficult because “it’s not in our blood…. Because of our lineage or because of how we were brought up” the folk song just comes naturally, but if they want to sing the western tune they must take time to learn it correctly.\(^{323}\) The Naga have to fight their natural singing tendencies to sing the western tunes correctly. The Naga folk songs use

\(^{320}\) Jongshimanen.

\(^{321}\) Ibid.

\(^{322}\) Ibid.

\(^{323}\) Ibid.
lots of ornaments and slides but these are not used in the western hymns. Jongshimanen explains, “We are not hitting the note straight away but we are sliding and coming to the note. That’s where I struggle a lot with our people because it’s already in their blood, that’s how our ancestors, grandfather’s sang that’s the reason why we are bringing the same thing to the western music.” These challenges in singing western music as well as the participatory nature of the folk music are strong arguments for the use of folk music in congregational worship.

Naga Christian music advocates want to eliminate the segregation of different styles of Christian worship to different services or events. Jongshimanen and others believe the segregation of cultural songs for cultural events and western songs in church should not be. He feels Naga folk songs and Naga compositions are vital for the Naga church because they allow Naga Christians to express their faith in their own unique way. He explains “our Christian life should be like this, it should not be imposed from outside but it should come from inside.” Hojevi Cappo encouraged the use of Naga traditional music in the church at a pastor’s conference where he presented a paper saying, “when the Naga people compose based on the Naga tune with the gospel text that becomes the Naga Christian music.” Hojevi encourages church leaders to think; “Sümi Christian hymn, Naga Christian hymn, Western hymn, Asian hymn… There are a lot of differences but they all convey the same message in a different way in a different culture, in a different lifestyle.” All these different styles of music even praise and worship are “focusing on the same goal but in a different approach… we need all this music…”

324 Jongshimanen
325 Ibid.
327 Ibid.
We need integration even in our worship. We have to bring all the different songs together, not only one type of song” in each service.328

The leaders and musicians I spoke to advocated for the contextualization of Naga folk songs for modern use through artistic development and fusion of western and Naga folk music. “We cannot present our folk arts today in its original form” but rather should seek to develop the music.329 Jongshimanen shared how in the Naga church western hymns have been sung for 130 or 140 years and western music in general has been fully adopted and universally accepted by the Nagas so “it has to be there but in order to make the music more relevant in our Christian worship I think that our traditional folk tune has to be blended in the western tune.”330 James explains if we present the folk songs and tunes in “the same way now it would be looked upon as monotonous and boring so to say. That’s why I feel it could be contextualized to our current generation that.. will appeal to a bigger section of the society.”331 While preferences for praise and worship or the hymns creates a generational divide between the older, middle and younger generations, James has seen the same positive “reaction from all these three generations” to folk inspired music.332 When discussing his two compositions “Haleluya” and “Ampeu-Shelo-He-o” he made these comments.

These two songs we have discussed they are based on folk motives right? If they are presented in the original way, you know just the folk song repeated but with different text and all, it becomes monotonous and the response to that from the people is like “oh ok this is a folk song” but it is like we’ve heard one we’ve heard them all attitude… But I have now condensed it to a choral version here. It still sounds very Naga because of the

330 Jongshimanen.
332 James Swu, April 5th, 2017.
harmony but it is made interesting because of the compositional techniques, the rhythmic treatment and such, so as opposed to that dull response of the original folk song. These three generations when they have heard this they say ‘oh wow so Naga song can be made like this. It still can be very modern but still sound Naga.” That kind of response I have had. That is the kind of thing I want to work on. Developing it. It’s not really fusion so to say but more of contextualizing our indigeneity into a modern context.333

**Argument Against**

Despite many positive voices for the use of Naga folk music in worship there is still a lot of debate about this among the Naga community. First, the use of the Naga folk songs in worship is opposed because they contain the oral history of the tribes. The lyrics tell stories of tribal warfare and head hunting. For example, one song might say how “our warrior from our village brought 10 fresh heads from this certain village,” Jongshi explains, “every time we sing this, this village will feel bad.”334 The tunes are the last remnant of a head hunting pagan past that many Nagas remember with shame. Moreover, the association of the tune with violence and war is so strong for some that they fear singing them again will “stir up our spirit of killing each other.”335 It is important to understand the history of violence and conflict in Nagaland, in ancient times the tribes were fighting and killing one another. In recent decades, the Indian army and underground army factions fought against one another and many died. Remnants of tribal and underground conflict still exist despite the current unity of the Naga tribes and the signing of the peace accords with India. Peace in Nagaland is precious, highly valued and fiercely protected, even if that means discouraging the Naga folk tunes.

333 James Swu, April 5th, 2017.

334 Jongshimanen.

335 Ibid.
Secondly, the songs also contain spiritual ideas and themes from the pagan and animistic religion the Naga’s previously practiced. Many consider the Naga folk tunes to be “devilish.” The uneasiness around folk songs is understandable because Nagas want to protect against syncretism. There are some Nagas teaching “tribal theology,” a syncretism of Christianity and the animist religion, teaching that “there may be salvation in our old way of worship, animistic worship, which I think is theologically wrong.” Some may be wary of using traditional music in fear of the appearance of syncretism. The association of Naga folk music with headhunting and animism are the two main reasons many church leaders feel Naga Christian music would not be well received.

However, it is important to note that very few churches have actually tried singing Naga compositions in worship services. A negative response is assumed therefore the songs are not tried. Jongshimanen and many more church leaders I interviewed stated this fact. Vivee encourages musicians and church leaders not to make this assumption, “some church elders may have some reservation but who knows… we never tried so we don’t know.” While Naga compositions with folk tunes have never been tried in the regular worship services, they have often been used for special occasions and according to my research they were almost always very well received.

Finally, some oppose the use of the Naga folk songs because the hymns are already so popular and they doubt whether the Naga folk tunes will really speak to the hearts of the people. Niekemhiezo is opposed to the use of folk songs in Christian worship stating they are not

336 Ibid.
suitable, a little bit awkward, not so inspirational and that “the religion we accepted is from western so western tune is more suitable.”³³⁹ In more conversations with people it became clear that hymn singing is not always seen as western or foreign but rather as part of “Christian culture.”³⁴⁰ They argue there is not much need for new compositions because “we have a lot of ready-made English songs. Hymns are already printed. You don’t need any other.”³⁴¹ Even Nzan Odyuo who has love and respect for traditional songs says, “I don’t see any place… in the church.”³⁴² Avoni Odyuo, a member of the younger generation and church worker explained, “the main thing is you really want them to feel the lyrics more, if our people now even if they sing in this folk tune it will not speak to their heart.”³⁴³ She believes the “the hymns will speak to the heart more cause they’ve been here for 50 or 100 years.”³⁴⁴ Moreover, a Naga hymnody would be in the Naga languages and for many of the younger generation and even some of the middle generation the “language of the heart for these people is English not our language.”³⁴⁵

Obstacles For Incorporating Naga Folk Music in Congregational Worship

Obstacle 1: Young People Do Not Know Folk Music

The popularity of hymns and the dominance of the English language in Nagaland illuminates one of the main obstacles facing the incorporation of Naga folk music in Christian

³³⁹ Niekemhiezo.


³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

worship; western music is more popular and young people do not know the folk songs. The reality of globalization and modern technology means western music is a dominate force globally. Even in the villages, people listen to music in “Hindi, Indian movies, popular music, some country music, mostly English” and Korean pop music. In a single bus ride with Patkai students, I heard them sing classic English rock songs by Bon Jovi, Bollywood music, a Taylor Swift song, Christian praise and worship songs, and Naga folk inspired songs they were taught in class, moving easily and without pause from one genre to the next. In this multifaceted musical landscape, Naga folk music is quickly eclipsed by other more popular and readily accessible genres. Hojevi explains, “our music has become strange to our own people, especially the younger generation. Western music is easily accessible on the internet, they listen to it, sing it and have it in written materials.” The children and young people are very active in pursuing musical education but mainly in western music.

In contrast, today in Nagaland there is almost no intentional and organized or unintentional and organic transmission of Naga folk music to the next generation. Hojevi explains, the very sad thing about Naga culture right now is that there is no established platform “that promotes our folk music that’s the reason why it is vanishing because when the elder one’s pass away the songs go with them.” Young people learn a folk song only for a cultural performance or some special occasion, perform it and then do not sing it again. This is very different from how the Naga folk tunes used to be sung and passed down among the Nagas.

346 Talimeren.


348 Jongshimanen.
Niekmelhiezo explained to me how music used to be part of everything the Nagas did in their traditional way of life. They were an agricultural society and would sing while they worked because “singing in working also lightens the burden…. Every different type of work [has a] different type of music according to the suitability of the type of work.” Moreover, once the harvest was done the Nagas would “settle down and enjoy their harvest, festival after festival… singing and drinking and eating meat and local rice beer like that Naga life was simple very simple.” Naga folk songs and dances were “a communal event.” Every night after the 4 o’clock meal, the older and younger generation would gather in the village and drink rice beer and sing songs and dance together but now as more and more Nagas live in urban areas “it’s very difficult for us to do that. Most of the population they work as government servants, employees in govt. offices and some of them do business, so it’s very difficult for people to gather and do these things unless it is a special occasion.” Urbanization along with other impacts of modernization, like rigorous education destroyed established systems for using and passing on folk songs. Niekmelhiezo complained, “there is no time our academic work load is too heavy.” Whether work or school, there are more demands on the Naga’s time in modern society and less time for participating in folk songs and dance. Nzam explained “the cultural songs were related to our way of life in the past now our lifestyle is changed.” Finally, the drinking of rice beer was

---

349 Niekmelhiezo.
350 Ibid.
352 Ibid.
353 Niekmelhiezo.
an integral part of this communal singing time and when that was discouraged by Christian missionaries, it removed an important context for passing on the Naga folk songs and dances.

Many Nagas pointed out how transmission of folk songs and dances today is not only very limited but also poor in quality. On the rare occasion young people do learn a folk song for a cultural event or class it is usually “a very common tune.”\textsuperscript{355} The songs they learn are often shorter versions of the originals. For example, the Sümi tribe has a melodic narrative genre in which a long story is set to music but “now when it is being performed in a festival it is really condensed to be let’s say 5 lines or 6 lines but in the original days it was really an epic….. like the Iliad.”\textsuperscript{356} Furthermore, even when the young people do learn a traditional song they often sing it wrong omitting slides and ornaments. This frustrates the older generation who think “it’s beautiful when we sing that way.”\textsuperscript{357} Avoni explains “the problem is with the singing because for 50 years our grandma they have been singing like hymns and then my parents they have been singing hymns and that’s all we know.”\textsuperscript{358} They struggle to sing in the traditional style and “it’s awkward for us when we try to sing it.”\textsuperscript{359} James says of the traditional music “even the vocal production is very different and we can’t produce it any more, except for the senior people in the villages.”\textsuperscript{360} The vocal production “is in such a way that they get rich overtones.”\textsuperscript{361} Some young people find the music boring or aesthetically less beautiful because of these vocal differences.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{355} Jongshimanen.
\item \textsuperscript{356} James Swu, March 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{357} Nzan Odyuo, March 31\textsuperscript{st}, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{358} Avoni Odyuo, March 31\textsuperscript{st}, 2017.
\item \textsuperscript{359} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{360} James Swu, March 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2017
\item \textsuperscript{361} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
For example, the Tetseo sisters are a young singing group that sings in the traditional style, but one informant shared she does not find it “musically appealing, I find it too noisy.”

While the younger generation’s exposure and taste for the traditional music is less, that does not mean they have no interest in the genre. When surveying members of the younger generation about Naga traditional music, many said the folk songs bring feelings of nostalgia and pride in their traditions. Only 8 of the 16 survey respondents had participated in a folk song or dance. 6 of the 16 had seen or heard a folk song or dance with a Christian message. Despite this limited exposure, 9 of the 16 respondents thought using the folk songs and dances in church was a good idea as long as the Christian message is clear. 6 of the respondents did say that using traditional music in Church was “not appropriate,” and that it was “better not to mix these two.”

During my time in Nagaland, I did witness some examples of the younger generation utilizing Naga folk music in Christian worship. A young artist by the name of Jano Nyekha has composed fusion Naga folk and western style songs. One song “Aahoh” is available on YouTube. I heard this song used as background music for a Sunday school children’s presentation. It has Christian lyrics and uses Naga vocables. Traditional dress is used in the music video and western instruments like the piano and electric guitar are used as accompaniment. Her song is very popular. Perhaps more fusion efforts like this will provide a way to overcome this obstacle and revive the Naga folk music for the younger generation.

---

362 Anonymous respondent, ICFAI University Nagaland Culture Day survey, March 4th 2017
363 Anonymous respondent, ICFAI University Nagaland Culture Day survey, March 4th 2017
365 Chang Baptist Church Chumukedima, “Gospel Extravaganza Night,” April 9th, 2017
Obstacle 2: Folk Inspired Christian Songs Are Only Used As Special Music

There are actually a great number of Christian songs incorporating Naga folk music but these songs are almost always used only for special music and rarely for congregational worship. This was a reoccurring theme in many of my interviews with composers and is surprisingly true even of songs that were composed for congregational worship and are included in Naga hymnals. Kevichusa and Niekemhezo’s songs, which are printed in the Angami hymnal are excellent examples of this. Vivee Peseye pointed out that many Angami are unaware that there are Naga compositions in their hymnal. Kughaho Chishi also composed some folk songs for congregational worship, “Praise the Lord” and “Light the Lamp” but they are not regularly used despite being published. The Ao hymnal has two songs with Naga folk music. The first “Ajaki Yisu Sangang” is written by Jongshimanen and the second “Kotak Kübok Alir Ajak” is an Ao Naga tune with no composer. Jongshimanen has used these songs for special music and it went “very well because they prepared.” But they have never tried singing the songs as congregational music. I believe there are two main reasons folk inspired Naga Christian songs are only used as special music; outside the church Naga folk songs and dances are currently relegated to performance centric contexts and within the church Naga composers mostly compose on request for specific events.

Naga Folk Songs and Dances Are Currently Performance Based: In the village, the folk songs and dances are “still part of their culture and living traditions, living lifestyle so to say” but

367 Ibid.
368 Jongshimanen.
it is “not as rich as the earlier generations.” This is primarily because the context for using folk songs and dances in the villages has also changed. Each village has a “cultural troupe or cultural society” sponsored by the Indian government to come and perform in other parts of India and occasionally internationally as well. Rather than using the folk songs and dances for community recreation in the evenings, it is primarily the troupe that practices and performs the folk songs and dances. A college or organization hosting a culture day may invite performing groups from a variety of tribes to perform songs and dances. The most significant example of this is the Hornbill Festival organized by the Government of Nagaland to promote tourism and unite all the Nagas in one festival. James Swu explains, “if they are called to perform somewhere like Hornbill festival then they practice, that’s all.” Before “it was not practice” but something everyone would just do. The practicing troupe may pass on the folk songs and dances to the next generation because the children “get to see the elders practicing… so they still learn through listening and watching them practice.” However, many village children are sent to school in “the cities, Kohima and Dimapur, some even to Shillong and other cities in India” and do not have this opportunity.

In cities, the “novelty” of folk songs and dances is even more pronounced because they are used only at one or two major festivals a year. Even during the annual festivals in the

---

370 Ibid.
371 Ibid.
372 Ibid.
373 Ibid.
374 Ibid.
375 Ibid.
cities, the “majority of us are spectators.”\textsuperscript{376} An assigned group learns the folk songs and dances to perform for the festival and everyone else watches. James explains, “we are awed by them. Which should not be, because it is our culture so we should be knowing about it very well, but for us it is like we are tourists in our own land…. We still see them as something new.”\textsuperscript{377}

The current use of Naga folk songs and dances both in the village and in the cities as a performance based genre rather than communal hinders its incorporation into congregational worship. The Christian versions of folk songs that are performed in church are primarily used as special music because the vast majority of the congregation is accustomed to only being spectators of Naga folk songs. They are unfamiliar with the folk songs which are “not like a hymn at all and Nagas have been singing hymns four part harmony” for so long.\textsuperscript{378} There are many who wish to change this, to perceive the traditional songs and dances “not a performance but to perceive it as a part of who we are and a part of what we should be doing regularly.”\textsuperscript{379} Naga folk music advocates want to restore Naga folk songs and dances to the community based and participatory genre it was. Congregational worship could provide a context for Nagas to participate in folk songs communally. Sunday morning services also provide a regular platform for the use of Naga folk songs to impart them to the next generation. However, in order for Naga folk songs to be used in congregational worship the perception of the folk songs as a performance must be overcome.

\textsuperscript{376} James Swu, March 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.

\textsuperscript{377} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{378} Vivee Peseye, January 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.

\textsuperscript{379} James Swu, March 28\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
Naga Composers Only Compose for Specific Events: Another issue that I don’t fully understand but definitely plays a significant role in the incorporation of Naga compositions is the current system for encouraging composition. New music is often written when a composer is specifically asked by a group to compose a song for a specific occasion. The song is practiced and performed for the special event but often never used again. The composers I interviewed gave examples of events, such as the Jubilee, Founders day, Harvest Festival and a Men’s Association meeting, etc. While James and Gedion, did not compose songs for a specific event their music was composed to meet the requirements of their degree and therefore is intended for choral performance and too complicated for congregational worship. In fact, many of the songs composed for a special event are composed for choirs to perform at the event. Very few composers write music specifically for congregational singing. Composers may write songs on their own volition and share them as special music, but their songs are most often only sung by others when requested for a specific event. Even this method of procuring and performing new music by request is beginning to decrease. Nzan Odyuo explained requesting new compositions occurs less often today because now a days a person can find sufficient materials for special occasions on the internet; you can find “songs on any topic.”380 This easy availability of music has reduced the compulsion to compose that many of the older generation felt; “you just go to the internet and its already there so you don’t have to struggle with composing you have the best one there.”381

Though Kevichusa and Niekmhiezo also gave examples of compositions they wrote when they were young that were inspired by their own personal lives, Hojevi Cappo is one of the

381 Ibid.
few composers I met who still composes not by request but of his own volition. While people often ask Hojevi to compose for specific occasions he has also introduced several new songs to the church that were not requested. He explains, “I don’t think about others whether they will like it or not.. but it comes particularly from my heart I will write according to the situation and then after writing I will look for opportunity to perform, the advantage for me since I am a musician… and I am in an organization I get privilege to perform in the churches and the different platforms.”

I believe there are many more musicians in Nagaland like Hojevi who compose spontaneously from spiritual inspiration. However, most of them do not have the influence or renown of Hojevi and therefore have few opportunities to share their music. It is influential musicians and church leaders who hold the key to encouraging these composers and providing platforms for their music to be shared. To summarize, the second reason Naga folk inspired music has only been used for special music is because it was requested for a special event and often composed for a choir not congregational singing.

Obstacle 3: Naga Folk Music Is Difficult To Transcribe In Western Staff Notation

Because Naga musicians and church leaders seem to place a high priority on the use of western notation in Christian worship, one obstacle to incorporating Naga folk music into Christian worship is the issue of properly transcribing the music into western notation. Rhythms used in Naga folk music do not easily translate to western meter. The rhythms don’t “come with the bar.” Jongshimanen pointed out some of these issues with the Naga folk inspired songs included in the Ao hymnal. He does not like the notation because “even in the middle of a word

---

383 Jongshimanen.
we have a rest sign.”\textsuperscript{384} The rhythms notated “don’t make sense.”\textsuperscript{385} Composers like Jongshimanen are frequently frustrated when trying to blend Naga folk rhythms into western styles because western notation does not represent the rhythms accurately. When discussing a traditional song in the Lotha hymnal, Nzan told me “it is not written the way it is sung by our forefathers” and Avoni shared “we sing it the way it is written and he always tells us it’s wrong.”\textsuperscript{386} Jongshimanen also complained the western notation is “very limited they should have given some foot notes where someone can lead and the congregation can follow. If they could write like that here, it would happen much better but all the church members cannot sing at one go. Echo should be there.”\textsuperscript{387} Further study of Naga traditional music is necessary to isolate problems with western notation and develop modifications to the staff notation so it accurately depicts the music being sung. However, it is important to note that the majority of the Naga population does not read staff notation and music is often widely distributed orally and electronically without notation.

**Recommendations for Incorporating Naga Folk Music into Congregational Worship**

**Composition of Folk Inspired Worship Songs**

Many Nagas gave suggestions for how Naga folk music could be incorporated in worship. First, more songs can be written Christian lyrics set to preexisting folk tunes. Naga’s express concern about using Naga folk songs in church because the words teach animistic and

\textsuperscript{384} Jongshimanen.
\textsuperscript{385} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{386} Nzan Odyuo, March 31\textsuperscript{st}, 2017.
\textsuperscript{387} Jongshimanen.
pagan ideas, but Jongshimanen suggests “let us adopt the tune and put the Christian word, gospel lyric in the tune.”\(^{388}\) He urges that this will have “more relevance to our Christian life.”\(^{389}\) This could be accomplished with any Naga folk tune or genre, but many Nagas recommended using tunes and even very common folk songs that do not have bad implications or pagan history and therefore are considered ok to sing. Nzan explained how when the missionaries first came they taught to reject all the traditional songs because “they thought they were associated with animist worship… At that point in time they could not distinguish between culture and religion,”\(^{390}\) but the Nagas have many songs such as love songs and work songs that have no religious connotation. For example, a song sung when husking says only “quickly husk quickly husk it’s just encouraging one another to husk quickly nothing to do with religion…. It’s just a way of life talking to one another in song.”\(^{391}\) These non-religious folk songs are an excellent starting point for the incorporation of Naga folk music in worship because even the original lyrics are accepted by everybody.

Similarly, Jongshimanen suggests that the meaning and purpose behind the Naga folk song should be considered and used in a way that compliments the new text being sung. Jongshimanen successfully did this when he took a work song traditionally sung while working in the field but then composed it to be a song about witnessing for the Lord. When working in the field the Naga would yell encouragement, keep going even though the work is hard. In the work song, there are different entrances “hey, ho” at different pitches. Each part is relatively

\(^{388}\) Jongshimanen.

\(^{389}\) Ibid.

\(^{390}\) Nzan Odyuo, March 31\(^{st}\), 2017.

\(^{391}\) Ibid.
simple and repetitive but the interlocking of the different parts is complex and it is the interlocking that helps the group of workers stay in time and keep going. Jongshi’s song about sharing the gospel incorporates this same principle to encourage Christians to keep witnessing for the Lord. He said the youth were easily able to learn the song. Sadly, there is no transcription or recording of this song. Jongshimanen usually teaches his songs orally or perhaps shares a recording from his mobile phone because the groups that request the song do not read western notation so he has never written the songs down.

Composition of these types of Naga Christian worship songs that use the folk idiom could be encouraged through song writing workshops that teach how to write scripture songs. Vivee shares, “I was so excited when I attended the… ethnomusicology workshops and all that and we talk about the scripture songs.. making scripture song workshops.. I was thinking ‘hey this is something we should start in Nagaland.’”392 This would go along side with the collection of Naga folk tunes. People could come to the workshop and learn “how to use scriptures and then use their own idioms so then each tribe has their own tunes.”393

Finally, James recommended incorporating Naga folk dances in worship by arranging with “less repetition, shortened version of the original format maybe because now… our generation seems to have less time for everything so, attention span is much shorter.”394 Naga traditional instruments could also be incorporated into the church service. James explains “It’s sad that we Nagas don’t have a rich collection of traditional instruments, it’s very sad very limited all the tribes, we just have some few wind instruments and some percussion. I would like

393 Ibid.
the use of these instruments in our churches on a regular basis.”

They could be used as accompaniment for the Naga hymnal.

Dissemination of Naga Christian Worship Songs

Many Nagas are unaware of the Christian folk songs that have been written by Nagas. In many tribes these songs are not printed in the hymnal. Hojevi explains, “They would be used more after they are in print in the hymnal…they cannot learn if they don’t have.”

However, even if they are printed in the hymnal many Nagas are unaware these Christian folk songs exist. Vivee Peseye suggests a first step to encouraging the use of these Naga songs in regular worship would be simply making people aware that the music exists by sharing it as widely as possible. Give physical copies to choirs and music directors and make audio or video recordings of songs to be shared. This would be particularly effective in exposing youth to the Christian folk songs. Talimeren also recommends sharing the song at a gathering or festival or through audio recordings. There are some in his church that compose contemporary songs “their songs we know it because they share it in audio files.”

Finally, another way of promoting the music is “to talk about it with the young people, here even in our academic setting, college setting, music school setting.”

After people are aware that the music exists, then church leaders can develop strategies for teaching these songs to congregations. One strategy would be “to first maybe let

397 Talimeren.
the choir sing and then the choir can help, that’s the way to start it.”

Talimeren, the Music Director at Dimapur Ao Baptist Arogo uses a similar method to introduce new hymns. He will have the part masters from the choir learn the parts of a new hymn and introduce it on Sunday morning or during the week at an evening service.

Good Music Leaders

Just like good song leadership by trained musicians is vital for the hymns to be “lively” and “powerful” and for praise and worship songs to be acceptable to the older generation; good leadership is vital for the introduction of Naga Christian folk songs as well. They are very different than what Nagas are used to singing in church so “unless we have a very good leader who knows how to pull the congregations together it’s difficult.”

Many of the people I interviewed emphasized the importance of music training for effective worship leadership. “It depends on how the leader leads, it is not the form” that makes the service boring or less impactful, “how the leader leads the song makes a difference.” Culturally and theologically Nagaland has shifted to value folk songs and is open to their use in the church, but one final thing is needed. Vivee explains, “I think we are ready the only thing is we need good musicians… good leadership.”

---

399 Vivee Peseye, January 28th, 2017.
400 Nzan Odyuo, March 24th, 2017.
This is true for all the styles of music. Many people I spoke to also complained that the praise and worship is too loud and noisy. The youth play all the instruments “as hard as possible” and you cannot understand the words they are singing because the voices are drowned out.\textsuperscript{404} The sound systems are often turned up as loud as possible. The older generation “somehow can’t enjoy [praise and worship]” when it is done this way.\textsuperscript{405} Banuo explained when the praise and worship is so loud “we get tired of the noise, it’s not a beautiful music anymore it becomes noise.”\textsuperscript{406} Nchemo suggests the young people need proper training on the use of sound equipment to make praise and worship more enjoyable for all generations.

Furthermore, music directors and song leaders need theological training so they can make sure only Biblically accurate songs are sung as well as teach the members of their music ministry and congregation correct theology of worship. Talimeren regularly does this with the nine sector choirs he directs as music director of DABA (Dimapur Ao Baptist Arogo), “I supervise them and introduce the hymns… I go correct them if it is theologically not good… It’s a worship matter so if we don’t present according to the biblical messages… it is not good. It is not good on our part to sing without knowing the meaning, without giving a proper message.” Talimeren has both a Bachelors of Divinity and a Bachelors of Music, but few music leaders in Nagaland have both musical and theological training. Avoni Odyuo teaches a class on Music and Worship at Golden Crown College. She shares her dismay, “some of the things the students are hearing it for the first time like what is worship or why do we worship God, how do we worship God, when do we worship God… They are hearing it for the first time and I feel like the church should be teaching

\textsuperscript{404} Mozhui.

\textsuperscript{405} Mozhui.

\textsuperscript{406} Banuo Ngukha.
that. Even if it’s in a sermon, Bible study or youth study, anywhere we should be doing that even the worship team … they should come together and not just practice the songs but have time in the word and study why they are leading. They should understand the concept of worship then I think it will be more meaningful, that part is missing.”

Music education programs for church leaders could include some bible and theology classes or workshops and conferences could be offered to lay leaders.

Many areas of Naga Christian worship would vastly improve if leaders with training in music, theology and sound engineering were available to lead hymns and praise and worship in the church. The need for trained music directors, choir masters and song leaders was frequently mentioned to me as one of the greatest needs of the Naga church today. Avoni believes one of the main needs of the Naga church is worship leaders with authentic faith and spiritual maturity.

They act like all holy and everything but when you really go into conversation with them some of them they don’t know the Bible or their daily life the way they behave and all that it’s not very Christian…those are the people leading and then on top of that…I feel like that most of their praise and worship is like a performance…. Why I say this I see this like the ones on the stage they are like playing very nice the guitar and the drums and everyone even the singers are very nice singers, they sing very well and I look down to the crowd and like no one is singing along, and that’s bad you know because the role of the worship team or the worship leader is to make the congregation sing along with them.

Talimeren encourages church leaders to “pick someone from your community, the talented people and send them where they will get a proper training” so that more churches can have trained full-time music directors. He believes this is important because like many others he says, “the way we worship becomes kind of monotonous.” This could be solved by hiring

---

407 Avoni Odyuo, Interview by author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, April 1st, 2017.
408 Ibid.
409 Talimeren.
410 Ibid.
trained music directors. Worship leaders with a “knowledge of music will have more innovative ideas to sing in the churches and for the participation of musicians.”<sup>411</sup> If a trained music leader “is there definitely the creativity in the church worship will begin to take place… I feel that it is important… for the singing as well as for the spiritual nourishment, it’s not about just singing but even music is preaching the word of God… music is a medium to preach the word of God.”<sup>412</sup> Talimeren concludes, “there is so much things to do here in Nagaland especially as music in the church is concerned.”<sup>413</sup>

Strong leadership is essential for bringing Naga folk music into the church. Nzan encouraged that for traditional music to be incorporated in Christian worship, “somebody should work aggressively then it will happen, praise and worship was not accepted until we started from 1990…. Somebody need to come and inspire people to revive the traditional music…not for museum but to use.”<sup>414</sup> Some of the young people find the traditional music boring but Nzan encouraged, “if they develop properly people really enjoy singing.”<sup>415</sup>

<sup>411</sup> Talimeren.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>414</sup> Nzan Odyuo, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.
Chapter 5
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This study investigated the music used in Christian worship in Nagaland India, by recording the history and modern day use of hymns, contemporary praise and worship, and revival songs, interviewing Naga composers and analyzing the use and advocacy for Naga folk music in Christian worship. Special emphasis was given to the translation and transcription of hymns by N. Mozhui of the Lotha tribe and Nzan Odyuo’s promotion of praise and worship. Discussion and analysis of the generational divide in musical preferences was included. Finally, special attention was given to the birth of the Christian Revival Church denomination and revival songs as a genre unique to the Naga people. These revival songs or *kecha tsali* are anonymously written and inspired by the Holy Spirit during times of prayer and *roupfū tsali*, singing in the Spirit. The genre originated in the Revival Church denomination but is now used by congregations throughout Nagaland at special revival services.

The personal history and compositional process of several composers and an analysis of their work forms the next section of the paper. The composers R. Kevichusa and Niekemhezo were included in the study because their compositions are some of the few composed by Nagas included in the Angami Hymnal. D. S. Zhasa is another composer from the Angami tribe, however he is a leader in the Christian Revival Church denomination and composed songs commonly sung by those congregations. Nzan Odyuo, from the Lotha tribe also composed choruses, anthems and some songs with Naga folk influence. In fact, all the composers included in the study composed with Naga folk music to some degree, though some did only out of necessity for a child’s class assignment, some did unconsciously because it came naturally while
composing and some did intentionally with the hopes of fusing Naga folk tunes with western music to create Christian worship contextualized for Nagaland. Gedion Thono, James Swu and Hojevi Cappo all took this later approach because of their training at the Asian Institute of Liturgy and Music. The college encouraged students to compose music for Christian worship using indigenous folk tunes. Gedion Thono and James Swu wrote several choral arrangements in this manner, while Hojevi Cappo in recent years has focused on arrangements for his indigenous music group Nagagenous as well as songs for congregational singing. There are also a few young people composing contemporary praise and worship songs as well as Naga folk inspired Christian pop music.

The study concludes with discussion and analysis of the use of Naga folk music in worship. A folk music revival spurred on by exposure to global music and the Hornbill festival has led some church leaders and music educators to advocate for the use of Naga folk music in the church. They argue that the use of Naga folk music in Christian worship would not only preserve the genre but also make Christian worship more relevant and participatory. They recommend fusing Naga folk tunes with western music to encourage whole hearted worship and a lifestyle of worship from all generations. Opponents of Naga folk music in worship argue some may still associate it with animism and head-hunting where as others claim it is no longer a relevant style to Nagas who have sung hymns and now praise and worship all their lives. Advocates for Naga folk music in Christian worship especially want to see the music used for congregational singing, however three main obstacles hinder its use in this way. First, young people do not know folk music because western music is so dominant and there are no current effective methods for transmitting folk songs to the next generation. Second, Naga compositions are only used as special music because Naga folk music has become predominantly a
performance genre and composers only compose on request for special events. Finally, some composers cite difficulties transcribing Naga folk music in western staff notation. Naga’s recommend overcoming these obstacles by putting Christian words to non-religious folk tunes, increasing awareness and accessibility to Naga Christian songs thru print and audio recordings, and by encouraging both musical and theological training for worship leaders.

Conclusions

The investigation of Christian music in Nagaland immediately revealed a generational divide in worship style preferences. The older generation loves the hymns but the younger generation prefers praise and worship. While it is easy to see this divide as identical to the worship wars in the United States it is in fact far more complex and deeply nuanced. The socio-economic and political history of Nagaland frames and informs the development of this divide in significant ways. First, the Naga-Indo war manifested the growing unity between the Naga tribes in the political sphere as Naga’s united to fight for independence. The hymns became the voice of this unity as all tribes could sing and worship together through the hymns, each person singing in their own language yet all still singing the same song. The older generation grew up singing only the hymns in church all their lives. Secondly, the rapid modernization, urbanization and globalization of Nagaland created drastically different lifestyles and upbringings for the older and younger generations. One lived an agricultural lifestyle in the village while the other dedicated countless hours to formal education and work in the cities. As the Naga-Indo war came to an end outside influences also began to rush in bringing the younger generation in contact with a wide variety of styles of music, most significantly praise and worship.
Third, this urbanization and emphasis on English education has led to language loss. Linguistically diverse urban populations use English or Nagamese to communicate and education is all conducted in English. Many young people speak their tribal language less fluently than their parents and grandparents presenting a challenge to whole hearted worship through the translated hymns. They prefer the praise and worship songs not only because of the musical style but also because they feel more comfortable worshiping in English. Lastly, the generational divide in worship is affirmed through the social structure of Nagaland that places a large distinction between young single persons and older married individuals. There are a vast number of differences between the expectations of these two groups including which church service they attend. The younger generation attends the Sunday night youth services while the older married couples attend the Sunday morning service. This transition is natural in Naga communities because it coincides with a variety of other changes in expectations upon marriage.

Interestingly, many of the reasons for the generational divide between worship music styles also contribute to the disappearance of Naga folk music and dance. The older generation practiced these traditions as part of their daily life in the village but as lives were disrupted by warfare, urbanization and modernization the platforms for teaching and passing along these songs and dances disappeared. New platforms were not created because disapproval of folk songs and dances by missionaries and the first converts lingered in the older generation’s mentality. Today, the vast majority of the younger generation has extremely limited knowledge of Naga traditional or folk music. Even the middle generation feel like “tourists in our own land.” Recent years has seen a great revival of traditional music and culture with Hojevi Cappo, Vivee Peseye, James Swu and others leading the way in bringing that music into the

---

416 James Swu, March 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2017.
church. Ao church leader, Jongshimanen also emphasized to me how beneficial the use of Naga folk music in Christian worship would be to encourage a lifestyle of worship to God, combining Naga and Christian identity rather than keeping these two aspects of oneself distinct as has been the case to some extent in the past.

Despite these voices of assent to Naga folk music in worship, there is very little used in the church. This is not because the materials are not there. Many Christian worship songs with Naga folk music inspiration have been written and some are even published but these songs are not regularly used in the church for several reasons. First, many fear the older generation will oppose its use because of its connection to animism and head-hunting. While many voice this fear they also recognize that times have changed and many people today see Naga folk music as part of their cultural heritage with no religious connotation. Secondly, Naga folk music has been relegated to a performance genre in secular spheres. Rather than being a communal activity as it was before, the use of folk songs and dances today is primarily in a performance context for special festivals and foreign visitors. This translates to Christian worship in which folk inspired songs are only performed for special music and not used for congregational worship because the majority of the congregation is accustomed to being a spectator rather than a participator in the genre. Secondly, composers almost always compose by request for specific events. Because their song is composed for a specific event or occasion, it is performed at the event, maybe a few times more and then quickly forgotten. Thirdly, the music itself presents challenges. The AILM graduates composed complex music for choirs not congregational singing and others struggled to transcribe the Naga folk tune into western notation because it does not perfectly conform to a western rhythmic system. Lastly, the greatest hurdle facing the incorporation of Naga folk music in Christian worship is the need for good worship leaders.
Skilled worship song and music leaders is one of the greatest needs of Nagaland at this time. Leaders with both theological and musical training are needed to make the hymns lively and engaging and to make the praise and worship orderly and intentional. Worship leaders are needed to teach the meaning of the songs so the congregation can sing with deeper understanding. And in the case of Naga folk inspired songs, worship leaders can teach the congregation how to sing them and develop effective strategies for incorporating them into regular worship. Institutions like Patkai Christian College’s Margaret Shishak School of Music are leading the way in training musicians and church leaders to meet this need, but there is still much work to be done.

Overall, this study shows the desire of the Naga people to worship God authentically and accurately. While trained worship leaders will help reach that goal, many see the use of Naga compositions in all different styles as a means to more fully engage the hearts and minds of Naga people in worship. That’s why the recommendations of this study focus on how to incorporate songs written by Nagas regardless of style into regular congregational worship as well as recommendations for encouraging folk compositions and areas for further study.

**Recommendations**

Current methods of introducing new songs can continue to be used as a first step towards incorporating Naga compositions in worship. The current methods for introducing new hymns to a congregation could also be used to introduce new Naga worship songs. These include performing songs as special music, teaching the song at mid-week services or during the pre-service worship time, and utilizing part masters from choirs to lead the song. For example, in one Lotha service I attended, the song leader sang a hymn during the pre-service singing time that
was then sung again during the actual service. Abigail explained they do this if “the hymn is new to the church or they sung it incorrectly before or if they haven’t been singing the song for some time and the song leader thinks they have forgotten the song.” In this particular service the song was 302 “Mine Eyes Have seen the Glory” in Lotha, “Opvui Pfütsson Lona Etsao Ji.” New compositions written by Nagas could be introduced the same way.

Similarly, the successful introduction of new praise & worship songs in the 90s can be a model for introducing new songs written by Nagas today. During a function they had a special praise and worship session where theology defending the use of praise and worship was taught along with the songs themselves. Nzan used to sing one line and have the congregation repeat it, “then after a while they sing along, then everybody sings together.” This method was successful in a time where technology and access to music was limited, “now it is quite easy you have the LCD projector” to display lyrics. This same technique for promoting praise and worship could successfully promote Naga compositions, especially those containing folk and traditional music. Nzan advises in reference to Naga folk inspired worship songs that “someone should write the song and produce in a hymnal like this and encourage people to sing.” I recommend setting aside special services to teach from the Bible about the acceptability and importance of using Naga inspired music and to sing songs composed by Nagas, particularly those containing Naga folk and traditional music since this is so theologically contested. This would lay the foundation for a grassroots revival of folk music in worship.

---

417 Abigail Odyuo, personal conversation with author, Bor Lengri Lotha Baptist Church Yithenro, March 5th, 2017.


419 Ibid.

These educational and awareness oriented services, however are only a first step to encouraging Naga compositions because the research demonstrates that current methods for introducing new music that rely on special events, competitions and services fail to integrate the new songs into regular congregational worship. Avoni mentioned that for a church competition they encouraged the singing of traditional songs from the hymnal by dividing the women by colony and assigning each group a traditional song to practice and sing. This was definitely a great step towards increasing awareness of the Naga Christian folk songs however, more research is needed to understand why after the event these songs were not integrated into Sunday morning worship. I recommend this further research focus first, on the aforementioned relegation of Naga folk music to performance rather than communal use with special attention to the Hornbill festival and the Ministry of Culture and second, on how social practices and expectations impact the composition and sharing of new music.

Next, I recommend encouraging the composition of new worship songs through several methods. First, the work of Kevichusa and Niekemhiezo testifies to the importance of prayer and the inspiration of God in the composition of new songs. It is through prayer that individuals are inspired to composed but also groups as is demonstrated in the creation of revival songs. The established compositional model for revival songs, which successfully generates and integrates new songs into congregation worship could be used to encourage new Naga compositions. Congregations or even small groups of musicians can sing the kecha tsali and allow times for roupfū tsali either during a Sunday morning service or a special gathering. Pray for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and see what new songs emerge during these times of worship. Further study of revival songs is needed to understand the compositional process for this genre as well as how a song inspired during roupfū tsali becomes a regularly sung kecha tsali.
The next method for encouraging new worship songs, specifically those inspired by folk and traditional music relies heavily on the collection and preservation of Naga folk music and dance. The realm of Naga traditional or folk music needs a monumental amount of study. This precious music is dying out with the older generation and before it does ethnomusicologists need to study and record it for future generations. Preservation and collection of Naga folk songs and dances would necessitate further study of the issues in transcribing and notating Naga folk tunes in western staff notation. Furthermore, from this study and preservation, the dreams of James Swu and others to contextualize Naga folk music and dance for the modern context can be realized. The Nagas want to incorporate the Naga folk music into worship but many have limited knowledge of the genre. Once the music is collected via audio recording or transcription, more composers could compose the same way James, Gedion, Nzan and others have by taking an original folk tune and writing new Christian words. These collected folk tunes could also be used in fusion music, whether in more traditional choral and hymn arrangements or in contemporary pop and rock styles. For any of these methods to be effective strong leadership is needed to move things forward. Influential church leaders should seek out Naga compositions, encourage Naga composers and work alongside ethnomusicologists to develop effective methods for integrating Naga compositions into Christian worship.

So many areas for further study emerged from this research. First, investigation of Christian worship in general can be continued. The large number of tribes not included in this study should be researched. Christian worship in villages should be studied and compared to that of urban environments. Further investigation of choirs and choral singing could be conducted and there are many more composers and Christian leaders that could be interviewed. Lipok, Vesato and Kughaho Chichi, were mentioned to me as individuals who have done significant
work for Naga church music but I was unable to include them in this study. Interestingly, I was introduced to only male composers during my time in Nagaland and learned of only one female Christian composer, Jano Nyekha. Their omission begs the question of how gender impacts Christian composition? Further, investigation of gender in folk music and Christian worship is needed. A more thorough investigation and compilation of revival songs would also be beneficial. The generation divide between hymns and praise and worship could be studied in more depth. Greater understanding of the social context for this generation gap would be of great value as well as further collaboration with church leaders on ways to address the generational divide in the future. What do Naga church leaders hypothesize will happen to this divide as the older generation passes and the younger generation ages? How can the church continue to navigate the ever changing socio-economic and political context of Nagaland, specifically in reference to its worship music?

Finally, continued research and collaboration with Nagas is desperately needed to develop methods and platforms for the preservation, transmission and contextualization of Naga folk music and culture. Transcription and musical analysis of the folk songs and dances would be of great value. This research also suggests there is a uniqueness to Naga vocal production and perhaps even traditional vocal physiology which would merit much further investigation. Ethnographic study of the original and modern day use of Naga folk songs and dances is needed. Advocate ethnomusicology is needed to determine how Naga folk culture has been affected by the Naga people’s unique minority status within the Indian nation. Furthermore, applied ethnomusicology can be used to study how the original communal nature of the music might be revived in the church context. Finally, further study and development of platforms for the training of church music leaders is needed to meet the need for effective worship leadership in
Naga churches. There is so much work to be done by ethnomusicologists in Nagaland. I hope this paper will inspire many more to go and explore the music of this unique and beautiful people.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


_____.


_____.

Zhimo, Avitoli G. "Indigenizing Christianity: Politics of Conversion Among the Sumi Naga."
Appendix 1

A. Tonic solfa notation in Tangkhul Naga Baptist Convention Hymnal

B. Revival Songs Sung by Patkai Students

Song 1:
Tsie Ruopfü Kekuo Kefseshücie (x2)
Hie Kethachüko kedipie kekuonūsū
Tsie Ruopfü kekuo kefseshücie

Translation:
Send the power of the Holy Spirit now (x2)
Turn/Change/Surrendering our weakness into His Strength/power
Send the power of the Holy Spirit now

Song 2:
Kemesa Roupfū mu mi nu, a petse schücie (x3)
Halleluya     Halleluya

Translation:
Anoint me with the fire of the Holy Spirit (x3)
Hallelujah    Hallelujah

Kechakoulie, Rokoseno Zhasa, and Vilhoubeizo Kire, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, May 3rd, 2017.
C. Revival Song translated into Tenyidie from Assamese tribe

“Niepu No a bu rei tsucie” Key of Doh (Lord let me too)

1. Niepu mia puo n lie nu tsuzhie
   No puo khröhishücie,
   N kekuo se mo zo liro kita?
   No puo khröhishücie.

Korüs:
   Niepu No a bu rei tsucie
   A la mhatho huo ba mecie
   Niepu No a cha thashücie
   A bu rei N lie nu tsucie.

2. N lietho nu u shū kerhei chū
   Teiso teizei si mo
   Khe merü zorei sirei tuoshūzhie
   No puo khröhishücie.

3. Mezieta moro puotei touki,
   Vo rüleita zutuo,
   Dieliemia ketsü khoushūtse metha
   Teigei rüleitatuo.\(^\text{423}\)

---

\(^{423}\) D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14\(^{th}\), 2017.
D. Sümi revival song from Xükithe Le Kaku, the revival song booklet

46. “Jisü Akümzapu Jisü”

1. Axine lono samo shi xüche
   Niye Alhou mütha no xüche
   Ikemu xakulu sakushono
   Pano ikimiyeno xalu

   Jisü, Jisü akümzapu Jisü
   Nono ikukeu ino chilu
   Jisü, Jisü ikim ‘ye keu Jisü
   Ni ow shiva ixalulo

2. Ampeu Jisü no ayeghi lo ighi
   Axine kümtsü pano qhitsü
   Ino pa kikimiye ithulu
   Pano ixakulu-u ipi ithi

3. Ayeghilo kini kümtsü tsünamu
   Jisü kikimiye toimo
   Tighenguno kimiye keu pesu
   Alhokuthu Jisü sa xüni

4. Axine no ighime akelo
   Ino ighamuku Jisü ku
   Jisü pau no ikhape Luno
   Pano inhezü isüvetsü

5. Niye Jisüno isasü cheni
   Ighüzula lo ghi müsamo
   Niye kungu lo pa sasü xüni
   Itehi niye Jisü w shiva

Loose Translation:

1. I used to live in sin like a dream
   I used to live without knowing God
   But when I met the savior
   By His grace He saved me

   Jesus Jesus wonderful savior
   I heard you calling me
   Jesus Jesus wonderful savior
   I belong to you, save me
2. Jesus came into this world
   And forgives all sins
   I experience his love
   I understood he is my Savior

3. Even all the wealth the world offers
   It is not like the love of Jesus
   That is the reason with my love
   I will live with Jesus forever

4. While I was tormented by sin
   I shouted and called on Jesus
   Then Jesus held me with his hand
   He wiped away my tears

5. I am lead by Jesus
   I will not be afraid
   Even in my journey I will live with Him in heaven
   Now Jesus is mine\textsuperscript{424}

\textsuperscript{424} Hojevi Cappo, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, May 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
E. Lie Me Re Vi Zhūte by R. Kevichusa

F. “Out of Darkness into Light” by R. Kevichusa

Out of Darkness Into Light
(Quasquicentennial Theme Song)

1. In the morning and at noon-dae, Come a-couraging, bow be-
fore Him; In the evening and at mid-night, Praise and worship.

2. In the darkness and in shadow, Rise up and seek, lost and
healing: Take the tidings to all nations: Christ has healing

3. Climb the mountains, cross the oceans, Ever trusting, ever
lu-jaah! Halle-lu-jaah! Halle-lu-jaah! Halle-

4. Halle-jaah! Halle-lu-jaah! Halle-lu-jaah! Halle-
lu-jaah! Halle-

Refrain

off er Him
described “sting” We are God’s people, called by His name: His greatest-
lu-jaah!

Ever we proclaim. We are God’s people, saved by His grace.

“Called out of darkness into light.”

---

426 Used by permission of Razhukhrieli Keveichüsa, personal communication with author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 4th, 2017.
“Azuo-Mother” by Niekemhezo Yhor

AZUOG

(Mother)

1. Ke nei ke so zha ko le vo-ro, Azuo a kasirie le mo fie vi me.
2. Azuo me zhe mia the na gu mo rei, Poo ko ke la nhia dhe pe kru ke shi.

Korus

Koro

Dedicated to Mothers

KVBC, Theykoko
10th May 2015. Mother’s Day

427 Used by permission of Neikemhezo Yhor, personal communication with author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 24th, 2017.
H. "Terhuo Ukhrie-In God's Love" compiled by Neikemhezo Yor

Terhuo Ukhrie
(In God's Love)

(A Taot Rythm)

Ta ti
1. Te - rho - o u khr - i - rie, u, bu - hou - sie - ra
2. Yi ke - hou zou mis - ki vi - ri - ket
3. Pu ke - zha si - ki de ke - tho - shu

Te - rho - o u khr - i - rie, we, u bu - hou - sie - ru u - nu
U - ke - hou zou, we, mis ki vi - ri - ket
Pu ke - zha su, we, ku - si ke - cho - shu

Chorus / Coda

The - ja ke (the - ja Ke) pha ri - na ba nu - hou.
Mi - ra - vi (mi - ra - vi) rel, u - ra mho - mo.

The - ja ke (phl), we, ri - na ba - ru hou tu - ru
Mi - ra - vi rel, we, u - ra mho - mo.

Presented by:
Kevingameno Yhor

---

428 Used by permission of Neikemhezo Yhor, personal communication with author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 24th, 2017.
I. Niekmhiezo Yor’s original framed score “Jisu A Kì Kevor Ze-When I Let Jesus Come In”\textsuperscript{429}

\textsuperscript{429} Used by permission of Niekmhiezo Yhor, personal communication with author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 24\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
J. “Jisu A Ki Kevor Ze-When I Let Jesus Come In” By Niekemhiezo Yor Text and Translation

First Verse;
Jisu a ki kevor ze a kijü kesa puo ngute
Thiedzü we a ha kemhie letuoya mo
Jisu zo moü liro suonie hau pie a tsütuo ga?
Jisu u kekhrie ha kedipfü u ngo ga!

Chorus:
No rei kenei ketho mengu kethoya ro,
Jisu ki vorliecie Puo n meliewa lho
Jisu pelelie rom ha pete nviezo

Second verse:
Ketsa nu menyiepou ko pou pie ziekrui zo keba
Süko zivi rei niepuu zayiezo
Pera ko rei ruo mevükhuoi ketsa va keza pfü
Derei u themia ha puo kenei tuo mote

Third Verse:
Kijü hagei vieko n la tseilie thenyüsie ba me?
Süko ngulie rei Jisu sa mo liro
No tuokeshü nhie süko n ze teigei kholie vi me?
Süla a zeu no, tsie n pepiliecie

Fourth Verse:
Thechü kezivi phi puo chüpie u peteko pfhe ba
Kelakelieu vo sünu u pfheba
Hie rei khunhie vo süra lhuoketuo le hie nei phi ba
No rei vo lhounyü ro, tsie n kese liecie

Translation:
First Verse:
When I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal savior it seems like a new world or it seems like a new world.
Before I have never imagined or thought of this change unless it is only by the grace of Jesus Christ I received this
The love of our lord Jesus Christ is so wonderful

Chorus:
If you want real joy come to Jesus
Jesus will never reject you or refuse you
Receive Jesus Christ into your life you will have everything

Second Verse:
In the jungle flowers are blooming birds are chirping and all their beauty and their glory all the beauty of the flowers, all the sweet melody of the birds are for the glory of our Lord. But we human being we have no joy We have no joy

Third Verse:
Here on this early well we never go into heaven it will get early well but not Jesus you are not getting into heaven therefore my friend accept the lord Jesus Christ right now

Fourth Verse:
There is a beautiful grace in heaven for us its waiting for us our savior also there is waiting for us even myself also is sure to go there one day if you also want to go there accept the Lord Jesus Christ right now

430 Neikemhiezo Yhor, Personal communication with author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, March 24th, 2017
K. “Send me to thy field” (Probhu Moi Ke Bhi Pothabi.) By D. S. Zhasa 1954

1. O Lord, a man is going to Your field,
   Thou help him on his way,
   If not by Your pow’r, then what shall it yield?
   Thou help him on his way.

   Chorus:
   O Lord! Send me too in Thy field,
   There must be some works for me
   O Lord! Thou guide me on my way,
   Send me to Thy field I pray.

2. Lord in Thy field, he’s working gladly,
   No day nor night is known,
   Hunger may fill him, he’s going in your name,
   Thou help him on his way.

3. If not weary than in God’s own time,
   We shall rest with the Lord;
   When the angels blows the Trumpet of God,
   Then we shall rest in Heav’n.\(^{431}\)

\(^{431}\) Used by permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017

1. This is my body, this is My body,
You take this bread, you will be healed,
This is My body, This is My body,
You take this bread you will be healed.

2. Oh! This is My blood, Oh! This is my blood,
It will be remission of sins,
Oh! This is My blood, Oh! This is My blood,
You drink this cup, you’ll be alive.\textsuperscript{432}

\textsuperscript{432} Used by permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14\textsuperscript{th}, 2017
M. “Niepu Mia Puo” By D. S. Zhasa 1954 in Nagamese. Doh is C

Hemphu Nang Barikam (Niepu mia puo N lie nu tsuzhie)

1. Hemphu Nang bari kam keklemji,
   Nephan ne rap duntha;
   Nang jakong pen pete plang unjima?
   Hemphu ne rap duntha.

   Kerui:
   Hemphu la ne pedam longtha,
   Doma Nang kam ne pharmanta?
   Hemphu Nang Tovar ne than ra;
   Nang kam ne pedam longtha.

2. Nang kam along ne ning kangsam do
   Sangse ajo nerlo;
   Keso pen kangchir langit ahutta,
   Hemphu ne rap duntha.

3. Duk cheronri O korte marli.
   Mo hadak sang longji
   Tekala atum pongut nangbut si,
   Hadak chetong petji.433

433 Used by permission of D. S. Zhasa, Personal communication with the author, Dimapur, Nagaland, India, May 14th, 2017
N. “March On” By Nzan Odyuo

LOTHA STUDENTS’ UNION ANTHEM.

KHOCHIA, NZO TSSEO; KHOCHIA.

Words and Music - Nzan Odyuo

1. Kho chia, n-ko-tssoe kho-chia voua, Lum tsoo-ni e-kho y ku k'huua Po - tso ri-ven ji
2. Kho chia, n-ko tssoe kho-chia voua, O - ri jiaang tso p'vu khyov'-ka, Po - tso e-tho lo-
3. Kho chia, n-ko tssoe kho-chia voua, Po - tso e-tho lo - na voua Po - tso lan - so, Po-

[Musical notation]

6

na vung - si, kho-chia Kho chia. Kha-chia, kho-chia, n-
na khyov'-ka, E - kho y khen khua -
tso van hya, lo - na kho chia.


11

za-tssoekho-chia ovu-ngi, Kho-chia, kho-chia lum tso-nikho chia ovu

kho-chia ovungikho-chia ovu ngi.

16

ngi Po - tso ri-ven ji na so-si, Kho chia Kho chia.

O vungi

---

434 Used by permission of Nzan Odyuo, Personal correspondence with the author, March 31st, 2017
Lotha Text:

Ho-Ho-Le-Ha-He
Ho-Ho-Le-Aya-Le
Ho-Ho-Le, Ho-Le Ha

Verse 1:
Eramoreni na, ete pyimtsü motsüi jiangna nchüng jana
Eyio Lotha Tsūna oli ri vasi
Sükhying enyia, Tokhūtala
Lotha tokhfü emong jo nzanta tukhfü
Lotha tokhfü emong jo senjümta tokhfü
Lotha tokhfü emong jo longshita tokhfü

Verse 2:
E-tokhfü emong shilo, Potso m-mha rothukhü
Nsensi ntsson, echü vara ntsona
Mhala-mhati tssoa Tokhfü che-thokvü
Lotha tokhfü emong jo nzanta tokhfü
Lotha tokhfü emong jo senjümta tukhfü
Lotha tokhū emong jo longshita tokhfü

English Translation:

From the days of our forefathers until today,
after the harvest is over seeking God’s blessings
we observe this festival
Lotha festival is a festival of Love
Lotha festival is a festival of reconciliation
Lotha festival is a festival of joy

Let the blessings of God come to this festival
Let no misfortune come during this festival
Let no one face death during this festival
Let there be blessing and blessing alone follow this (our) festival

435 Used by permission of Nzan Odyuo, Personal Correspondence with the author November 10th, 2020
Ma Sen

436 Used by permission of Gedion Thono, Personal communication with the author, February 22nd, 2017.
Q. “Ma Sen” by Gedion Thono lyrics and translation

Text: Ma sen
Ma sen ya lo
Zhi tsiiti ma sen ya lo
Ni tsiiti ma sen ya lo
Ma non khupithang chil lo

Translation: Praise him
Praise him (with stronger expression)
All the land praise him
All the people praise him
Glorify His name

R. “Haleluya” By James Swu

(removed to comply with copyright)

---


438 Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5th, 2017.
S. “Ampeu Shelo He” By James Swu\textsuperscript{439}

(Removed to comply with copyright)

\textsuperscript{439} Used by permission of James Swu, Personal communication with author, Chumukeidma, Nagaland, India, April 5\textsuperscript{th}, 2017.
T. “Pano Ni Lhoke Wa! (He Has Created Us)” by Hojevi Kappo

**PANO NI LHOKE WA!**
(He Has Created Us)

1. Pa no ri lho - ke wa! Pa no ni lho - ke, Ni ye Pa she mo - no ngo - mü - la.
2. Pa ni xa - lu - ke wa! Pa ni xa - lu - ke, Ni ye Pa she mo - no ngo - mü - la.
3. Pa ni lo - pi - vi wa! Pa ni lo - pi - vi, Ni ye Pa she mo - no ngo - mü - la.

*Wa' is a sweet and compassionate traditional expression of the Siang tribe. Normally addressed by elderly people.*