

## WORLD MUSIC

# PHILIPPINE ISLANDS PALAWAN ISLAND

---

WD-PH1 France 1987

### **BÄGIT KABÄG: "LA CHAUVE-SOURIS FRUGIVORE" (KABÄG – THE FRUIT-EATING BAT)**

WD – Ethnic – Instrumental

**Comp:** (Traditional)

**Perf:** **MANDUN** (lute kusjapiq)

**Prod. Co:** Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique  
& Musée de l'Homme

**Rec. Eng:** Nicole Revel-MacDonald, Charles Macdonald,  
& José Maceda

**Liner Notes:** (8-page Booklet) Nicole Revel-MacDonald & José  
Maceda (English trans.: Patricia Railing & N. Revel MacDonald)

**Time:** 0:59

1. **LP:** PHILIPPINES – MUSIQUES DES  
HAUTES-TERRES PALAWAN

Le Chant du Monde LDX 74865

12" 33rpm (Sd 2 – Bd 8)

2. Reissue on **CD:** PHILIPPINES – MUSIQUES DES HAUTES-TERRES PALAWAN (1992)

Le Chant du Monde 274865 (Tk 8 – Part 7)

**Notes:** Palawan, the last frontier in southwestern Philippines, is itself an archipelago of 2,000 islets. (Anon. n.d.) This short ethnic piece was recorded with eight other pieces in one of the villages located between the valleys of the Mäkägwaq and Tamlang Rivers.

A "bägit" is "strictly instrumental music played on an anhemitonic pentatonic scale to produce sounds related to nature, birds, and animals." (Booklet notes) The "kusjapiq" is a two-string lute where the melody string has six frets and the drone string has no frets. It may reach a length of 2m30. The sound resembles in some ways the Appalachian dulcimer, which has three strings and frets and is much smaller.

Regarding the inspiration for this piece, which is a fairly simple melody repeated five times, we are told in French that – "Un ancêtre s'était placé au pied de l'arbre *binuwang* (variété de ficus) afin d'abattre les chauves-souris avec sa gaule. Il entendit leurs multiples bruits et préféra rentrer chez lui pour les transposer sur son luth." (Booklet notes)

And in English – "An ancestor was at the bottom of the binuwang tree (a variety of *Ficus*) so that he could slay the bats with his long bamboo pole. When he heard the rustling of their many wings and cries he decided rather to go home and transpose this for the lute." (Booklet notes)

**Ref:** Anon. n.d., Philippines, Musiques des hautes terres, *Asian Music*, Fall-Winter 1993-1994, p. 312, [JSTOR](http://www.jstor.org)  
Philippines, Musiques des hautes terres palawan, [WorldCat](http://www.worldcat.org)

