

**Dumiwata: Starting Point for Inculturated  
Christianity among the Subanen**  
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**Abstract**

This paper attempts to advance the inculturation of Christianity and transform the “discorded faith” among the indigenous Subanen by grounding missiological practice in their indigenous belief system. It seeks to demonstrate how the Subanen belief in Dumiwata in conversation with the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit might result in the mutual enrichment of both belief systems. Implications for an inculturated catechesis are outlined.

**Introduction**

As with other aspects of their culture, Subanen religious life was affected by the encounter with the expressions of Christianity passed on by settlers and the missionaries who came in their wake. Dominated by pre-Vatican II thought and approaches, Christian mission focused primarily on conversion, incorporation into the church, and liturgy. Christian practices were dominated by lowland cultures alien to the distinctive Subanen indigenous belief system and their identity as *lumads* (non-Muslim indigenous people). Without seeing the relationship between Christianity and their deeply-held indigenous belief system, the Subanen stood on ruptured ground in a crisis of identity which affected their religious life.