

MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN INTERMARRIAGE

IN JOLO, SULU

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of San Carlos

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Anthropology

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by

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled "Muslim-Christian Intermarriage in Jolo, Sulu," prepared and submitted by Mr. Jumdanan J. Sandangan in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Anthropology Major in Applied Research has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION.

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Thesis Abstract

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Statement of the Problem:

In conducting the study, the writer was interested in examining the sociological dynamics of Muslim-Christian intermarriage, seeking answers to the following questions:

- a. What were the motivations which prompted the couple to marry?
- b. What is the extent of Islamic restriction and community resistance to intermarriage?
- c. What were the religious practices of each spouse before and after marriage?
- d. In what way have the courtship, engagement, and marriage succeeded in spite of their different religious backgrounds?

- e. What were the attitudes of the partners toward intermarriage? Has a mutual or one-sided exchange of culture and religion, intellect and emotion taken place?
- f. What were the socio-economic backgrounds of each spouse before and after marriage?
- g. What is the relationship of the couples and their children with neighbors in the community?
- h. What decisions are shared and what are arrived at separately?
- i. What kind of arrangement has been made concerning the education of the children, and what about their religious upbringing?

#### Research Method Used:

This thesis is a theoretical and descriptive study. Two methods of data-gathering were used. These were the structured interview using the interview schedule and the unstructured interview.

A simple random sampling procedure was followed. That is, 75 per cent of the 240 listed couples were randomly selected as the sample. A purposive random sampling procedure, on the other hand, was utilized in selecting parents-in-law, neighbors, and religious leaders in the community.

The hypotheses were subjected to statistical testing such as the McNemar test for the significance of changes and relative frequency. The arithmetic mean, mode, percentage, ratio, and range were likewise utilized. Other data derived from the study were summarized in tables.

Summary of (a) Findings, (b) Conclusion, and (c) Recommendations:

#### Findings

The Muslim-Christian marriages in Jolo were influenced by the following sociological factors: (1) opportunities for close social interaction with members of the opposite sex from different ethnic groups in places of educational, social and economic activities such as school, the place of employment, or in travel; (2) the influence of romantic ideals in mate selection; (3) the relatively higher education of the respondents; (4) the acquisition of social values that encourage marriage across ethnic and religious barriers; (5) separation from family control; (6) the use of go-between; (7) the Mindanao conflict of the 1970's; and (8) ignorance about the official religious teachings concerning inter-marriage.

Courtship and dating were, in most cases, carried on secretly without the knowledge of the parents and immediate relatives of both sides. Moreover, the marriages were basically motivated by love and a search for certain qualities in a potential partner who could assure them of a physical satisfaction and everlasting marriage.

Although there was strong opposition on the part of some Muslim parents and close relatives to the intermarriage of Muslim women, there is no sign of community resistance or intolerance to their marriage as there would be in some predominantly Muslim places.

There is a significant tendency for Christian females married to Muslim males to change their religion to Islam after marriage. It appears, on the other hand, that there was no significant increase in regularity of religious activity or participation among the Christian male-Muslim female couples.

With the exception of divorce, in general, the respondents tended to show positive attitudes toward inter-ethnic relationship, mixed marriage of their children, and bride-gift practices of the Tausug.

Inadequate income and health needs of the family were the main problems encountered by the respondents.

The husband was recognized by the majority of the respondents as the head of the family while the wife was seen

as in charge of the household management. There were also those who believed in an egalitarian pattern of power-holding in the family.

The children of over two-thirds of the Muslim husband-Christian wife and one-third of the Christian husband-Muslim wife couples adopted Islam as their religion. For couples who were strong in their respective faiths, the children tended to be divided into Muslims and Christians as they grew older and were able to decide their religious allegiance for themselves.

### Conclusions

The findings in this present study supported some of Lacar's and Balverde's tentative conclusions regarding the sociological factors that were influential in intermarriage.

1. The Muslim-Christian intermarriages in Jolo were influenced by the following sociological factors:
  - a. Opportunities for close social interaction with members of the opposite sex from different ethnic groups in places of educational, social and economic activities such as school, the place of employment, or in travel;
  - b. The influence of romantic ideals in mate selection;

- c. The relatively higher education of the respondents;
  - d. The acquisition of social values that encourages marriage across ethnic and religious barriers;
  - e. Separation from family control;
  - f. The use of go-between;
  - g. The Mindanao conflict of the 1970's; and
  - h. Ignorance about the official religious teachings concerning marriage.
2. There is no general intolerance to the existence of the intermarried couples in Jolo. Thus the couples and their children face little or no community prejudice or hostility.
  3. The exchange of religion and culture was both ways. It is, however, more on the Christians (especially the women) who adopted the Tausug's culture and Islam partly due to the environmental influence.
  4. The Muslim respondents tended to increase their religious activities after marriage while there is no significant increase among the Christian spouses.
  5. The respondents tended to show positive attitudes toward inter-ethnic relationship, allow their children (especially their son) to enter into mixed marriage, and accent the bride-gift practice of the Tausugs. Majority of them, on the other hand, showed