

Why don't the Evangelical Churches in the Andes of Ecuador use their indigenous music to worship God?

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Introduction

This is my fourth tutorial. The first three were literature reviews and theoretical. Since this is field research, both the format and the content are very different. My committee members have read my mid-term proposal. For the reader who has not, I will try to fill in the necessary information.

The Research Site

Quito is city. But just on the other side of its east mountain ridge lies a valley which holds an interesting mix of city folk escaping the crowd and smog, and indigenous folk trying to hold onto their lands and traditions. In this valley I have lived for the past nineteen years. This has become my home. Although I was born in Princeton, New Jersey, a little town called “El-Tingo” in the Chillo Valley has now become my point of reference when people ask me, “Where are you from?”

The Chillo Valley is a mix of white, middle-class urbanizations, and indigenous, lower-class “pueblos.”¹ When I use the word “pueblo,” which I will use throughout this paper, I refer to what Dr. Alfredo Costales, the first anthropologist in Ecuador, refers to as “doctrines” (Costales 2006:). The Catholic church gathered the Indians into pueblos in order to indoctrinate them. As a result, the whole Ecuadorian Andes region is dotted with pueblos from north to south. Every pueblo has a central park with a catholic church where mass is held regularly as well as baptisms, weddings, and many, many festivals. At first the catholic missionaries tried to eliminate these pagan festivals, but were

¹ Many excellent ethnographies have been written about some of these pueblos: Conocoto (Gallardo 1994:1); Sangolqui (Gomezjurado Zevallos 2003:1); Sangolqui (Hinojosa Figueroa 2002:1); Pintag (Sosa Freire 1996:1).

unsuccessful. The festivals eventually merged with many catholic traditions (Moya 1995:18).

The Chillo Valley holds many pueblos. Originally I selected five in which to study their festivals: El-Tingo, Alangasí, Sangolqui, Checa, and El Quinche. But in the end, I filmed festivals only in Alangasí, El-Tingo, and La Armenia. I had more success in studying the churches I had proposed: Alangasí, La Merced, Conocoto, and La Comuna. Plus I added two more after I begin my research in Ecuador: San José and Santa Teresa. (See Figure 1.)

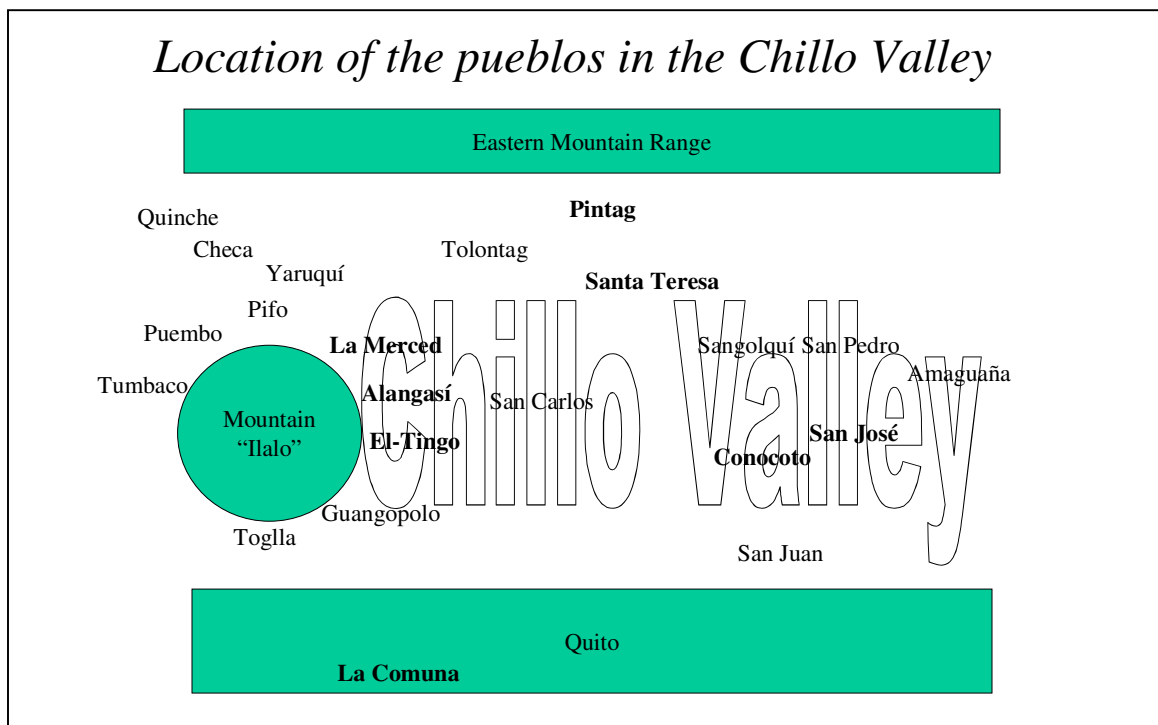


FIGURE 1 – MAP OF THE CHILLO VALLEY

The Research Question

Most of these pueblos now have evangelical churches as well, many of which I know personally. But as I have participated in their worship services, I have noticed that their worship music is very different from that of the pueblo. In fact, the whole worship event is almost incomparable with the indigenous festivals. I would think that people would want to use their own music, with which they are most familiar, to worship God, but the music they use is not indigenous. Why? In order to begin to answer that question, I returned to Quito from Pasadena for a five-month visit.

My Research Biases

I went prepared. Now, if I've been a missionary there for almost twenty years, what more preparation did I need? I had to "clean my glasses." By that phrase I refer to mental glasses that constitute one's worldview. How do I see them? How should I see them? What framework, paradigm, or model am I taking to Ecuador to view music worship in the pueblos and in the evangelical churches?

That question began to form in my mind two years ago when I was about to register for a course in Qualitative Research at Fuller Theological Seminary. To prepare for the course I began to read "The Handbook of Qualitative Research" and came across this sentence: "No inquirer, we maintain, ought to go about the business of inquiry without being clear about just what paradigm informs and guides his or her approach" (Guba 1994:116). So I began to ask myself, "What is my paradigm of research?"

I come from a scientific background. My father holds a Ph.D. from Harvard in Physics. He taught his sons to play chess, and to think analytically. I graduated from college with a B.S. in Dietetics and then an M.S. in nutrition. The Master's degree taught

me how to do research. What I have now realized is that although it taught me how to do scientific research, that is not the only way research can be done.

Every type of research has a philosophy that drives it. When I arrived at Fuller Theological Seminary to take the initial course on Research Methods, I became greatly confused and didn't know why. After more than a year of struggling, I realize now that my problem was re-programming my mind to think outside the scientific mindset. I can summarize this change in two ways.

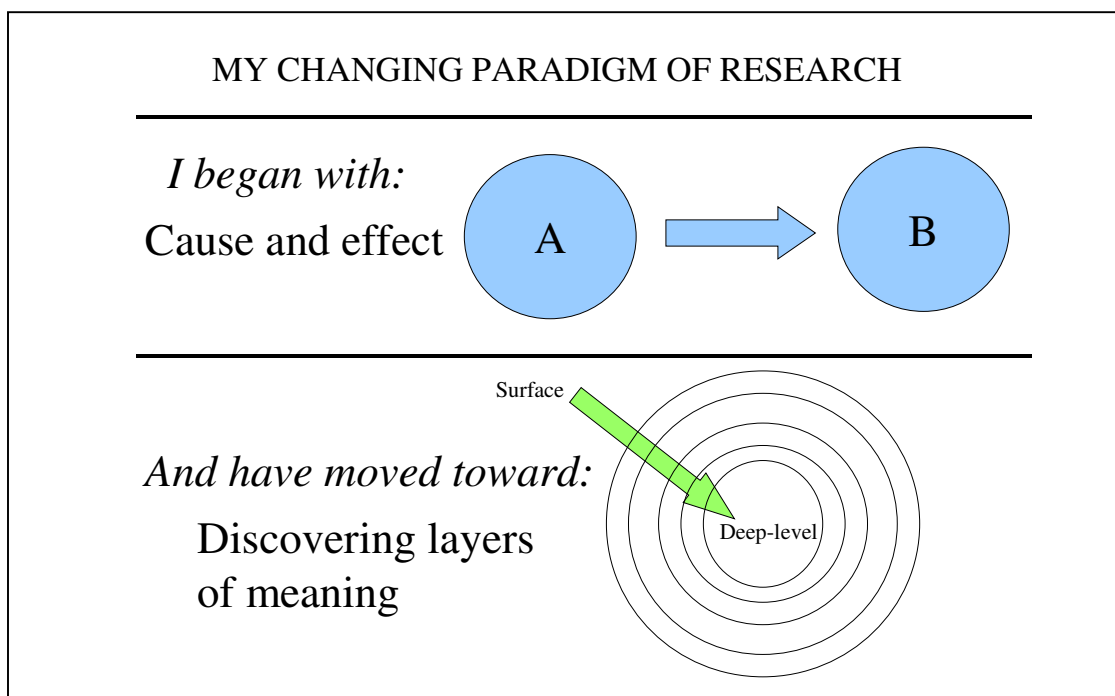


FIGURE 2 – DOING RESEARCH

The first is to think of scientific research as isolating two variables, holding everything else constant, and discovering how the first variable affects the second. You could call this "hypothesis testing." After I read some of Clifford Geertz's work, I realized another way of doing research is to uncover layers of meaning.

"man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun,
I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an

experimental science in search in law, but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1973:5).

Rather than looking at the relationship between variables, the researcher attempts to dig as deep as possible into the way people see their lives. (I have dealt with the implications of these different mindsets in my previous tutorials.) My point is that, in this tutorial, I am searching for meaning, rather than for a relationship between two variables. (See Figure 2.)

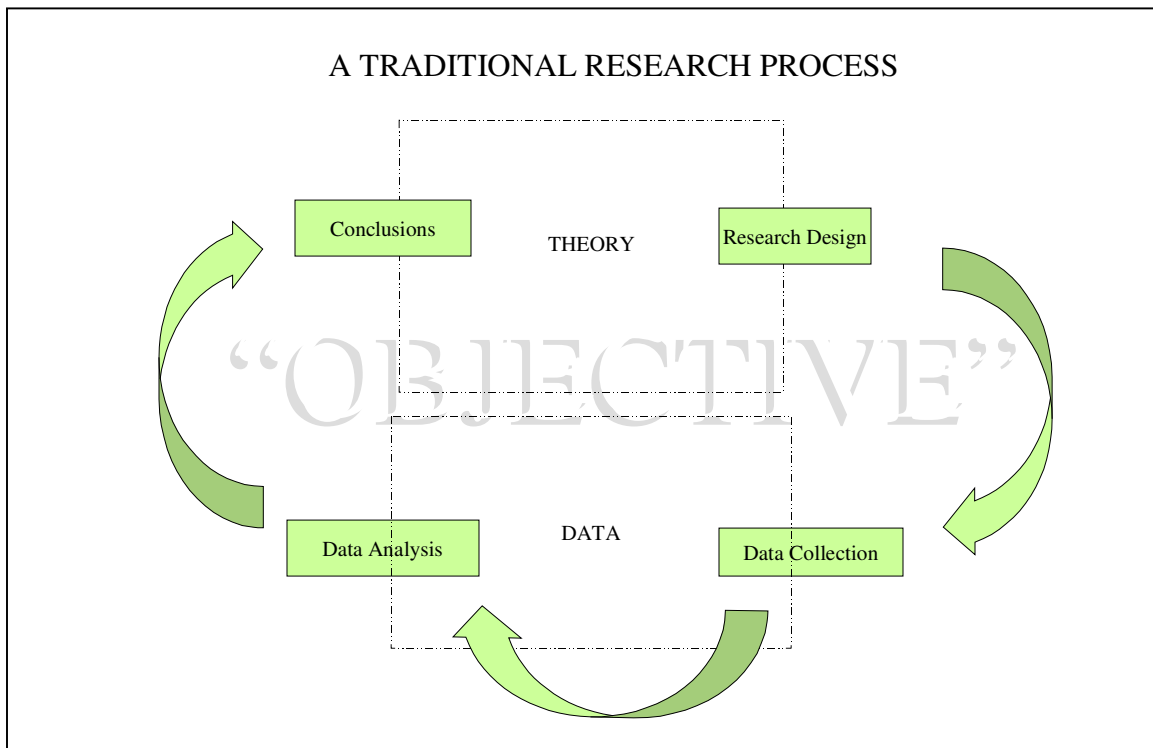


FIGURE 3 –TESTING THEORY

The second way to summarize my change of mindset is to examine different strategies of research development. One way to do research is straightforward: formulate a theory; collect the data; analyze the data; and draw conclusions. And the research is “finished.” (See Figure 3.) Another way is to formulate a theory, collect data, draw initial conclusions and then re-evaluate the theory. This process is repeated until either the theory no longer changes, or the researcher runs out of time and money to continue. (See

Figure 4.) I call the first method “testing theory” and the second “exploratory research.” And if I’m not mistaken, at Fuller Theological Seminary, the D. Miss. students do the first and the Ph.D. students do the second. In this tutorial, I am striving to do the second.

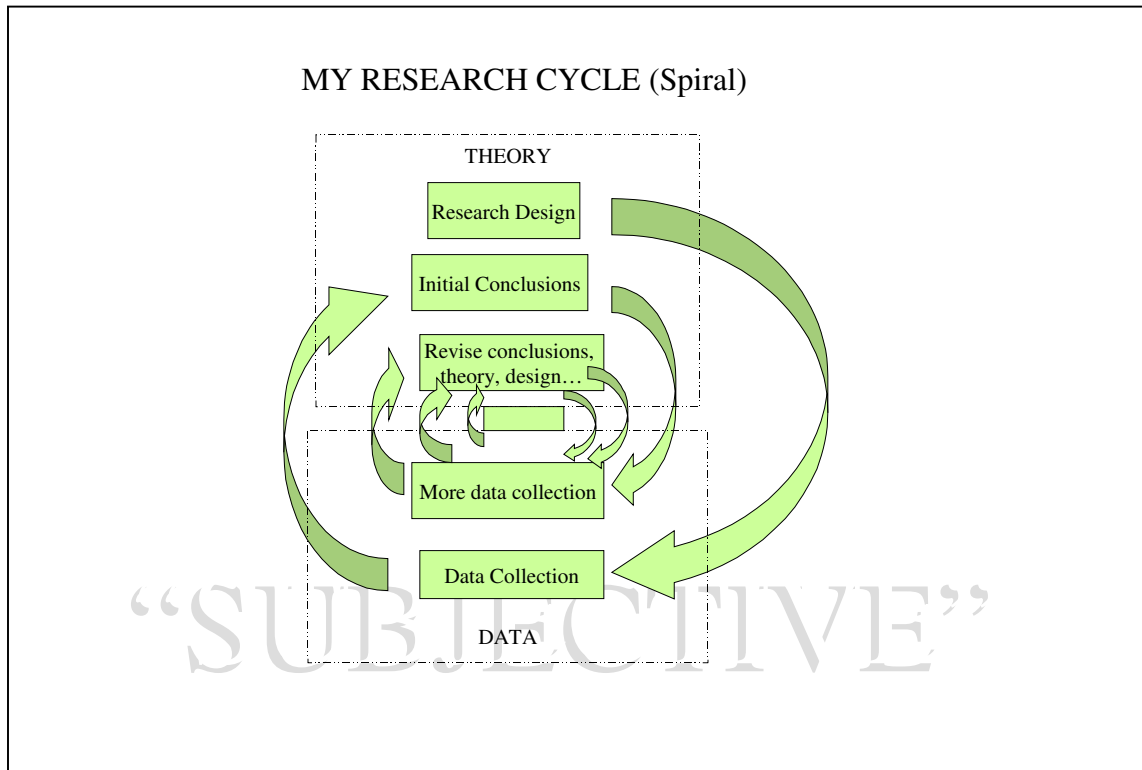


FIGURE 4 – EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

I went to Ecuador prepared with new glasses. I went to do exploratory research that would discover meaning, based on a contextual paradigm by interaction with persons, using my subjective bias. At the University of Maryland, they taught me that research had to be “objective” and that the researcher had to be “removed” from the investigation. In this tutorial, I am doing just the opposite. I am much a part of this research. In fact, my life and pilgrimage are part of the data, and my personal opinion influences most of the analysis.

Methodology

Once in Ecuador, my goal was to visit and interact with five evangelical churches in the Chillo Valley, and film the festivals in their pueblos. The films are not the data, but a means to obtain data. The plan was to show the video to the people in it, and listen to their comments and reactions. Did it go as planned? Fairly so, but not exactly. I had some wonderful surprises that I believe God placed in my path of investigation.

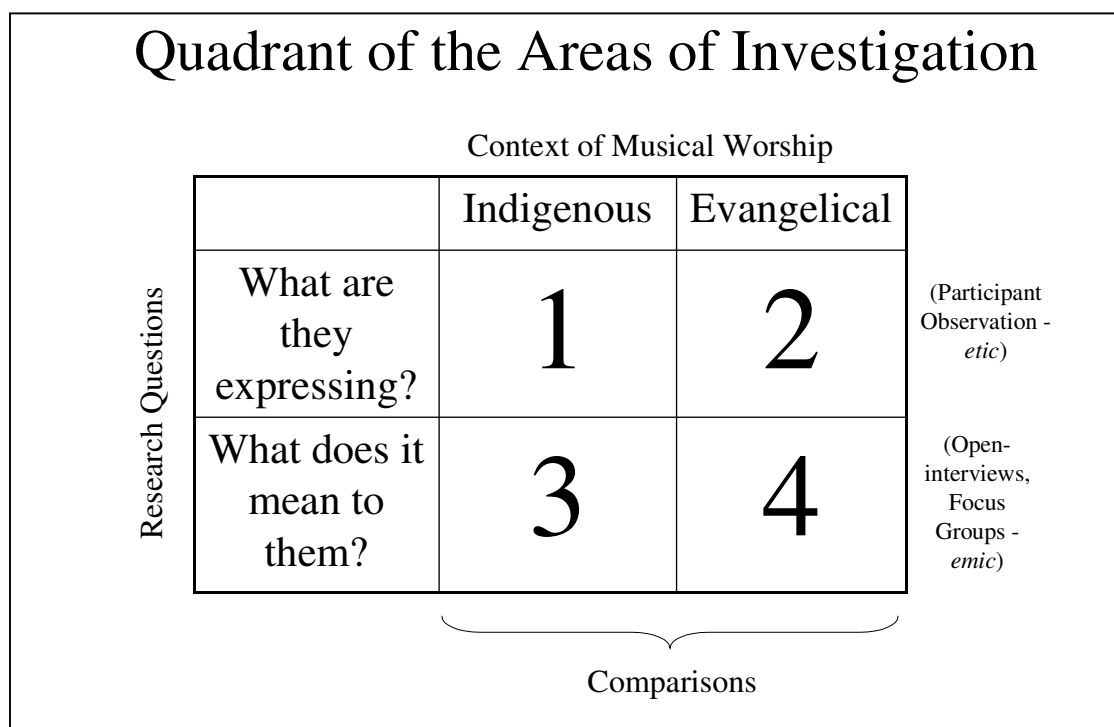


FIGURE 5 – RESEARCH QUADRANT

In my mid-term defense, I proposed a “quadrant of investigation” to illustrate the design of my study. I would use two general questions to research the music worship of two groups of people. For both indigenous festivals and evangelical Sunday services I would research: “What are they expressing?” and “What does it mean to them?” The first question deals with the “etic” sphere and uses participant observation. The second deals with the “emic” sphere and uses interviews and focus groups. (See figure 5.) Originally,

this tutorial was to study just the indigenous festivals, and the following tutorial evangelical music worship. After visiting Ecuador and examining my data, I need to change that design. This tutorial will deal principally the “etic” of both groups, and my next tutorial will need to continue my investigation of the “emic” (meaning).

As for the data analysis of this tutorial, the method of comparison is the most useful. That is, I will draw conclusions based on my experiences and biases of how the indigenous festivals compare with evangelical worship in the Chillo Valley.

Indigenous Festivals

Every pueblo in Ecuador celebrates festivals several times a year or more. The festivals are varied and differ from pueblo to pueblo. My original goal was to stick to Patron Festivals, but I found them too “commercialized.” Other festivals promised much more hope of spiritual devotion.

Alangasí

Alangasí is the next town east of my home town of El-Tingo. It is also one of the oldest towns in the Valley, dating at least 500 years (Landázuri N. 1990:28). Thus it has been the administrative center for most of the nearby towns for many years. That implies that it receives a significant budget from the government, and that it needs to maintain its reputation as the “best” town around.

The Patron Festival of Alangasí

Upon arrival in Quito, I had less than five days to prepare to film my first indigenous festival in a pueblo called “Alangasí.” (“Forget about all that paradigm stuff for a second and just make sure the camera works and film the festival!”) One of the

things I quickly learned is that I can hold a video camera for about fifteen minutes before my arm starts getting cramps. (So that's why the professionals use tripods!) I wasn't as prepared as I thought. (See Video clip #1 for a sample of the festivities.)

My wife and I have friends in that town from years ago when we worked with the evangelical church there. The Mejia family lives right on the park. So we had a place to rest (as well as a bathroom to use), and trustworthy friends to tell us what the festival agenda was for the weekend.

I wasn't surprised when the town marching band appeared, leading the Friday evening parade. Nor was I surprised by the six-foot virgin figure, encased in glass, and carried on a very decorated truck bed. What did surprise me was when they carried the virgin from the truck to the church door, and began to prepare for what I thought was going to be a form of worship of the virgin. Everyone crowded around the church door, leaving a ten-foot circle of space in front of the virgin. Into this space entered a group of Mexican mariachis who began to serenade the virgin with love songs a young boy would sing to his girlfriend. I was totally disillusioned. I had expected something much more reverent and spiritual. After all, four different bands had marched around the park following the virgin. Following the bands were groups from different neighborhoods, each with an "offering." One group paraded an offering of bamboo castles, rigged with fireworks for later in the evening. Another group carried offerings of "globes." These globes are tissue paper hot air balloons made to hold a candle at the bottom and rise when lit to disappear into the darkened sky. Another group paraded in their pickup trucks, each loaded with dry branches to feed the bonfire at the stadium. When the virgin was offered "love songs," I didn't think it fit in with the theme of the evening.

Once the virgin was back in her place in the church, everyone trickled down to the stadium, which is made of wooden poles tied together to enclose a large field with second story viewing. Of course you have to pay one dollar to climb a wooden ladder and sit on a plastic chair to view what's going on. Business is business. Each marching band took their place in one corner of the stadium, and played on, completely ignoring what the other bands were doing. The trucks entered from one side and left their loads of branches. The bamboo castles were set up and the bonfire lit to set off the fireworks. Personally, I have seen this many times before, and I couldn't see any spiritual worship going on here. So I went home to return for the parade the next day.

Saturday was the big parade where every nearby neighborhood participates in one way or another. Again, I have seen these many times before, but this time I came with new eyes, looking for music and worship. It didn't take me long to see that nothing spiritual was going on here. You would expect to see a central theme throughout the parade, especially since this whole weekend was supposed to be in honor of the patron saint of Alangasí: the Virgin of the "Candelaria." But I could quickly tell that no one was thinking about the Virgin in this parade. The military band led the parade, followed by the president of the town council who organized the whole thing. Various groups followed, and the parade continued for about two hours. One group would represent a typical indigenous tradition, such as faces painted black, men dressed in ponchos, wielding machetes, and dancing to a drum. The next group was scantily dressed girls dancing to reggae! Another group of indigenous folk was followed by cheerleaders! Forget about the Virgin. This is a party! Later on, I would learn that the only part of the whole weekend considered to be spiritual was the catholic mass.

I have rarely attended mass, since I grew up evangelical. But still I could tell that this mass was more than normal. All the pews were full, and many were standing at the back and in the doorway. Different groups had various participations. Again I was surprised by Mexican mariachis serenading the virgin, and during mass itself! I was still waiting for indigenous music, which never came. At the end of mass, two young men played several wonderful duets on guitar and trumpet. They were obviously trained in the music conservatory in Quito.

Talking with our friends from the Mejia family, who have lived in Alangasí for two generations, I found out their opinion of the festival was that it's just empty tradition. No one knows how it started, nor gives it any spiritual meaning, nor really cares about either.

The Evangelical Church near Alangasí

One of the Mejia family, Pablo, is the youngest of five brothers. I have known him for eighteen years since he was single. During his younger years he lived in Quito, but for the past twenty years he has lived in Alangasí. He is now married with four children, and pastors a small church of about twenty members. The church meets in the next town down the road, called "La Merced," about three miles from Alangasí, but many of its members are from Alangasí.

I attended one of their Sunday services and filmed the music worship. They met in the living room of a small house. With three benches and a few chairs, the room was full. Edwin, one of the youth, led with a guitar, and Jose, another young fellow, played drums. The guitar was amplified, and both Pablo and Edwin used mikes during the singing. The congregation sang enthusiastically, and all the songs were "modern." (Video clip #2)

For this paper, I will use three broad categories to group the songs: modern, traditional, and national. No church I visited sang hymns. Twenty years ago, when I first arrived in Ecuador, the churches had already switched from hymns to choruses. I refer to these choruses as “traditional” evangelical music. In the past ten years, many Latin American Christian artists have produced CD’s which spread over Latin America very quickly. Within weeks of releasing a CD, many evangelical churches are using these songs in their services. A few of these artists are: Marcos Witt, Jesus Adrian Romero, and Danilo Montero. This is the music I call “modern,” using a term I have heard in the evangelical churches in Quito. They often say, “We have modernized our music.”

“National” music, from an evangelical point of view, refers to a different style of music that has survived for at least a couple of generations. Others call this music style “indigenous.” It is usually pentatonic, does not follow the I, IV, V chord progression, and has repetitive lines. The further one is removed from the city, the more one finds this style of music in the evangelical churches. Personally, I find this style of music much more suited to congregational singing than the modern songs that are dominating the urban churches.

The following Saturday I met with Pablo and the musicians to watch the video I had recorded and to talk about music worship. This was during the time they rehearse for the service, but they were very eager to talk with me about music worship. I had two questions in my mind: “What does the music worship mean to you?” and “Do you think the festivals are worship?” But I learned quickly that people cannot verbalize deep meaning very well, and I had to try to help them by asking similar questions from different angles: What is the objective of singing? What are you trying to accomplish?

How do you know if the service was successful? From this group, I really didn't get much response beyond, "We sing on Sunday to praise God." Part of the problem was my lack of experience in this type of investigation.

When it came to commenting on the festival, the conversation became more interesting. The initial response was that the festivals are just tradition. They are part of the identity of the pueblo, and often bring in tourists. The only spiritual part is the Catholic mass inside the church. But when I asked if they had participated in the festivals, one youth, who had joined our meeting recently, said that the festivals are "art" and that he enjoyed putting on a costume and dancing with them all day long. Then I asked the group if Christians should participate or not. The answer was no. When I proposed doing a festival as Christians, they were hesitant to answer. The first response was that the pueblo would think we were making fun of them, but then Pablo commented that we Christians need to give a public testimony and that parading around town might help us be more bold in our testimony.

La Armenia

I had planned to film only certain festivals, but God gave me an opportunity I had to take. Nelson Morales had often worked for us at our camp, doing repairs and minor renovations. We have known him for several years now. He lives in a pueblo called "La Armenia." We have often had short conversations about traditions in his pueblo. He claims that in "La Armenia" some of the traditions are disappearing because key people have moved to the city or died. For example, the man who played the flute (pingullo) during Corpus Cristhi had passed away, and since no one had learned to play it, they no longer celebrated that occasion.

He mentioned that he was going to have a festival at his house. When I asked if I could film it, he immediately said, "Please do." For me it was a research opportunity. For him, he was getting a free video of his party. Although I have seen many festivals in these pueblos, (usually from the driver seat of my car, since their parades often block traffic unexpectedly), I wasn't sure what to expect. But I showed up on time with my camera, ready for whatever.

The "Pase del Niño" Festival

A large group was already in the yard when I arrived. Most of them dressed up in various costumes, with masks on their faces. We were ushered into Nelson's house and offered a large plate of ham, potatoes, and hominy corn. Tradition, of course! How can you celebrate without food! Everyone has to eat. And it was only ten o'clock. I had eaten breakfast a few hours earlier and wasn't hungry, but you can't offend the host. I began to dig away at the food, but was spared from eating the whole thing when I heard the band arriving. Since I was the photographer, I had to film them. Out I went, and the food stayed behind. My next obstacle would be to avoid the "chicha," a semi-alcoholic drink being served to everyone everywhere. But with a camera in hand and busy filming, I could politely refuse.

The band paraded in from the street. No costumes here, just uniforms of black pants and white shirts. The band consisted mostly of brass and percussion instruments: trumpets, trombones, saxophones, snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals. The music fell under my category of "national." Pentatonic and repetitive. Great for dancing.

On a sunny day, at 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit, I was comfortable. But these dancers had on a costume, some a wool poncho, and their heads were wrapped in sheets.

Some even had hats on top of the sheets. Plus the masks. They had to be sweating profusely under all that cloth! But on they went. They were organized in groups, and each group had its own costume. In general, either they dressed as Indians with ponchos or as clowns. I counted four groups, which pretty much stayed together during the dancing and parading, although their lines would intertwine. One who was not part of any group was the wolf. He had a small boy who held his leash, but I could tell the boy followed the wolf and not vice versa. I was looking for some kind of idol or virgin as the center of the occasion, but I saw none, at least not yet. (Video #3)

I had imagined the festival to be only at the house, but soon the whole group paraded down the road to another house, where they briefly repeated the music and dance. Then off to another house, for more music and dancing. On the way, another group of women, not in costume, but in uniform, joined us. They carried the flowers and the fruit baskets. At the following house, two groups of children joined us, dressed as Indians. Here the boys formed one group and the girls another. Then off to the priest's house. (The priest is the one who pays for all this! Turns out he was also baptizing his baby that day.)

Here they had a three tents set up with chairs underneath. It looked like some sort of a reception. One tent sheltered a long table. At the end of the table lay an adorned glass case. Turned out the "baby Jesus" was in the case, and that this whole festival is centered around this figure. (Okay, now I found an idol!) The festival is called "Pase del Niño" (The Passing of the Baby Jesus). The music and dancing continued. I admire the endurance of both the dancers and the band. And in a hot sun! No wonder they drink that "chicha!"

At the time, I had no idea how long the festival would last, nor if and where they would go next. So far, I was having no problem filming the festival. In fact, I was not alone. Another man was filming the festival too. And no one was complaining. In fact, they often danced a little extra just for the camera.

Then the whole group took to the street again. It seemed like the whole pueblo was present. Not many spectators. All the groups of dancers stayed together, followed by the prioste. Now the prioste was carrying the baby Jesus and just ahead of him were two girls holding ropes which suspended burning incense between the two of them. Most festivals I have seen include this type of incense. I assume it comes from the Catholic tradition somewhere. (Video #4)

After the prioste came the band, then a group of women carrying fruit baskets on their heads, and another group carrying candles. It was a least a quarter of a mile walk to the Catholic church in the hot sun. I sure hope they were enjoying it!

All the women filed into the church. Those with baskets set them up front. Then they all sat in the plastic chairs and waited (for the priest to begin mass). We must have waited for more than half an hour, and the priest sure did take his time in setting up! I noticed that no costumed figure entered the church. They went off to a neighboring house, and returned when mass was over. I assumed they felt it was improper to enter the church dressed as clowns. Mass was ordinary. No special music. The main event was the baptism of the prioste's child. Very solemn. By the looks on most people faces, I would say they were bored.

But the atmosphere changed dramatically once mass was over. The prioste exited with the baby Jesus, and the women followed with their baskets and candles. The band

struck up their usual beat, and the dancers reappeared and moved with the rhythm. I really wasn't sure where I should be nor what I needed to film. Somewhere near the prioste someone released several pigeons. As I moved toward them to see if I could film something important, it began to rain bread! Baskets of bread had been brought from somewhere, and the tradition was to throw the bread into the air for people to catch. Wow!

Eventually they formed a parade line again to return to the prioste's house. I know enough to expect that most of these festivals end up with drinking and dancing. In order to avoid being obligated to drink and dance (they had already picked out my wife for one dance), I decided my filming adventure was over for that festival.

Interview with Nelson Morales

Due to circumstances, I wasn't able to meet with Nelson to discuss the video until three months later. He is reserved, and somewhat hard to locate, unless it's about an opportunity to earn some money. He finally came to the camp, because we happened to meet on the road, and I told him his video was waiting for him.

Formal interviews are awkward, unless you know someone really well. So when Nelson came, I had to keep it fairly informal. As we watched the video, he would briefly respond to my inquiries, but nothing very deep. Plus we had kids around. Nelson told me that about half of the groups in the festival were from outside the pueblo. They had been invited and/or contracted to participate. To most of my questions he answered, "That's the tradition." I really wanted to find out why they use costumes; why they wrap their heads in sheets; what the significance is of the wolf; but those answers only come when they really trust you, and that takes time and God's grace to gain. Later a friend told me

that they don't wash their costumes, but save them. It's some kind of cleansing. But he wasn't sure, and I found no hint of it in my investigation.

Festivals in El-Tingo

My home town is El-Tingo. Having lived there for sixteen years, the local folk are beginning to trust my wife and me. Yet it is only a beginning. I can intrude a little more here than in La Armenia, but I am still far away from full confidence.

Two of the biggest annual festivals in El-Tingo are Holy Week and "Saint Peter Saint Paul." One week before the latter is a festival called "Corpus Cristhi" (the body of Christ). In general, Holy Week follows the Catholic tradition. "Saint Peter Saint Paul" is meshed with pagan traditions having to do with the solar equinox (June 23rd).

Holy Week

In El-Tingo, during Holy Week, they act out the last days in the life of Christ from Thursday through Sunday. This is not on a stage, but throughout the pueblo. For example, romans soldiers actually go up the mountain to arrest Christ and bring him back down for judgment. Our house is right on the park, but since it's rented out, we now live an hour drive away. So I was not able to be there to witness all of the events.

On Friday, they enacted the thirteen stations of the last hours in the life of Christ. This is a Catholic tradition, coming down the ranks from the Pope. The first station lay on the east side of town, and the last five are celebrated in the park, ending at the Catholic church. At each station they have a prayer, a reading, and at some, a short drama or a reflection. The whole program, including the readings and prayers, was written in a pamphlet they were selling for fifty cents.

In this procession, only a few people were wearing costumes: the Roman soldiers, Jesus, the thieves, a few select men and women who represented the disciples, and some hooded figures, dressed in purple, not mentioned in the Bible. The latter must have been part of their tradition. The rest of the people followed in regular dress. A few carried the virgin Mary, followed by another virgin I couldn't identify. The band was next, playing solemn music. Two more idols brought up the rear: Christ crucified, and Saint Peter.

They processed to each station, and followed a routine of prayer, reading, drama and/or reflection. I could tell that this year enthusiasm was lacking. The actors played their parts very routinely without much energy or expression. At several stations the protagonists were not sure what they were supposed to do. The priest was directing the whole program. (Video #5)

In talking with several people, I learned this year's background: The priest is new and this was his first Holy Week in El-Tingo. He wasn't present until only two weeks before the festival and so there wasn't much time to prepare. The people don't know him that well, and are not sure what he expects. But they do it anyway. "Next year," they say, "we'll improve it and correct the errors."

From my point of view, this was all tradition. I would even say it was obligation. I couldn't see any voluntary worship here, except for one elderly woman I saw who was praying the rosary during one of the stations.

Saturday everyone rested from the activities, since Saturday Christ spent the day in the grave.

I had never witnessed the Sunday events, since I was always in the evangelical church on Easter Sunday. So this year I skipped church and went to El-Tingo to see what they do.

I arrived a little late. (That's the big disadvantage of renting out our house.) The procession had already left. So I ran after them to catch up. This was going to be a two-mile parade in the hot sun! No wonder so few people were participating.

This time the band led, and the music was no longer solemn, but up-beat. Behind the band, four men carried the virgin Mary, who was dressed with a black cloak and veil. About twenty people walked behind her. And then came Saint Peter, borne by four more, and a women throwing flower petals on him. (You can always tell when a procession has gone passed by the flower petals left on the road.) I counted only sixty people in the video. Obviously a large part of the pueblo were not participating in this event. (Video #6)

I followed them until they reached the furthest west side of the pueblo. (I note that Friday they had started at the furthest east side of the pueblo. They said the objective was to include every neighborhood in the festivals, so no one would feel left out. From a spiritual point of view, they are carrying the idols to the limits of the pueblo to mark out the idol's spirit's territory. Sadly, that's not the theme of this investigation. It'll have to wait for another time.) Here, in a field, stood a chapel. I noticed that, like in Alangasí, they brought the idols into the church with the idol facing outside and its back to the door. I don't know why.

Since the priest was late in arriving, the band played a long number outside on the grass. I learned later that he was giving another mass at the main church in the park.

There was a rumor that he did not agree with all the traditions of the pueblo. But he has to be careful, because the pueblo has enough influence to get him transferred out if necessary.

I decided not to stay for the mass for several reasons. First, they knew I was evangelical, and my presence in mass would make them see me compromising my faith. Second, I am looking for worship outside the Catholic church. Lastly, I wanted to make sure I could return to the park in time for something I had never seen before, and didn't want to miss.

Having walked the two miles back to the park, I waited. This is one of the aspects of research: waiting. Sometimes you never know what's going to happen, nor how long it will take. I had to wait almost three hours!

I was standing beside a fifteen foot high, square, wooden structure, with a six diameter hole in the high platform and a dome covering the top. I had seen this structure every year, but had never seen what happened here. I assumed they re-enacted Christ's ascension, and pulled him up with ropes. Now what was the ladder for?

To my surprise, Cristina Perez's granddaughter was being dressed up as an angel. When the band finally approached, with the virgin Mary, two men scrambled up the ladder, and two others took the ladder away. Then the two men in the dome quickly lowered a plastic chair with thick ropes onto the ground and others placed the little girl in it. She was about to be hauled up before the band arrived at the spot, when someone remembered to tie her into the chair. The white shawl was maybe the handiest thing around, and she disappeared fifteen feet above the street into the dome structure.

The band moved to one side to let the virgin Mary pass beneath the dome. The next task was to place the idol in exactly the correct spot under the dome. It turns out that the little girl descends and changes the virgin's veil from mourning (black) to joy (yellow). That was a big surprise for me! I've since learned that although many of the same festivals are celebrated in different pueblos, each pueblo has certain traditions distinct from any other pueblo.

The angel descended, gave a little speech, and removed the virgin's veil of mourning. She had some trouble because the virgin was a little too far her to reach. Good thing she was tied into that chair! With help, she changed the veil, the band struck up a merry tune, and everyone marched over to the church. (Video #7)

Is this worship? If it isn't, why do they celebrate it every year without fail? Is it just tradition? I can't tell from just participant observation. My guess so far is that it's a tradition that came from spiritual worship, but has lost its original significance, and has now taken on a new significance. At this point, that is only an hypothesis, and not a conclusion. The participants of El-Tingo are the ones who need to answer these questions. (This implies a local theology paradigm.)

Group Interview in El-Tingo

One of the biggest lessons I've learned in this investigation is how challenging it is to get people to talk about their beliefs. First, you need time to develop the conversation, and second, you have to have a pretty good friendship with them. I may have lived in El-Tingo for sixteen years, but still, they're Catholic and I'm Evangelical, and that creates a huge barrier in their minds!

God works in wonderful ways. The town has a cultural center run by the City Council of Quito. (My wife and I started this cultural center a while back, but that's another story.) We met the new director, and she gave us permission to show my videos of Holy Week there in the cultural center. Faby, my wife, has a fairly good relation with some of the women in the pueblo, and she promoted this event through "the grape-vine."

It poured rain one hour before the showing. Still, we had a few people come to see the videos. I had made clips to reduce the whole filming to thirty minutes. In the end, three women, two youth, and one man viewed the clips. I did what I could to stimulate discussion. We stayed almost a half hour talking afterwards. Most of their comments were on how to improve the festival: more time for preparation, better communication with the priest, doing it like they do in other pueblos. These kinds of comments make me think the festivals have more to do with identity than with worship.

Corpus Cristhi

This festival was totally different from Holy Week! The main part had nothing to do with the Catholic tradition. The part that did was clearly marked so. "Corpus Cristhi" means "the body of Christ" and the name obviously comes from the Catholic tradition. But I strongly doubt that flute players with drums, large mother-earth figures, and costumed dancers have anything to do with "the body of Christ." At last, here was a festival that looked like its roots preceded the Spanish conquest.

They told me that the first event Friday would be night. Like I said before, you never knew what's going to happen, nor when. I arrived "on time" at six o'clock and found the park empty. Now what? Wait. (And go get something to eat.)

Around seven o'clock some folks start setting up some chairs on the wide sidewalk in front of the Catholic church. Time to see what's going on. Some men brought a dozen or so bamboo poles, eight feet long each. Since I knew some of them, I approached, asked a few polite questions, and began filming and watching. I realized that they were constructing a mother figure called, "Mama Pacha" (mother earth) for the festival. "Isn't it kind of late to be doing this?" I asked. "We were at our jobs all day long, and couldn't start any earlier," they replied. They didn't seem to care if they were "late."

I've learned that several groups were going to participate, each with their own "pingullero," "Mama Pacha," and rucos. The pingullero is the person who plays a thin, three-holed flute, and, at the same time, beats a one-foot diameter drum to which the rucos dance. The rucos are dressed uniformly with a colorful poncho and two matching cloths that hang out both back pockets of their black pants. They have white shirts on, and around their knees they have bells tied which clang together as they dance to the beat of the drum. From underneath their black hats long trails of hair drape down their backs. They also wear masks, and hold something in one hand. The men had something that resembled bull horns. The women held a corn cob in one hand.

I have to mention that for women to dress as rucos is something new. This is a traditionally male role in the festivals. In El-Tingo, they told me that the women decided to form their own group a couple of years ago, and they have since continued. Their pingullero was male, but then pingulleros are hard to come by. Out of the four in this festival, two were contracted from other pueblos.

While the men were putting together their "Mama Pacha," I asked, "Where's the pingullero?" Someone said, "He's inside." Then someone else said, "Bring him out and

let him play!” I don’t know if they wanted to hear him or were doing me a favor since I had a video camera. So he came out and began to play, and continued until they started to dance with the Mama Pacha.

The melody was very repetitive, but no one seemed to mind. He played the flute with the left hand, while the right hand kept the beat with a stick on the drum. The back of the drum had a string across it with a small stick in the middle for an extra sound effect. When he took a break, I took advantage of the opportunity to talk to him. He was from La Merced, two pueblos east of El-Tingo. They had contracted him for the festival. (Maybe that’s why he “had” to come out and play.) The pingullo he bought from an elderly ex-pingullero who could no longer play it. (Often a family will not sell the flute. It remains part of the family inheritance.) The drum he had found somewhere in Sangolquí (another pueblo).

Later I tried to find where I could purchase these instruments. I visited many a music store which sold traditional instruments, but not these. The pingulleros had told me that almost no one made them, and they were right. I even went to Otavalo, which is a town north of Quito that sells everything “typical” you could imagine from Ecuador, but no one had the instruments. I found a similar drum, but only one side was closed. No wonder this art of playing pingullos is dying out!

As the men tried to tie the bamboo poles at one end and open the other to make a large cone shape, I talked with the woman who was holding the face they would tie onto the top. It was a women’s face made of wood. She said it was over a hundred and fifty years old! As far as she was concerned it was the original “Mama Pacha.” The others were imitations.

I was concerned that the men weren't going to finish in time, but they seemed to be enjoying the process more than being concerned about finishing on time. I heard a flute and a drum approaching the park, with the rhythmic clanging of bells to a series of shouts by women. This was the women's group. The men didn't seem to care. Of course, I ran to film them as they danced around the park twice and then returned to where they had come from.

Once the Mama Pacha was complete with face, hair, arms, hands, and a big white sheet for a body, one man entered the cone and made the Mama Pacha dance. The rest of the men put on their outfits and began to dance to the drum and flute of the pingullero. Their feet moved in a unison "shuffle," sort of like skipping without jumping. Every minute or so they reversed direction around the Mama Pacha. Since I was filming, I couldn't tell who the leader was. Maybe they didn't have one.

It was fascinating to watch, but not a good time to ask questions. Suddenly a woman approached me and asked, "Do you speak English?" My first response was, "Who told you?" Although I am North American, I don't stand out as one. Turns out the director of the cultural center was there, and her brother and sister-in-law were visiting from Chicago. The sister-in-law had approached me so I could talk to her son in English. She was Ecuadorian, but her son didn't speak that much Spanish. Twenty years had passed since she had visited Ecuador, and here she was in El-Tingo! Well, she proceeded to explain to me what the festival "meant." The Mama Pacha represented the earth, and the rucos were adoring her so that their harvests would be good the following year. I wondered if any of the participants would agree with her.

Then one of the rucos began to draw a three-foot circle on the cement. Someone placed a small paper cup filled with beer in the middle. Then two rucos began dancing around the circle. Eventually they spread their legs, placed their hands behind their backs, and tried to pick up the cup with their lips. If they lost their balance, they left the circle. A friend commented to me that it was very difficult to execute. You also had to put the cup back in place if you managed to pick it up!

A small boy, in full costume, wanted to try. As he bent over his poncho draped in front of his body. He seemed to be successful when someone lifted the poncho to discover that he was leaning on his hands! Everyone laughed. But he tried again, this time with his hands behind his back. I was witnessing tradition passing from one generation to the next. (Video #8)

The next day was the full “performance” at noon, when four different groups of pingulleros paraded around the park, each with their Mama Pacha. You could hardly distinguish the drums from each pingullero. I don’t know how each group of rucos could hear their own pingullero’s beat. It was all preceded by mass, and a procession of the “body of Christ.” But even the priest was out on the street afterwards filming the dancing! (Video #9)

I was impressed by the difference in the attitude of the people from when they were dancing as rucos and when they were following the priest around the park after mass. When they were with the priest, they were very solemn, serious, and quiet. The priest led. They did sing “Alabaré,” a very well known chorus among evangelicals, but when they were led by the pingullero, they were moving and dancing, and shouting, and joyful. What a difference! (Video #10)

Is this worship? I was much more impressed by what I saw Friday night than Saturday morning, because the latter was more for show. Many people come from Quito and elsewhere to see and to film the festivals. But the Friday night dance was not for show. There was something else going on there. Just what, I do not know yet.

Evangelical Worship

Now I move to the evangelical worship. Why it is so different from the indigenous festivals? Do evangelicals consider the festivals to be worship? Pablo Mejia's church members mentioned that it was mostly tradition, but had some element of worship, and that evangelicals might take advantage of the style. But what do other evangelical congregations think?

One of the first things I realized is that evangelical churches differ greatly in their style of music worship. I have previously mentioned three categories of songs (modern, traditional, and national), and in the five churches I visited and studied I found all three styles used.

Gonzalo Logacho and his church

I have known Gonzalo for many years. He works in the telephone company and on several occasions has been used by God to help us obtain telephone lines both for our home and our camp. God has also used him to found a church which is now twenty years old and has about one hundred members. The church serves a neighborhood called "San José" which is part of a pueblo called "Conocoto."

The Chillo Valley consists of "white" folk and "indigenous" folk. The indigenous folk are the original inhabitants of the pueblos, and the white folk are those who are

moving out of the city and building housing complexes near these pueblos. The older indigenous folk maintain some of their identity, but the youth, who are going for higher education in the city, are caught between these two people groups and tend to lean toward the urban culture. As a result, in many indigenous evangelical churches, the adults and youth have different cultural tastes. This is especially manifest in their worship music. Gonzalo's church is no exception.

When I talked to Gonzalo about visiting them and filming their service, I asked about the music. By my categories, he said that the youth want to sing the "modern" songs, but the older generation prefers the traditional and national songs. (As one member said, "I was converted by this song.") "Who's leading this Sunday?" I inquired. "We are," he replied. In all, I visited his church on three occasions. They have a full drum set, electric bass, electric guitar, electric piano, and four large speakers. But whenever I visited they only used a guitar and voices, with amplification. I was surprised that the older men led and played the music. In every other church I visited, the youth directed and played the music. Yet in Gonzalo's church, I could hear the congregation singing. In many other churches, I could hear only the band. (Video #11)

My goal was to use focus groups as a method for discovering meaning. Now I realize how difficult it is to set them up. In Gonzalo's church, when I explained that I wanted to meet with them and discuss what I had filmed on Sunday, they agreed enthusiastically. The best time for them was after the Thursday night Bible study. I didn't realize the whole congregation would stay for the discussion! So much for limiting the group to eight persons! So I worked with what they offered. (In twenty years of living in Ecuador, I have learned to be flexible.)

In response to my general question about the purpose of worship, I received the usual responses of: “to praise and glorify God,” “to love Him,” “to be in His presence,” and “to express what’s in the heart.” When I showed them a video of a church playing “modern” music, they began to be apologetic: “We do it differently;” “Their music is worship music. Our is praise music;” “You can’t hear the congregation in their church;” and “All you can hear is noise.” I would say that this was one church that was content with their style of music and didn’t want to become “modern.”

Then I showed them a video of a festival and began to probe to see if they saw this as worship or not. At first they rejected the idea, and said the festivals were pagan and not acceptable for Christians. I began to understand that they said this because most of them had come out of that environment to become Christians. To go back would be to deny their faith. But as I talked some about national music, they began to agree that the festival music was part of who they are. When I proposed using the festival music for Christian worship by first adapting it, they were open to the idea. I need to go back and continue this discussion with them to go further and deeper.

Conocoto and Alangasí

Whereas Gonzalo’s church has a stable history of twenty years, the church in Conocoto has been in existence for only eight and is going through some changes. I found it hard to study a church when it’s in a major transition.

The church in Conocoto is called “Jubileo.” It was founded by Pastor Miguel Moreira, who also founded the evangelical church in Alangasí. The churches are fifteen miles apart, but the same musicians lead the services in both. The Pastor has recently taken on the responsibility of directing an orphanage, which also holds a Sunday service,

and the musicians play there also. So this music group will play at eight o'clock in Alangasí, and then move to Conocoto to play at nine thirty, while the pastor is preaching in Alangasí. Then the pastor moves to Conocoto to preach while the musicians run to the orphanage to play for the eleven o'clock service. If I noticed that the musicians were already tired at the second service, they must have been worn out by the third.

Since the pastor accepted the position at the orphanage, church membership had declined in both churches. When I was filming the services, they were in the process of looking for more musicians so that each church would have its own group. Even so, I filmed a service in Alangasí and another in Conocoto, and arranged to meet with the group.

In both services, they played modern songs, and they played them very loud. They used electric guitar and bass, keyboard, full drum set, and voices. It was difficult to hear the congregation singing. When I showed them the videos they had the same opinion, and blamed the sound setup for the noise. Their comments on the purpose of worship were: "that the congregation participate;" "to praise God;" and "to express what's inside the heart." (Video #12)

I was surprised to learn that several of these youth had participated in festivals in the pueblos. And that gave me some inside perspective on the festivals. When I asked them to compare their service with a festival they commented, "We worship a living God, and they worship an idol." So they saw the festival clearly as worship of an idol. Then I asked about the style of worship, and all agreed that the festivals were very expressive and full of joy. One young man, who comes from a Christian family, commented that evangelical worship services used to be that way, but now they are more like concerts.

People go to see the “show.” Then someone commented that many Christians participate in the festivals. Why? Because it’s fun. They don’t see it as worship, but as a party. They enjoy the music and the enthusiasm manifested there.

I have to add that I only had twenty minutes for this discussion. As in most cases, the only time I could meet with a group was after their rehearsal. In this case, they had finished at eight fifteen. I had previously set up the computer with the videos, and now began by asking the leader, “How much time do I have?” He answered, “Fifteen minutes.” You take what you can get, and, by God’s grace, I got some data.

Santa Teresa

Now here was a church, further removed from the white folk urbanizations, that still used “national” music. It wasn’t on my original list, but I had met one of the elders at a conference, and we had visited his home near the church a few weeks before. He had given me an open invitation to visit them one Sunday, so I took advantage of the opportunity.

I called a few days earlier to let him know I was coming, but the phone number he had given me was the wrong one. So Faby and I just showed up unexpectedly one Sunday. The church was empty, but the doors were open. Across the way, many people were watching a full-scale neighborhood soccer game with uniforms and referee. I began to think of how similar the soccer game was to a worship service. But I’ll have to leave that for another investigation.

Some church members finally showed up, and were surprised, but glad, to see us. Of course, when a missionary shows up at a country church, they expect you to preach.

So I was not surprised when they asked me to do so. (You always need to have a back-up sermon in your pocket.)

As the service began, I was glad that I hadn't announced our visit. If I had done so, they probably would have put together a special service very different from the normal routine. But now they had no other option but to do a regular service.

A woman led the singing with voice and tambourine, while another member played the guitar. How nice! No amplification. You could hear the congregation beautifully! The songs were national style: pentatonic and repetitive. I began to realize how suitable they are for singing. (Video #13)

Before the sermon, the congregation asked Faby and I to sing a special. I always prefer leading a song to singing alone, so I asked the congregation to choose a chorus. I was amazed when an elderly woman stood and said, "Let's sing 'Open my eyes.'" Now I know both a hymn and a modern song with that title, but I realized she was asking for the modern one. Makes me wonder why.

I remember being invited years ago to an indigenous community four hours south of Quito, and a half hour straight up the mountain. They wanted a music workshop. When I asked if they wanted to learn to read music, to set up the sound system, or new songs, they gave the typical answer: "Everything!" They had gone into debt to buy an electric amplification system, plus an electric guitar and bass, each with its own amplifier, and a full drum set. The speakers were taller than I was! It took me more than four hours of working with them to learn that what they really wanted to learn were the "modern" songs. On the lunch break, we were sitting outside the church, and they began playing their traditional instruments: drum, kena, guitar, and charango. I said to myself, "This

sounds much better than all that electrical stuff inside. Why are they not satisfied with their own music?"

The elderly woman at the church in Santa Teresa was asking for the same thing: to sing a modern song. I ask myself, "How come she didn't ask for a national song?"

I learned later that the church divided soon after that. Not because of my preaching, but because of personal problems between church members. So I did not return to follow up on my visit.

La Comuna

Ever since I arrived in Ecuador twenty years ago, I have been involved in the Presbyterian Church and have known their leaders. The church in "La Comuna" is one of those churches, although it was not included in the original plan. The goal of the mission was to plant churches among the upper class, but God used Carlos Cevallos, a member of one of their newly planted churches, to start a church among the lower class in "La Comuna." This neighborhood began with squatters, and now the city has recognized them as part of Quito. Even though they are inside the city limits, the neighborhood functions and looks like one of the pueblos in the Chillo Valley. Most of its inhabitants come from such pueblos.

The church was named, "San Pablo" and the Cevallos family are its founders. Years ago, when Faby and I led the music in the Presbyterian church in Quito, Carlos and his son (also Carlos) began rehearsing with us. Carlos Jr. remembers that as his beginning with music. He now has his own recording studio.

I have known Carlos for almost twenty years. Now married with three kids, I knew it would be no problem to visit his church and meet with the musicians. And since

the church, its members, and the neighborhood are fairly similar to the pueblos, I decided to include his church in my study.

Carlos uses a full set of instruments for the worship service. Besides the usual electric guitar and bass, keyboard and drums, they also use two sets of conga drums. On my first visit, all the music fell within my “modern” category. And the eco of the octagonal church building raised the noise level to well above my singing level! I filmed the service, and we set up a time to view the video. (Video #14)

This was the most organized discussion group I had during my time in Ecuador. (Although I discuss it last, it was actually my first discussion group.) We met in Carlos’ recording studio which is only about twelve feet square. There were thirteen of us, but we were together and Carlos had a good understanding of what I wanted to do. I could ask a question and get a response from each person present. We were not pressured for time either.

With this group, I actually asked them directly what the worship music means to them. Their answers included: “I enjoy it;” “It’s a gift God has given me;” “I feel closer to God;” and “It’s a way to express myself.” When I asked them what they expected to happen during a worship service, they said, “To be edified;” “To feel the peace and joy of the Lord;” “To glorify God and to see the congregation doing the same;” and “To leave my burdens with God.” All of their comments included a sense of feeling and emotion. No one gave me a dry, doctrinally correct answer.

When I presented the video of the festivals, they really couldn’t respond to my question of whether it was worship or not. They just said it was not, and the conversation moved on to another topic about music and the Presbyterian church.

The Final Workshop

One of the most fruitful events was bringing together all of the churches I had visited and filmed for a final workshop. “Final” in the sense that I was returning to the US, but “initial” for them, because they want to continue when I return.

My original idea was to limit attendance to only three or four people from each of the five churches. With only fifteen to twenty people I could divide them into discussion groups and keep control. But in the end, sixty people came. So I had to be flexible and improvise some by changing the format to more of a conference style.

I realized that those who came did so because of the friendship I had with their leaders. They knew me and trusted me. Two churches did not attend: Conocoto and Alangasí. I didn't know their pastor very well, and only knew one person in the music group. Yet two other churches came that I hadn't even visited. Their pastor knew me very well and I had invited them over the phone. I should have spent more time with them, rather than with the other two churches. Live and learn.

I held the workshop in Gonzalo's church for three reasons. First they were located fairly central in the Valley. Second, because the church itself was fairly stable and mature, I could count on there being no last minute changes. And third, because they had invited me to do so.

The final list of churches was: “La Comuna” from Quito, Pablo Mejia's small congregation, the church in a pueblo called “Pintag” who had invited another neighboring church from “Ubillus;” and Gonzalo Logacho's church who sponsored the whole thing. We even had a few people from other churches who were invited by various church members.

I had four main objectives: 1) to discuss the philosophy of worship; 2) to talk about how to combine the instruments; 3) to learn about volume control; and 4) to stimulate composition of new songs. It was organized as a workshop, not as a research investigation. That's because I feel the investigator is indebted to his or her informants. So a major part of this workshop I designed to teach them what I had been learning about worship music. I regret that I had to skip over the topic of the festivals because of time constraints, but under the circumstances, God still allowed me to do quite a bit.

In order to get people to talk within a group they have to know each other. So I began with an icebreaker. Nothing to do with music. Then I wanted them to see each other's music style. So I asked each group to come up front and play one song they had used in their previous Sunday service.

The church at San José was equipped with an amplification system, electric guitar and bass, drums, keyboard, microphones, and even conga drums. I told each group that they could use as much or as little equipment as they wanted. I had intended this as an introductory exercise, but later I realized that it was an excellent survey tool.

Actually, I had a surprise. No one wants to go first, but a young man volunteered. Someone had invited him to the workshop from a church I didn't know. He grabbed a guitar and led the whole group in a series of songs that I categorize as the traditional style. He led by himself, and often would listen to the singing. I mention him because he was the only one who didn't use a microphone. He knew how to lead singing. Of course, it's much easier when you do it alone than when you're trying to lead both a group of musicians and a congregation at the same time.

Out of the five churches, two played modern songs, one a traditional song, and two national songs. That was quite a mix! Geographical location of the church had nothing to do with it. Nor did age. I think it had to do more with tradition. “La Comuna” played a modern song with full instrumentation. They are all youth, and I could hardly understand the words. (I also didn’t know the song.) Gonzalo’s church followed with a national song. I admire them because they are older men who lead the music. That’s rare in a church these days! Those from Pintag played the only traditional song, and the church they invited, “Ubillus” used a national song. Later I realized it was 3/4 time! That’s rare for an upbeat chorus! Pablo’s group played a very popular modern song. When they stopped, everyone else kept going. (Video #15)

This was a demonstration that all three styles continue current and popular in the Chillo Valley. The whole group sang along with the songs they knew, whether they were modern, traditional, or national. So it’s not just style, but familiarity, that makes a song popular.

Stimulating conversation in such a large group was difficult, but I did receive some answers to my questions. As far as the goal of worship, some of the answers were: “to lead the people of God into the presence of God;” “to resolve personal conflicts and take them to God;” “to feel God’s presence and leave our problems with Him;” and “to get in the groove of praise.” The idea of resolving conflicts and problems was new to my investigation. And the phrase “getting into the groove” (“meterse en la honda”) is hard to translate and its meaning is vague even in Spanish.

I tried to stimulate more thought and discussion about worship by referring to several books on the topic that I had found at the biggest Christian bookstore in Quito. To

my surprise no one at the workshop had ever seen the books, much less read them! I gave them a summary of each author and their philosophy of worship. Marcos Witt is well-known in all of Latin American for his worship music. His philosophy of worship is for people to know God through the praise and worship (Witt 1993:13). Tony Perez lives in the US, and his work has been translated from English, but the book was for sale in Quito. His philosophy of worship is to enter into the Holy of Holies and thus please the heart of God (Perez 1995:180). Lamar Boschman gives new ideas by suggesting that worship is a time for God to manifest himself in new ways, even in giving a new song spontaneously (Boschman 1993:14). I added the idea found in 1 Corinthians 14:25 that worship is to testify to the world about God. Another view of worship is spiritual warfare. I have seen this philosophy in worship services and also in a concert by Marcos Witt.

I had expected such thoughts to stimulate discussion at the workshop, but it didn't work. I began to assume that most folks had never considered so many options. So I tried a different angle with some other authors. Eduardo Nelson says that our concept of God determines how we worship God (Nelson 1986:21). Barreda notes that music worship now holds a central part not only of the service but in the life of the whole church (Barreda Toscano 2004:8). And Darino introduces the idea that we need to return to our cultural roots for something more autochthonous and still true to Scripture (Darino 1993:12). I was hoping the last quote would stimulate some comments about using some features from the festivals for evangelical worship. Nothing.

One of my hobbies has been to collect church hymnals and songbooks. I showed them a "youth hymnal" from around forty years ago. It contained hymns with full clef notation. Hard to believe it was a "youth" hymnal. Then I showed another hymnal with a

green cover. Many persons were familiar with it from ten to twenty years back. I also have a small twenty page pamphlet with short choruses having only guitar chords and no musical notation. Many recognized this also. Then I showed them the chorus book I compiled during my eight years as a pastor in Ecuador to illustrate how the worship music style has changed over the past twenty years. Still no comments resulted from my exposition.

During the first part of the workshop I was trying to elicit responses from the participants, but since the response was very limited, I concentrated more during the second half on “thinking out loud.” That means I was giving them a conference which I had prepared, but God brought many new thoughts to my mind during my exposition.

I was talking about whether we are conscious or not about the reason behind some of our traditions. I told the story of the girl who wanted to know why her mother would cut a chicken in half and lay both halves flat in order to bake it. Her mom had learned from her grandmother, but didn't know why. The grandmother had learned it from the great-grandmother, and also couldn't tell why. The great-grandmother explained that in her days the oven was so small she had to cut to chicken in half to get it in the oven. Everyone at the workshop had a good laugh.

I commented on the location of the speakers in the room, and mentioned that we put them up front because that's the way they do it at concerts. Then I rhetorically asked out loud, “In this church, why do you put the speakers up front?” Gonzalo's answer surprised me. I would have expected a very acoustically technical answer. Instead he said, “Because that's where we can bolt them to the wall so no one can steal them.” That was the first answer I received that explained the reason behind a tradition.

I only had another half hour before I had to stop, and I still had one more topic to discuss: song composition. I started by inventing new words to an old song. I had used one particular song before to do this. So I played that song, and made up a couple of lines about how one might feel in the workplace. This produced a good laugh in from the whole group. Then God illumined me! The national music was ideal for creating lyrics in Spanish, and since the lines were always repeated, I could make up two lines and the congregation could repeat them. I tried it. Even I was surprised at how well it worked. I realized that their national music was composed for the purpose of singing, not performing. A lot of the modern songs are written for a professional voice and a concert atmosphere. (Video #16)

My Personal Analysis

This was my first experience at field research. It was fascinating! But not everything went as planned. I learned the reality of what it takes to get people to talk about their traditions and beliefs. It's not easy and requires a high level of confidence and trust, which takes time to build. In El-Tingo, many of our neighbors are just beginning to trust us, after living there for sixteen years. Whereas among the evangelicals, my wife and I are better known, and trust is easier to build, although it must not be assumed.

The other aspect of this research is that it is my personal analysis. I stated this in the beginning of this paper. I am using my experiences and my biases to interpret the data I have just described. And I have much more data, both from my years in Ecuador and this recent five-month visit, but it wouldn't fit into fifty pages. My video clips are much more descriptive than this prose, and I would have liked to include a CD with the video clips as an appendix to this tutorial.

Comparison of Events

My comparative analysis of the festivals and evangelical music worship is summarized in Figure 6. First I will discuss the many differences between the two and then the sparse similarities. My brief discussion is limited to the participant observation data, since I plan to continue the investigation of meaning in my next tutorial.

Differences

Looking back on my five months in Ecuador, I am amazed to realize that the indigenous festivals and the evangelical music worship are vastly different! Let me begin by noting that the festivals are held outdoors. They are public events for everyone to see. Whereas the evangelicals meet behind four walls, and no one outside can see what they're doing.

Comparison of Events (Differences)	
FESTIVALS	EVANGELICALS
Outdoors	Indoors
Group Oriented	Individual Oriented
Several every year	Weekly event
Every neighborhood participates	Only leaders participate
Long hours	Short – 30-40 minutes
Social obligation	Voluntary
Dancing	Clapping
Very little speech	Monologue
Meals included	No meals
Children can participate	No children allowed
Mobile	Stationary
Acoustic	Amplified electrically

FIGURE 6 – INDIGENOUS FESTIVALS AND THE EVANGELICAL SERVICE

For the first time in my life I have begun to realize how individualistic the evangelicals services are. Look at the festivals which are community oriented. Here it's all or nothing. If everyone doesn't do their part, the festival is a failure. Whereas in the evangelical services, if half the congregation doesn't show up, the service continues.

Now I have to note that the festivals are yearly, (although they have many festivals during the year), and the evangelical services are weekly. If the pueblos did weekly festivals all year long, either they would go broke or the festivals would become very insignificant events.

As a community oriented event, everyone participates in the festivals. In fact they need everyone to participate. They often force participation either by social pressure or by imposing a fine. Groups of leaders organize the event, but it is executed by the whole community. Whereas the evangelical services are led by a selected few, and the rest do not play a major role in the service. Their participation is voluntary.

Now look at the time involved. An evangelical service lasts only an hour and a half. The members are "in and out." No wonder it works so well in an urban setting! Whereas in the pueblos, these festivals usually last the whole weekend. The evangelical service is just a meeting, but the festival is a full-scale celebration.

I still wonder why I don't see more dancing and movement at the evangelical services. The festivals have lots of it. In fact, that is the festival. The evangelicals service center around a monologue, but the festivals center around celebrating together. Which includes food. You can't have a festival without a lot of food and drink. Evangelicals rarely eat together at the services. And I have yet to hear a speech at a festival.

At the festivals, I could observe children alongside the adults, doing the same thing they were doing whenever possible. The adults were clearly the leaders. Whereas in the evangelical church, small children do not participate in the service, and the music is usually led by youth, and not by adults.

A festival will parade around the whole town, from one end to the other. The park is central, but the participants don't stay there. They will visit houses and other sites. Evangelicals, on the other hand, spend the whole time in just one place, often in front of the same seat.

Evangelical are keen on amplification of sound. The few who participate need to have lots of volume for their voices and instruments. Maybe it's to compensate for the lack of participation by the congregation. The pueblos use brass bands that don't need amplification. I was amazed that the flute and drum of the pingulleros could be heard a block away without amplification.

Similarities

The more I think about the indigenous festivals and the evangelical services, the less I see they have in common. They both use music, and both events have a religious origin, but that's about it. I had expected to find more similarities.

I will add an interesting note here. Many Pentecostals have a ritual during the service which consists in the leader yelling, "¿quién vive?" (Who lives?) and the congregation responding by yelling, "Cristo" (Christ). It continues: "y a su nombre" (and to his name), "Gloria" (glory), "y a su pueblo" (and for his people), "victoria" (victory). This is amazingly similar to what I witnessed at one festival. Someone yelled, "Que viva el prioste" (long live the host). And everyone yelled back, "Que viva" (may he live). The

same person continued to name other persons present, and everyone continued the same response. I wonder if this evangelical ritual didn't come from an indigenous festival?

(Video #17)

Meaning

Using a design from my methods paper, I can summarize my preliminary conclusions on meaning in the following chart:

Category	Contextual Meaning of Indigenous Festivals	Contextual Meaning of Evangelical Services	Meaning Evangelicals give to the Festivals
Reason	Tradition	“Modernization”	Idolatry
Content	Identity	Giving God worship	Expression of culture
Motive	Obligation to the community	Obligation to God	Enjoyable

FIGURE 7 – ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING OF MUSIC WORSHIP

So far, my preliminary conclusions are that the indigenous folk see their festivals as long-time tradition that gives them their identity as a pueblo. Their participation in the festivals is part of their commitment to each other.

Among evangelicals, they see their “music worship” as being “up-to-date” or “modern.” They are “keeping with the times.” Since the evangelical church in Ecuador is only one-hundred years old, and most of the churches I studied have existed for less than ten years, they have no history of tradition. So they copy what other, bigger, churches are doing. They have not yet reflected on who they are in their community. For these evangelicals, participation is an obligation to “worship God.”

The most important part of this chart is the last column, where I begin to analyze how evangelicals perceive the festivals. They see them as idolatry. Whereas the

indigenous folk themselves see it as tradition. But evangelicals do see the festivals as an expression of culture, and even as their (Ecuadorian) culture. I see this difference as a conflict in evangelicals in how to interpret the festivals. On the one hand, they see the festivals as idol worship, and, on the other, the festivals are closer to Ecuadorian culture and identity than the evangelical worship service. Whenever I met a Christian who had participated in the festivals, he or she would always say they enjoyed doing so, "It was fun."

At this point I want to add the view of some other authors. Campaña studied some of the festivals in Riobamba, which lies a three and a half hour drive south of Quito. In his opinion, the festivals have two motivations. The first includes tradition, faith, devotion, past miracles and catastrophes. The second is prestige, and financial gain. That's why his book is called, "Festivals and Power." But he also states that "The festivity is NOT a reflection of past traditions, but of a present social system" (Campaña 2000:14). This idea is helpful in my research, because I was looking for past meaning, rather than present meaning.

Sosa sees festivals in a different light. Latin Americans have been under conquest for centuries, first by the Incas, then by the Spanish, and now by capitalism. The festival is a time of liberation. As Sosa describes it:

"Out of oppression, men and women rise up to celebrate, not forgetting their struggle, to be nurtured by the sweet foretastes of the great fiesta of victory and liberation. It is not ordinary fiesta, intended to have people forget about their worries, to alienate them. It is the fiesta which liberates. For this reason it is said: 'People who have no strength to celebrate, have no strength to liberate themselves'" (Sosa 1993:68).

I have not found this view of the festivals in my research, although I think some of it might be present.

This preliminary analysis sets me up for my following tutorial, the goal of which is to investigate deeper into meaning. The design is very simple: return to the churches, show them my conclusions, and see what they think. Then ask them to create an evangelical festival. (See appendix 1.) I am more interested in the thinking and planning process than in the actual execution. My method is that by having evangelicals create a new music worship event, they will have to consider its deep meaning for them.

Conclusion

In short, I found the indigenous festivals and the evangelical music worship to be totally different, not only in the outward form, but also in the way evangelicals and indigenous folk view festivals.

Appendix 1 – Creating an Evangelical Festival

THE VISION

The problem is that the evangelical churches are not influencing the small mountain towns (pueblos). The pueblos continue in their pagan traditions, even though the pueblos have evangelical churches there. A member of the pueblo sees the evangelical worship service as something completely foreign, and therefore has no intention of attending. To become evangelical would be to become a foreigner and a stranger. If the evangelical church were to create an event similar in form to the traditional festivals of the pueblo, but with a clear message that in this festival God is worshipped, members of that pueblo might begin to understand that God wants to live among them. This would facilitate their seeking God.

THE PROJECT

The goal is for an evangelical church in a pueblo to plan and execute a religious festival for that pueblo in which the pueblo recognizes God's presence and understands that He has come to their pueblo.

Questions:

1. Which festival do the people anticipate the most?
2. What message do we want to communicate?
3. What type of music, dance, choreography, costumes, and food are most appropriate for communicating the message?
4. Who should participate in this festival?
5. How should the participants prepare spiritually for this event?
6. What date would be most significant to perform this festival?
7. How will we know what message the pueblo understood from our festival?

Appendix 2 – The Theoretical Framework for Contextualizing Music Worship

The following three diagrams will illustrate the theoretical framework I am using for my research. The model comes from my third tutorial on communication, and was modified in my first methods paper. The main idea is that God will accommodate to our culture and mindset (I will call this “worldview”) in order to communicate with us, and He wants us to communicate with Him in that same way. The context for this communication is a music worship event. The shapes are arbitrary and I use them for contrast, not for content.

In Figure 1, God (represented by a circle) is accommodating to the evangelicals in their worldview (represented by a triangle) by using that worldview for communication. The indigenous worldview (represented by a square) is very different from the evangelical worldview. Therefore the indigenous folk see the evangelical music worship event (a Sunday worship service) as some strange and foreign.

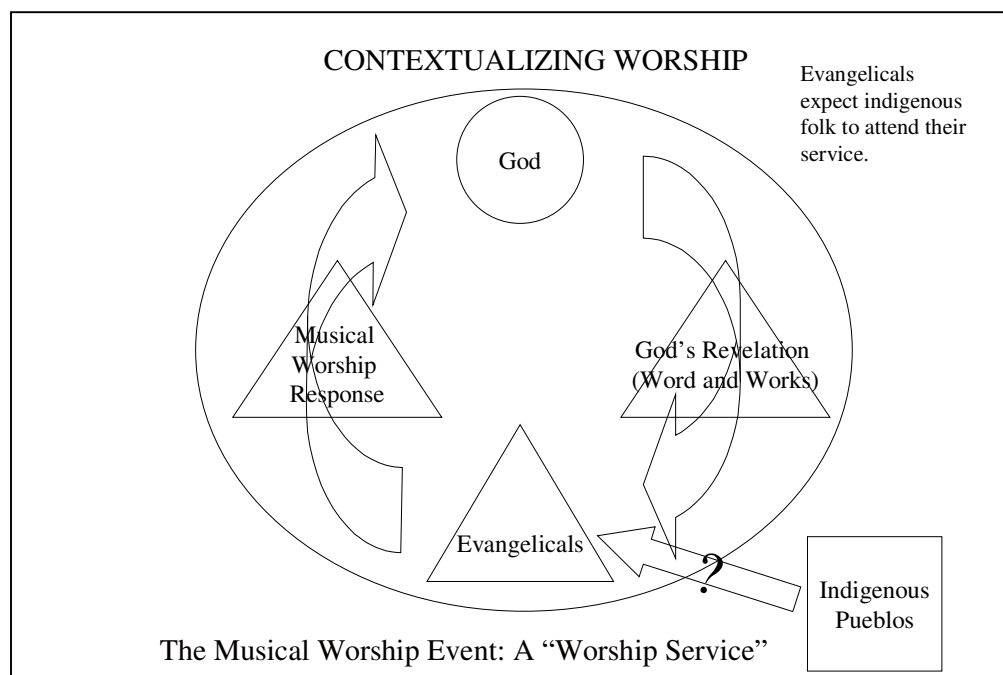


FIGURE 8 – CONTEXTUALIZING WORSHIP #1

Figure 2 illustrates that if the indigenous folk were to enter the evangelical music worship event, they would not understand how God wants to communicate with them, because the music event is fostering a different worldview .

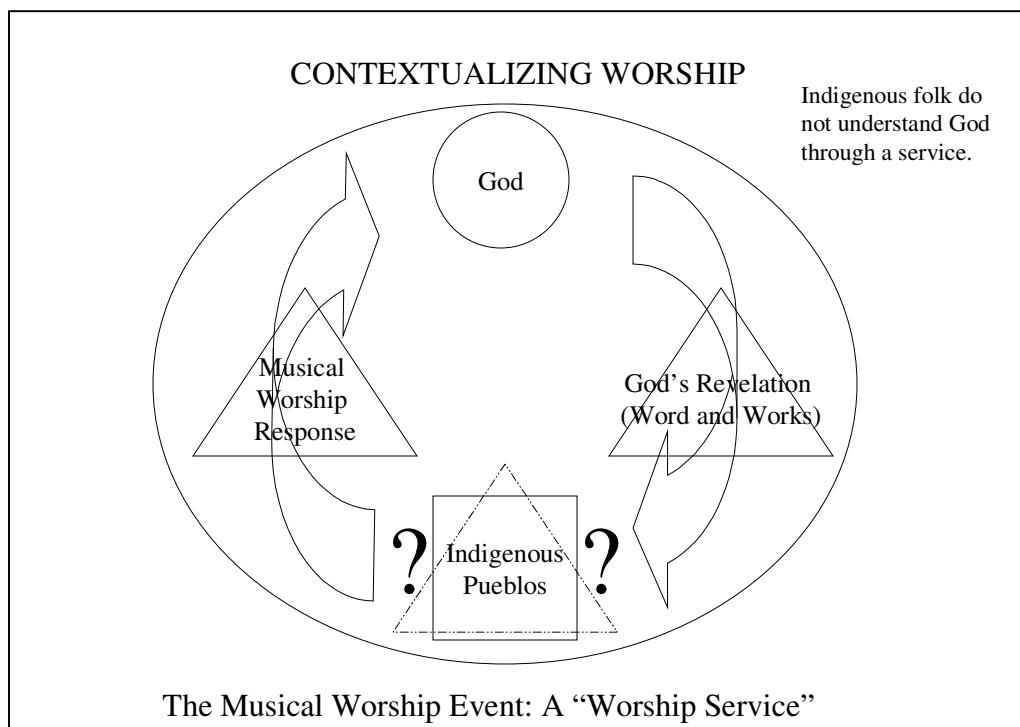


FIGURE 9 – CONTEXTUALIZING WORSHIP #2

So what if evangelicals would follow God’s example of accommodation, and create a music worship event in the worldview of the indigenous folk? (Figure 3.) This would foster an environment where divine communication would be easier, both for God to speak to the indigenous folk and for them to speak to God.

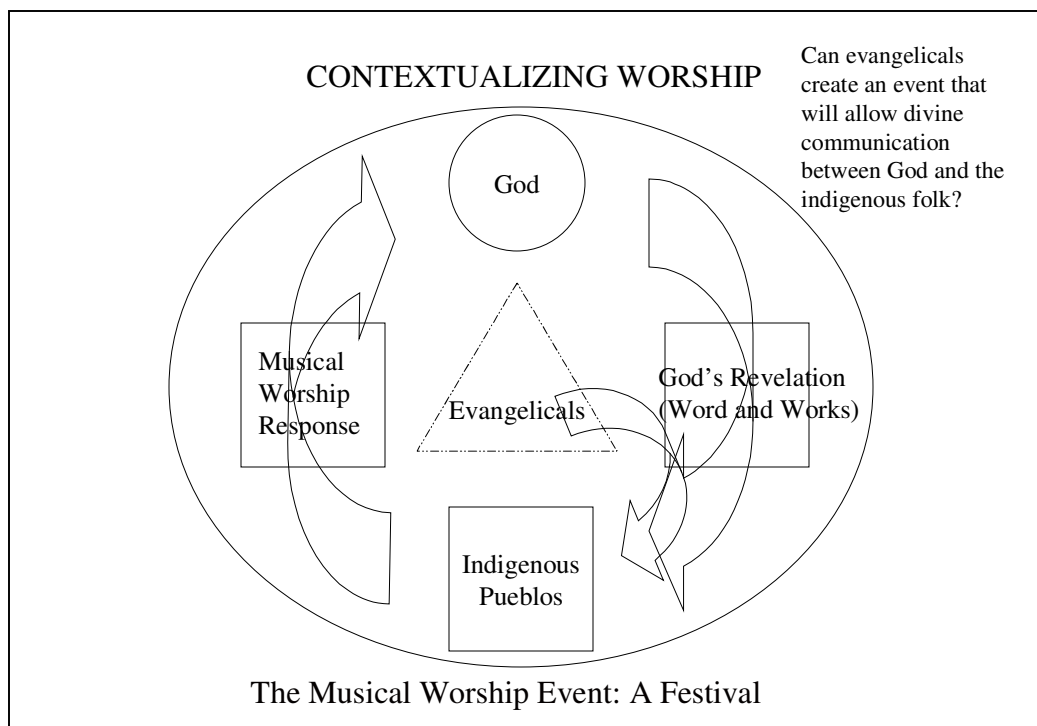


FIGURE 10 – CONTEXTUALIZING WORSHIP #3

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About September 4, 2006. Day of the Week: Monday How Long Ago? 14 years, 2 months and 25 days Leap Year: No. Generation Generation Z Chinese Zodiac: Dog Star Sign: Virgo. Sep 3, 2006. Dates in History. Sep 6, 2006. List of Years. All Days 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31. All Months January February March April May June July August September October November December. All Types Events Birthdays Weddings & Divorces Deaths. Search. All Days 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31. All Months January February March April May June July August September October November December. All Types Events Birthdays Weddings & Divorces Deaths. Dr. Claire Culleton, thanks for being my mentor at the Institute and telling me to set my sights very high for graduate school. Dr. Cheryl Johnson, thanks for all the conversations and mentorship. You'll always be my Academic Mother. In certain fields, there is also a subtle jab at both teachers and textbooks. Teachers were depicted as lost and crippled because their crutch—the textbook—was gone, reflecting how many people. view American education. 19th and 20th-century German physician and bacteriologist. For other people named Robert Koch, see Robert Koch (disambiguation). Robert Koch. Koch created and improved laboratory technologies and techniques in the field of microbiology, and made key discoveries in public health.[5] His research led to the creation of Koch's postulates, a series of four generalized principles linking specific microorganisms to specific diseases that proved influential on subsequent epidemiological principles such as the Bradford Hill criteria.[6] For his research on tuberculosis, Koch. Koch next turned his attention to cholera, and began to conduct research in Egypt in