

EthnoDoxology

SAMPLE ISSUE

Editorial

Welcome to **EthnoDoxology**—if you are interested in the multifaceted music and worship of God’s people around the world, you’re in the right place!

This quarterly journal is a key resource for people interested in communication through Christian music, across cultures and within a culture. *One focus* is on indigenous Christian music around the world, including both rural and urban areas as well as historical and contemporary studies. A *second focus* is on worship in the broad and narrow senses, and ways that it relates to the arts. A *third focus* is the interface between music, religion and culture, with perspectives from ethnomusicology. A *fourth focus* is the application of all the above so that God’s glory may fill the earth, through the effective use of music and arts in missions, worship and evangelism (conducted by cultural insiders and outsiders).

We’re sure you will enjoy and benefit from the articles, which include stories and case studies from Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania, and the Americas (all represented in this sample issue). Other articles will touch on media, worship (theology and practice), recording technology, instruments, and ethnomusicology. Books on worship, ethnomusicology, the music industry, histories of Christian music, and other subjects will be reviewed, as well as pertinent recordings.

Whether you are a missionary, teacher, worship leader, ethnomusicologist, national church leader, librarian, student, or leader of a training program for a mission organization, you will find this journal to be indispensable in your work and studies.

Among the many people groups (*ethnos*) across the globe, God is raising up meaningful worship (*doxology*). Let this journal help you keep up with how God’s Spirit is inspiring culturally-appropriate worship among the nations—and how you can be a part.

-- Paul Neeley



Worship is to be theologically, practically and strategically central to our lives. It is both an event and a lifestyle. A worship/arts leader on a church planting team has the dual ministry of serving the team in its regular worship gatherings, and encouraging the emergence of culturally relevant forms of worship in spirit and truth which incorporate the vast mosaic of a nation’s rich heritage of arts, music, dance and other means of expression.

--Dave Hall, Director, “Worship to the Nations”

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Musicologist Experiences A Cultural Awakening

by Terry L. Baldrige, Ph.D.

While on a sabbatical from my teaching responsibilities at MidAmerica Nazarene University in 1994, it was my privilege to spend a semester teaching at a graduate seminary in Manila. Although located in the Philippines, the seminary serves the entire Asia-Pacific region and consequently has students from many cultural backgrounds. My assignment was to teach two classes in church music, one class in ethnomusicology, and to organize a choir. When the Dean of the seminary first contacted me, he mentioned that most of the churches around Manila used American music in English and that he would like for me to help the Philippine students develop their own hymnody in an indigenous style and language. This project immediately captured my interest.

During the few months before my assignment was to begin, I conducted research and gathered materials relating to indigenous church music. I was even able to contact missionary ethnomusicologists currently working in the Philippines. As I continued to investigate the reasons why churches were not using indigenous music, I realized that the problem was not that such music had not been written. I discovered several publications of indigenous church music, but wondered why they were not being used.

Studying Philippine history helped me find some answers. The two dominant cultural influences in the country are Spanish and American, and occupation by these foreign powers has left its imprint upon Philippine culture. In many ways it is difficult to define the indigenous culture because so many Spanish and some American elements have been assimilated. The Spanish brought with them the Roman Catholic Church, and during their occupation this religion entrenched itself throughout the country. The Spanish considered themselves superior to the indigenous people and Filipinos were conditioned to believe that their culture was inferior and that what had been imported was better.

When Protestant missionaries arrived, bringing with them a religion often presented as American and at odds with that presented by Catholics, this conditioning of Filipino cultural inferiority continued. As the indigenous peoples began to mix with the foreign races in an effort to improve themselves or better their conditions, the truly indigenous peoples of the country were viewed by the mixed races as being even more inferior—a viewpoint which is still very common today. A striking example of this attitude is the use of “body bleach” by people who want to look more “American.”

As I attended church services and began working with students, I became keenly aware of how strongly implanted this anti-indigenous conditioning had become. Music in the churches was almost totally in English, and the few songs I heard in a local tongue were usually translations of American hymns—translations that were awkward because of the basic

differences in the languages. A local pastor had compiled, translated, and published a hymnal of American hymns several years earlier, but the translations were inadequate and so the hymnal was not used much. When it came time for the sermon, however, the native dialect was always used. Again, I was very perplexed.

When I first approached students about developing their own church music in an indigenous musical style and language, they could not understand why that needed to be done since they were content to sing in English. When I then asked why the sermon was not in English, they said it was so that all the people could understand it. This compounded my

The Spanish considered themselves superior to the indigenous people and Filipinos were conditioned to believe that their culture was inferior and that what had been imported was better.

own confusion and frustration. I also began to notice that even though we spoke English in the classroom, immediately upon dismissal the students would begin speaking to each other in their local dialects. When I asked why, they said it was more comfortable. Seizing the opportunity, I then suggested that this might also be a good premise for

using indigenous Christian music in church services. Slowly, the students began to see my point and we began to study examples of indigenous music which I had collected.

In the process, I began to discover other reasons why indigenous music was not being used in Protestant churches. For one thing, many Filipinos are extremely poor and they simply cannot afford to purchase the indigenous music that has been published. Instead they use whatever music is sent from American churches. Also, even if they could afford the music they would not be inclined to purchase it, since Roman Catholics have produced most of it—another example of an attitude which is actually a conditioned response.

When I finally gave the assignment for them to write Christian songs with original text and music, the results were fascinating. I had given no guidelines or restrictions—only that the music should be in an indigenous style to which the people could relate. With only one exception, the new hymns were in minor keys—a manifestation of the Spanish influence which has become such an important part of Filipino culture. The one exception was composed by the student who has had the most exposure to American culture. Her favorite hymn happens to be “When the Roll is Called Up Yonder,” and so her original composition was full of dotted eighth- and sixteenth-note rhythms.

Many of the hymns written by the students were presented in a chapel service at the seminary. Even before this program we had begun using some indigenous instruments in the services, and the response to both was very positive. One of the students who was most enthusiastic about the development of indigenous hymnody was the daughter of the pastor who had compiled and translated the hymnal mentioned earlier.

Even though my preliminary research had caused me to be aware that indigenous elements can be suppressed by foreign cultural influences, I was not prepared for the impact that such deeply entrenched conditioning can have. When I began my teaching in Manila, my goal had been to produce a book and recording of the students' hymns which could be distributed by the churches. The administration of the seminary, however, was reluctant to focus so much attention on one cultural group when they are responsible to the entire Asia-Pacific region. And so I left at the end of my assignment hoping that I had somehow inspired the students to pursue the creation and use of indigenous music.

Putting aside hundreds of years of conditioning will not be an easy process. I knew that I had experienced a cultural awakening and I could only pray that my students had undergone a similar experience.

Some Social Factors in Failure and Success of Indigenous Hymns

by Paul Neeley

Indigenous hymns involve Christians using their "heart music" system as well as their "heart language" system. Many social factors influence the creation of indigenous hymns and their subsequent acceptance or rejection by the community. These factors go beyond the sound of the songs to include such issues as individual and community attitudes toward various music systems, prestige and status of the music systems and musicians, context of the songs' creation, influence of Western music, involvement of recognized authorities (in the church and in the music systems), and aspects of culture change.

A case study published in 1969 by Isaiah Mwesa Mapoma details different approaches toward hymns found in some Bemba churches of Zambia.¹ One section that is particularly interesting is Mapoma's analysis of why indigenous hymnody once flourished in an area but afterward failed. A number of factors such as those given above were found to have major impact. The lessons we can learn are very relevant to us today, in churches in London and New York as much as in rural Africa.

The Anglican Church established a church among the Bemba people at Chipili, Zambia. In 1933 a European priest published a hymn book using three sources: a European hymnal, a hymnal used by a related dialect group, and hymns based on existing Bemba songs.

At one point the more indigenous hymns were very popular. However, there has been a decline in using Bemba music in the church over the last several decades. "Nowadays, little use is made of folk music in the church at Chipili, and this can be seen from their new hymn book which contains mainly translated hymns" (p. 80).

What factors led to the decline? Mapoma suggests six reasons:

1. The Anglican priests who "succeeded the innovators of folk music in church held opposing views" (p. 77).
2. The congregation started objecting to certain songs because of their origin (and original connotations).
3. Some church members resented the use of folk songs because many Europeans regarded African folk music as primitive. "Consequently, its use in the church was seen as a deliberate attempt to keep the African away from modern ideas and thus delay his progress and attainment of political equality with Europeans" (p. 78).
4. "A few influential young people resented folk music because they considered it old-fashioned" (p. 78).
5. A primary use of songs was to attract prospective new converts to the church. When this objective was accomplished, indigenous hymns lost a primary reason for existence.
6. Most of the church songs came from local dances whose popularity changed quickly. The church, therefore, became the only institution in which the songs of defunct dances were perpetuated. This led to the congregation singing songs from the new and exciting dances in one environment – the village – and singing the less exciting songs of the outmoded dances in another environment – the church. Consequently, the environment with the less pervading influence, the church, began losing ground (p. 78-80).

A multitude of factors led to the decline of Bemba music in the church and to the disuse of certain songs. People were even apparently so turned off to the idea that their new hymnbook contains mainly translated hymns (p. 80). What can we learn from the past to help us promote culturally-appropriate Christian music today?

First, the existing and potential authority figures, both local and foreign, should understand the importance of using a people's "heart music system" in Christian music, and be willing to back it up publicly in church. Support must be gained from individuals who can influence others and who can model attitudes of openness and acceptance toward even a step in the right direction.

Second, using pre-existing melodies usually carries pre-existing cultural connotations. If your congregation were to sing the lyrics of "Amazing Grace" to the tune of the theme song from "Gilligan's Island," do you think people will be thinking about God's grace or about coconuts? Whenever possible, church composers should be encouraged to sing a new song to the Lord to avoid previous secular attachments to a well-known melody. When song composers are challenged to use their creativity to express their own faith, the result will be a vibrant, meaningful expression of Christianity within the culture.

Third, we can express a positive attitude towards creativity in local musics in general, even though certain genres may not reflect Christian values. Regarding music as “primitive” or “repetitious” may be shown by attitude as well as words, and can influence people in a negative way. Our own personal taste and culturally-determined musical values should not be confused with any worldwide aesthetic absolutes. As ethnomusicologists have researched music the world over and reported their results for over 100 years, they have discovered that there are no aesthetic musical absolutes.

Fourth, prestige and status of specific song styles (and of particular composers) have a great deal to do with their acceptance by any subgroup of the community. Attitudes toward older and new musical styles, or rural and urban musics, must be taken into account while realizing that attitudes change. In a cross-cultural situation, our attitudes can influence people to regard (at least some) existing song styles of their culture in a positive light, and to esteem musical creativity which can lead to new songs and styles for use by Christians. We can add prestige in numerous ways, such as conducting research (formally or informally), making recordings, publishing song texts as literacy materials, even trying to learn from a master musician how to sing or dance or play an instrument. You don’t have to become proficient, just the act of trying enhances the prestige of the music and music-maker!

Fifth, indigenous hymns should be fully integrated into a local church, and not merely used as an addendum. Even in Western churches, music is often used for peripheral purposes such as to uphold tradition, promote relaxation, or merely to “set the mood” for preaching.² But when a full biblical understanding of “music ministry” is gained, church musicians and singers can function in the roles of prophet, evangelist and teacher as well as ‘worship leader’.³ Culturally-appropriate Christian music can have major impact on both building up the believers *and* reaching the non-Christians in a culture—let’s not limit its usefulness.

Sixth, a static body of hymns, whether imported or locally created, shows that indigenous hymnody has not been internalized by the church community. A key criterion for the vitality of most musical systems is that new songs are being created within the system. When foreign hymns were exported to Africa, they generally remained in a closed, static corpus. Many nationals did not learn the foreign music system well enough to internalize it and compose new songs in the system of Western tonality. In the Chipili case study, old indigenous songs were adapted for church use, but apparently remained in a closed corpus that did not keep up with changing tastes of the community.⁴ Indigenous hymnody should be expected to change and develop to meet the community’s felt needs and changing musical taste, while remaining in the traditional framework enough so that non-Christians recognize it as “our music.”

Attitudes have a great impact on the creation and continuation of locally-appropriate church songs. Attitudes affect the acceptance or rejection of indigenous hymnody perhaps even more than the sound of the songs. The songs used in the Chipili case study had a sound that the Bemba people could identify as their own, but attitudes eventually led to their demise. When Black Gospel music was introduced in America by Thomas Dorsey around 1926, overcoming attitudes was more difficult than composing new songs.⁵

When favorable attitudes are present, culturally appropriate Christian music, an authentic expression of faith formed in “heart music” as much as “heart language,” can be a primary means of evangelism, discipleship, and even Bible study for nonliterates. When the Epistle to the Hebrews was introduced into Yoruba culture (Nigeria) in the form of Yoruba Scripture songs on cassette, the Bible as memorized song moved out of the church walls to reach markets, farms, taxi drivers, and even Muslims.⁶

The Yoruba were emphatic in their attitude that songs were the most enjoyable way to learn the Scripture; it is significant that this method also gave the greatest retention of the materials.⁷ Hear this challenge: To the literate I have become the Word on paper, to the nonliterate I have become the Word in song.

The six negative factors that caused the decline of indigenous hymns at Chipili were replaced in the Yoruba church by positive attitudes and well-planned development of Scripture songs. New songs in Yoruba musical styles were created by Yoruba people. They were encouraged by missionaries who had a positive view of musical creativity and indigenous (nonliterate) communication styles. The songs were given prestige through acceptance by many local Christian leaders, and also by being recorded on a series of cassettes. They were used not just for evangelism and outreach, but for Bible studies and discipleship of believers within the Body and so were integrated into common church life. Since a large repertoire of Scripture songs was commissioned and composed for the Hebrews project, using rural and urban musical styles, there were songs that appealed to different musical tastes and generational preferences. Perhaps we can take all these factors into consideration and follow such an example in our own work.

“To the literate I have become the Word on paper, to the nonliterate I have become the Word in song.”

End Notes

¹. Mapoma, Isaiah Mwesa. 1969. “The Use of Folk Music Among Some Bemba Church Congregations in Zambia,” in 1969 Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council: 72-88.

². See Hustad, Donald P. 1960. “Developing a Biblical Philosophy of Church Music,” reprinted in “Readings in Christian Music Communication” edited by Roberta King, MA Thesis at Fuller Theological Seminary, 1982.

³. See Hustad above.

⁴. In the US, music with Christian lyrics is often at least

a decade (if not centuries) behind what subgroups of the community at large prefer as the “hot style.”

⁵. See Newsweek, February 8, 1993, p. 58.

⁶. Klem, Herbert. 1977. Oral Communication of the Scripture. Pasadena: William Carey Library.

⁷. Klem 1977:183

Praise Him with the Panpipes: Kerygma Canta

by Paul Neeley

The phrase *Kerygma Canta* combines Greek and Spanish words to mean something like “the message in song.” It is also the name of one popular band that pioneered the use of Andean instruments in Christian music. The original ensemble was formed, circa 1980, when Christians at a missionary training school in Peru wanted to use Andean instruments to proclaim the gospel. Up until that time, the piano was the primary instrument used in the churches. But five students wanted to use their own culture’s music to reach their own culture.

The band’s instrumentation is typical twentieth-century Andean: panpipes (*zamponas/sikus*, *toyos*, and *antaras*), flutes (*quenás* and *tarkas*), drum (*bombo*), a rattle made from sheep hooves (*chaj’cha*), and the *charango* (a European-influenced chordophone with resonator of wood or armadillo shell) augmented by guitar.

The church leaders initially had some resistance to this kind of music, not only for religious reasons but also for political ones: it was used to proclaim the Peruvian revolution in the streets at that time. As band member José Navarro states, “Peru was passing through a difficult time, and the revolutionaries would play this music to proclaim their ideas. As well, many people in the Andes use these kinds of instruments and song types in their religious festivals. When *Kerygma Canta* started to use this music in the church, they had problems from both sides. The revolutionaries said, ‘You can’t take this music to proclaim Jesus, it’s only to share our revolution.’ And the church said, ‘This music is not for worshipping God, it’s for worship of the devil.’ The only ‘holy instruments’ in the church at that time were piano and organ.”

But after a few years of trying this innovation of using Andean instruments, the church authorities developed an attitude of greater acceptance and began to realize the potential: missionaries and evangelists could use these instruments in sharing the gospel in markets, town squares, and street corners in different parts of Lima (the capital of Peru).

Musical Missionaries

All ensemble members have been students of a Peruvian Bible School, known in English as “Evangelical Missionary Association to All Nations” (the acronym of the name in Spanish is AMEN). All members are trained as preachers and evangelists, and preach through their song lyrics and in between the songs as well.

Music is an important ministry of AMEN. The missionary training of all students includes how to play Andean instruments. Those who show the most musical giftedness may be given the opportunity to be world-wide ambassadors through music. Some members of *Kerygma Canta* were accomplished musicians before attending the AMEN school; others discovered their gifts while there.

The original ensemble was made up of five members who have since gone on to be pastors and missionaries around the world. When I interviewed the band in 1996, the six-man group was actually the third generation of *Kerygma Canta*. Many of the members are composers, creating songs with Christian lyrics in a number of different Andean song genres. These include *huayno* (Quechua), *huaylas*, *takirari*, *son*, *sikuri* (from the altiplano area), *lando*, *lando festejo* (Afro-Peruvian), *San Jacinto* (Ecuador), *trote*, traditional festival rhythms, and more.

As José explains, “When the early missionaries from Europe came to our countries, they tried to teach our people to worship God with the piano, but they had great difficulty with that music.” But when *Kerygma Canta* toured cities in the Andes, teaching people to sing Christian *huaynos* with *charangos*, the audiences were pleased to find their own culture’s instruments and song styles used in worship.

Kerygma Canta was one of the pioneer groups in this regard. After they helped to open the door as far as public acceptance, other ensembles encountered much less opposition. A similar case study¹ dates the origins of Christian Quechua music to 1978 in Ayacucho, and details the heavy opposition that was initially faced in Peruvian churches by the group “The Messengers of God.”

Many similar groups have sprung up in the Andes since then. José estimates that there are about 500 Christian musical ensembles using Andean instruments, most of them based in local churches. Many churches want to have such a music group resident to aid in worship services. *Kerygma Canta* is the “house band” of a Spanish-speaking church in London planted by AMEN missionaries. The pastor is the group’s manager. When performing in London, they are sometimes accompanied by a group of dancers from a local Brazilian church.

Kerygma Canta started in Peru, then went to neighboring countries, then around the world. They have performed in many countries in South America, as well as the USA, Philippines, and eight countries in Europe. They have played in concert halls, schools, town halls, on board a Russian ship, in churches, and at outdoor concerts. They recently spent a

week with Christian students at a secular university in Liverpool, holding open-air evangelistic meetings. They have found that their expertise on Andean instruments will always draw a crowd in any country.

The group I interviewed in London had been based there for about a year and was traveling throughout Europe before that. In London, some members were taking further studies at a Bible school while others worked on learning English. In addition, they were working to establish a missionary training school (similar to AMEN in Peru) for Spanish-speaking people in Europe.

After a few years of musical performance, all members plan to move into other types of Christian service. “The people in the group will always be changing, but the philosophy, the vision of sharing the gospel through our culture’s music, will not change,” says José. When each member feels it is time to be a pastor or do other work, he leaves the ensemble and a replacement is brought in who has been trained at AMEN. The group is self-supporting through concerts, recordings, and sales of handicrafts imported from Peru. Most of the band members are single men.



Song Lyrics

Lyrics can be grouped into three main areas. The first is the Scriptures, including excerpts from Psalms 8 and 63, Revelation 7, Isaiah 43, Song of Songs, and the Lord’s Prayer. The second group of songs reflect the group’s missionary orientation: “The Missionary Life,” “Missionaries from My Land,” and “Backpacks and Guitars” are representative song titles.

The third topical area is personal experience. Song titles include “Help Me, Lord” and “The Earth and Its Pain.” Several songs were born out of the volatile political situation in Peru. “Urpichay” is a *huayno* sung in Quechua, calling for peace and an end to violence. “The Solution” focuses on “the Latin American situation and the search for a solution.” Still a third politically-influenced song is named after a state in Peru called Ayacucho, which is Quechua for “corner of the dead.” This area is the birthplace of the Shining Path rebel group, and many people have been killed there through terrorism. The song “Ayacucho” (sung in Quechua) addresses the violence and proclaims that Jesus is the only way to peace.

The group occasionally writes new lyrics for popular traditional melodies. For example, the tune of “El Condor Pasa” is sung to these words (in Spanish): “Brothers and sisters, let’s get ready because Jesus is coming soon, and he’ll ask you to give an account.”

Musical Roots and Branches

Some songs are instrumentals. For example, “Genesis” features the incredibly deep sound of the *toyos* (4-foot long panpipes) to musically represent the creation of the world. The ensemble plays a mix of pre-Columbian music (such as

a pentatonic panpipe ensemble) and music that is more influenced by contemporary pop music (for instance, panpipes added to Western chord progressions played on guitar). The two styles may even be used in a single song (pop vocal section accompanied by guitar and *charango* alternating with a pre-Columbian instrumental panpipe section).²

Their art form is rooted in tradition but not static. The ensemble is now branching out by occasionally adding bass guitar, drums, or piano on some songs. “We are interested in mixing our Andean instruments with others,” they say, “and we are working on singing more songs in English so that we can better communicate to European audiences.” After having paved the way for Andean music to be used in Andean churches, the band now reaches out to the extensive Latin community in Europe. “We make songs for the old and new generations,” José explains, developing different types of music to reach different audiences.

While considering themselves to be evangelists even more than musicians, they are equally as professional as other contemporary Andean ensembles that tour the UK, such as **Apu** and **Rumillajta**. Many groups have popularized Andean music and instruments in Europe; for example, the British label *Tumi Music* distributes recordings made by about a dozen different Andean performers. But *Kerygma Canta* is the only one to capitalize on this European interest in Andean music as they proclaim the gospel outside of the Andes. While contemporary Andean music is of course not a universal musical language, its popularity around the world increases year by year, which means the musical form can get a hearing for the message in many places.

“It has always been God’s plan that all people of the world should hear his message,” states José. “The Lord has been using different aspects of many peoples’ traditional cultures in order to reach man’s heart with this message—the gospel.” From the ancient Incan empire through the cold altiplano of the Andes to the major cities of Europe, *Kerygma Canta* has been presenting “the message in song” to receptive audiences around the world.

End Notes

¹ See chapter 8 of the book “One Bright Shining Path” by W. Terry Whalin and Chris Woehr, Crossway Books (Wheaton, IL).

² *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980 edition) describes “20th-century Quechua music which can be distinguished from the music of other Peruvian Indians and from post-Columbian mestizo and Creole music” (p. 562, “Peru folk music” by Isabel Aretz).

Special thanks to José Navarro for the interview on which this article is based, and to Dr. Tom Avery for his comments on an earlier article draft.

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Ministers on Turntables: Christian Rave Music

by John Buckeridge (with comments by editor)

Editor: Does everyone remember the cry against Christian rock music? Just when you thought it was safe to crank up the amp in the sanctuary, a new dispute has broken out over more recent popular music in Europe: rave. A rave is an event, taking place in a warehouse, a field, a nightclub, or wherever people can get together and dance. It's a bit like the 90's mobile version of Woodstock (complete with hallucinogenic drugs). Similarities can even be found to some music events of Papua New Guinea or First Nations groups throughout much of the Americas.

Why should Christians pay any attention to rave culture? Because that's where the young people are. British youth are three times more likely to attend a rave than a church service; 40% go to a rave or disco weekly, compared to an average of 13% who claim to be regular churchgoers. If you want to be a fisher of men, follow the fish, some say.

*Christians have had mixed reactions to those who seek to minister through the rave culture (as you might have guessed from church history). Rave is the current focal point for the big questions asked by the Church in every culture in every time period: can this part of our secular culture be redeemed through Christ? Can Christianity be enculturated into **this** experience? Is it appropriate for Christians to participate in a (modified) form of **this**?*

To explore some contemporary answers to these questions, the following article is excerpted with permission from the article "Rave New World" by John Buckeridge, editor of the British magazine YOUTHWORK. The details particularly concern the music of contemporary European youth, but the larger issues of music, culture, and faith will resonate with all of us who work with indigenous hymnody around the world.

The rave movement began in a handful of clubs in Manchester and London in 1987. [Many people say the musical roots began earlier that decade in Detroit and Chicago.] Within a year the movement had mushroomed into a huge number of illegal warehouse parties and outdoor raves, which routinely attracted tens of thousands. Rave culture exists outside of the United Kingdom as well, especially in the urban centers of Holland, Germany, and France. [It also caught on in other places such as the US, Australia, and South Africa.]

Now rave music dominates the pop charts. There is a constantly growing list of sub-genres, including ambient, gangsta rap, hard core, hip hop, house, trance, jungle, and more.

Ravers want a good time, and in a frantic atmosphere charged with loud back-to-back dance music and cheap

Ecstasy [*a drug*], a kind of chemical fellowship is created as people sweatily bop the night away. "If you listen to rave music in the setting in which it was intended to be listened to, then there's a general assumption that some chemical abuse is going on in order to sustain you through the long hours of dancing," says Karl Allison, a Christian working with youth in the rave counter-culture.

Some bands such as **The Shamen** are explicit promoters of rave spirituality, which includes hedonistic paganism and Eastern philosophy. Other bands are more implicit and suggestive about religious aspects.

The popularity of rave is not just the music, but primarily the communal experience. "Essentially it's club-oriented. Most of the music is made to be listened to in a specific context. Very few people listen, particularly to hard core, in their front room. That's because there's nothing really to listen to—it has to be experienced," according to Allison.

The popularity of rave is not just the music, but primarily the communal experience.

"Wherever the event is taking place, escapism is the name of the game. The imagery, the monotony of the beat, and the kind of drug-induced fellowship which goes on between the people is designed to be as different from the rest of their lives as they can possibly make it."

If rave has at its heart a mix of escapism, hedonism and a ragbag of New Age thinking, how appropriate is it for Christians to enculturate the gospel in the rave scene?

"Anything can be redeemed," insists music magazine editor Tony Cummings. "This was proved with heavy metal. When the first Christian bands like **Rez** [*Resurrection Band*] entered the heavy metal arenas in the 70s they were heavily criticized. Concerned evangelicals said they were trying to do the impossible. It was as if they were trying to redeem pornography—something which was inherently sinful.

"History has proven that not only have Christians produced something of significance in the whole metal and thrash areas of heavy rock music, but they have also helped to sustain the genre. By being there, understanding it culturally and working within it, in time they can create something effective as art.

"Obviously many Christians are going into art with a fairly utilitarian attitude towards their music. They have a strong sense that they have a message to pronounce within their chosen art form. There is nothing wrong with that.

"The irony is that those who attack that idea, and believe art is a rarified platform that exists entirely for its own sake, fail to see that all popular culture preaches something. All the evangelical utilitarians are trying to do is preach truth as opposed to preach lies," says Cummings.

Karl Allison, in addition to training to be a Salvation Army leader, has organized Last Daze, a series of "evangelical alternative worship events." Central to Last Daze, like all rave events, is dance. "It's very physical," says

Allison. "The body is the essential ingredient, then we encourage them to engage their brains in what's going on."

Allison uses video and slide projection to communicate a message. Compared to a secular rave where the images are mere blurs and colours, at Last Daze they are pointed and include words, including Scripture. The music is not meant to be escapist as at secular raves but a catalyst to worship. Last Daze events take place around the UK. "What we're doing is providing a climate and an atmosphere that young people understand," he states.

Elsewhere within the Christian rave scene, the times are exciting. Experimentation abounds, and the alternative worship scene continues to flourish.

Tony Cummings considers that some Christians in rave counter-culture like Scott Blackwell and World Wide Message Tribe are producing some truly creative work. He says, "All sorts of interesting things in evangelism and pre-evangelism are happening, like cutting out fragments of preaching and sampling them in dance tracks.

"The exciting stuff is the Christocentric material. I get a bit tired of the neo-liberals coming up with their tired arguments against evangelicalism, and who are so keen to get into bed with popular culture that there is nothing very different between what they are doing and what the world has.

"If all the Church can do is give young dysfunctional youth a chance to go to a church and have a rave and then go away again back into their culture, with nothing that connects or is different, except maybe for a little prayer at the end—if that is it, then the Church has lost out," states Cummings.

But thankfully, at their best, alternative services and Christian rave counter-culture are providing a cutting edge that impacts young people's lives, Christian and non-Christian alike. That's got to be good news.

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Editor: One of the most fascinating things since this article was written is how the rave movement and terminology have been co-opted by conservative churches in the US. I was so surprised to read in my parent's Baptist church newsletter about a "rave" that would be held for a Baptist youth group! And to find on the Web invitations to Christian raves from Salt Lake City to Philadelphia to Maryland. (A number of the sponsoring churches were Baptist; what are they teaching in the seminaries these days?!) Even a special term developed: a "crave." Some people claim this means "Christian rave" while others protest "no, it just means that we are craving to be in God's presence... and we get there while dancing for His glory."

All raves that go by the name "Christian" are supposed to be drug-free. And though fast music and dance should be

the essential ingredients in a rave experience, apparently they sometimes get left out as well. One youth ministry describes in detail "a 4-week Rave programming strategy designed to evangelize and assimilate unchurched youth." They call the four stages Mega Rave (which includes go-kart races), Gospel Rave (which includes volleyball and scavenger hunts), Christian Rave (pizza feast), and Issue Rave (talking about suffering, love). This smacks to me of just taking a "hot" phrase of pop culture and sticking it on activities that have nothing at all to do with rave culture, and it seems misleading. The euphoria from winning a volleyball game is different from the euphoria experienced at a rave event.

Most people, whatever their religious background, recognize the key importance of "spirituality" that is present at a rave. For a non-Christian's perspective on similarities of spirituality in the rave scene and Christianity, see the fascinating article "The Liturgy and the Laser" posted at <www.shootthemessenger.com.au/u_jan_98/.../i_liturg.htm> For another view, see the thought-provoking paper posted by a Methodist youth worker in S. Africa at <www.youth.co.za/xpapers1006.htm> which includes his comments on "what a Christian rave should be providing for young people."

Frank Horvath, a US Christian DJ, says the music should create an environment for ravers to communicate with God. "We're ministers on turntables," he says. "I can't make you believe, but I can make you dance yourself closer to God." Hmm ... heresy, or hope for this generation? Grab your dancing shoes (and earplugs) and decide yourself. To "stay on your toes" as far as the Christian rave scene, visit <www.dancechapel.com>.

Perseverance and Patience

by Vida Chenoweth, Ph.D.

Sometimes conditions seem to favor the importation of a foreign music system in a society; the following are two case histories from Oceania involving work in the indigenous music systems under such conditions.

In 1984 I supervised ethnomusicology student Jennifer Runner, who was assigned to music investigation on the small island of Teop, off the east coast of Bougainville in the north Solomon Islands. As we tried to record the local singers, who sang in a soft, harmonic style, young men in a nearby store bombarded the air with rock music played through a public address system and drowned out their parents' voices. We had no recourse but to move down to the beach, away from the loudspeakers, and there continued our collecting of traditional songs.

As the night wore on, dark shadows began to appear in the background. The shadows belonged to the same young men who had driven us out of the village. They came closer and closer to listen to the songs of their heritage, songs not

familiar to them because they had been sent to school away from their island and had missed out on learning them. On the bigger island of Bougainville they had been changed culturally by the radio and by commercially inspired ventures. They were proud of their mastery of some technical equipment, which, in their minds, was superior to any local knowledge. In fact, the ability to operate the audio equipment became more important than the music heard on it.

Not until that moonlit night on the beach had they ever heard their own songs. They listened with rapt attention and gained newfound respect for their music. Sometimes, just the act of appreciation shown by foreigners is enough to cause a people to regard their music in a new light.

The second case study has to do with Virginia Whitney, who worked in a translation project in the Akoye language of Papua New Guinea. Virginia was in the first group of ethnomusicology interns from Wheaton College I supervised in PNG. Her assignment was Yessan-Mayo music. She transcribed and analyzed it, then composed some trial Scripture songs hoping to inspire further creativity among the locals.

In 1996, Virginia wrote me:

I'm very encouraged to see a new interest in composing Scripture songs in Akoye. And the real gem of the whole story is that the translators who sent us the tape [of the locally composed Christian songs which we played for the Akoye] ... were none other than Helen and Velma [the Yessan-Mayo translators]! The music was from a dialect of Yessan-Mayo they are now working in, but the music system is the same as the Yessan-Mayo [system which I analyzed long ago]. What a blessing for *that* group to be the spark to ignite [composition among] our Akoye friends.

Virginia's efforts of twenty years ago have born fruit, and not only for the Yessan-Mayo people. Their creativity in their local music system inspired the Akoye to compose Christian songs in the vernacular as well.

We must educate and be patient for God's timing, and not rush into encouraging the use of imported music styles. The Sepik River peoples of PNG certainly had a full dose of music introduced from the West, but they were not fruitful in creating new hymns in that music system. However, new indigenous Christian music became bountiful over time. From the book of James (5:11) we find that those who persevere are considered blessed. Perseverance and patience are far more than 'virtues,' they are necessities.

TIDBIT:

Many people regard the first true rock 'n' roll song as "Rocket 88" by Ike Turner in 1951. The special distorted guitar sound—later to be copied by many—was the result of an accident: an amp fell out of the car en route to the studio and things got jarred loose.

Musical Ministry in Areas Where Western Music has Penetrated

by Tom Avery, Ph.D. (with input from Paul Neeley)

Introduction

This article is based on a letter intended for musicians with an interest in missions but with little orientation in the dynamics of cross-cultural communication. Among other points, it argues for the culturally sensitive approach even where Western European music has already been used for Christian songs. It gives practical suggestions for Christian musicians on an international tour. Note that my ideas concerning music of the Far East are based on relatively little data.

Hymn Translation in the Far East and Europe

How can we utilize the principles of indigenous hymnodies in areas where hymn translation has been done, or is being done, on a large scale? In regard to the oriental areas where hymn translation was done long ago, I don't believe that one will run into any serious problems suggesting the development of indigenous hymnodies. To start with, I think we need to admit that as wonderful and dedicated as the early missionaries China, Korea, etc. were, the preponderance of translated hymns in many of these countries suggests that they made some serious mistakes. I don't think we should condemn them because, in large part, they were operating under a set of false assumptions regarding culture. (Cultural evolutionism, now disproved, was the "hot" theory of the latter half of the 19th century.) It seems a bit incredible to me that with the richness of both classical and folk traditions in these regions, somehow the missionaries failed to utilize these tremendous resources. (Maybe they tried but it didn't catch on.)

While we don't condemn the early missionaries, we don't try to make excuses for them either. We should state the indigenous principle and then let people draw their own conclusions about what has been done in the past. Furthermore, I don't think current missionaries will be offended by this, since the precedent for Western hymns in churches in the Far East was set by missionaries long gone. If there are missionaries who are currently translating Western hymns and choruses, I hope that what is presented in contemporary training programs (and in this article) will challenge them to consider a better approach.

If we send short-term musicians to evangelize in areas of the Far East, we should get them to do their homework beforehand and have at least a part of their repertoire be music from that region. It is a way of showing respect. It wouldn't have to be ancient *koto* music, but something from that area perhaps in a modern style. Otherwise, we are just repeating the mistakes of the past.

I don't think the people from these regions will be

offended by the approach to music that we suggest. I have had several conversations with people (mainly of Chinese extraction) and have never detected that they were upset by the principles discussed. On the contrary, discussing these issues has led to some interesting conversations with them about what they consider to be deficiencies in their hymnody. Chinese is a tonal language, but tone was ignored when the translations were made. Thus, the meanings of the songs are obscured by the melody. Also, at least one person felt the translations were poorly done.

Even ignoring the question of using foreign music, how would you like to have an entire body of hymnody that was almost totally translated from another language? Sure, we like *A Mighty Fortress* translated from the German, but even this powerful text is awkward in construction. Try attending a church where they sing translated hymns exclusively and I predict that very soon you will be begging for the poetry of Watts and the Wesleys.

A third complaint that I have heard about translated Oriental hymns is that the language is formal and archaic. If indigenous compositions had been encouraged in the past, maybe there would be a lively hymn-producing tradition now (instead of a relatively static one) where modern poetic forms would be used.

Presenting the indigenous principle, or emphasizing the use of local music resources with regard to hymnody, is a way of (sometimes belatedly) showing deserved respect for the traditional musical systems. Usually this principle is greeted positively by people who come from these traditions.

Having said this, I am not so naïve as to assume that suggesting this approach will lead to a sudden revolution in Chinese hymnody. Tradition is strong, and I suspect that the translated hymns will be used for a long time to come. I do believe, however, that when some people (insiders and outsiders) validate the indigenous approach, those who are already working in this area (and there are some) will be encouraged, and those who might be tempted to squelch this movement might have their eyes opened to its value.

What about hymn translation into non-English languages of Europe? It is well known that the nations of Western Europe share a common musical language in broad terms, so the challenges of hymn translation are more linguistic than musical. In those cases it is not necessary to argue for an interdiction of all hymn translation. On the other hand, for reasons mentioned above in the discussion of English hymnody, I think it would be a shame for a church established in a European country to have only “hymns and choruses” that were translated from other languages (usually English).

For example, I love songs by Graham Kendrick; these are songs that move me deeply because of the power of the words in my mother tongue as well as the music. The power of the lyrics is not in their message alone but in the way that the message is musically expressed. I’m not sure how well they translate, but I strongly suspect that even in European

languages a lot is lost in the translation. There is a real danger of trivializing a vital message by presenting it in translated versions that sound like doggerel.

If we are aware of the potential problems, many of them can be avoided. I believe that translated hymns—where musical languages are shared—have a supplementary place, and that the substantial “meat and potatoes” of any hymnody should be the products of composers and poets who are local musicians and native speakers of the language.

Non-European Areas Where Western Popular Music Has Penetrated

It is overly simplistic to suggest that it is okay to use western European music wherever that music has penetrated. Some see boomboxes everywhere (there are many in the Amazon and rural Africa), and conclude that it is all right to use songs by Michael W. Smith or whoever. (I like his music, by the way.) It is so much easier to use *our* music (already composed and recorded) that there will be a strong temptation to jump to a quick conclusion that may not be correct, or the most helpful in the long run.

Also, just because people make use of what we would term **worldbeat music**, it is not necessarily a good idea to use pop styles straight from the West when communicating the Gospel in song. “Worldbeat music” has hundreds of variations. If we want to use an urban musical style we need to investigate what variants of “worldbeat” music are already popular. Is there a “worldbeat” hybrid of local music(s) and Western music which is appropriate for a Christian message?

A very successful example of such a genre is the *juju* music of the Yoruba people in Nigeria. Thanks to the efforts of composers and performers such as King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and others, the urban Yoruba people (who number in the millions) have an opportunity to hear God’s words in the specific urban music style that they grew up with—their true “heart music.” Though *juju* music and Michael W. Smith’s music have some things in common, such as guitars, keyboards, drums and amplified vocals, only one will deeply reach into the heart of the Yoruba—and unless you are Yoruba yourself, do not expect their urban Christian music to lead you into deep worship either.

I am not talking here about the language differences, or the diverse ways in which the vocal lines fit together in each culture’s music system. I am talking about the significant differences in how the two music systems make use of the same instruments and tonal system. Both musics have guitar chords, vocals and percussion patterns, but the way they are put together makes the music sound distinctively African or American/European. Each type of urban Christian music is potentially very valuable for building the Kingdom of God—each in its own setting. Otherwise the emphasis will be on the novelty of the musical style—not an emphasis conducive to true worship.

For Yoruba people to develop urban songs with Christian texts, *juju* is more locally appropriate—and locally

sustainable!—than translating Vineyard choruses. The best approach for a cross-cultural Christian music communicator is not to jump in and say, “look at all the goodies I have brought” and start passing out overhead transparencies and song sheets. Rather, one should **research the sociomusical situation** and discover what the local people are already doing—and could do—in terms of creating their own musical offerings to God and the Body of Christ. “Do you mean I can’t just jump off the boat with the songs that touch my heart the deepest and give my new friends translated versions?” Not if you want the music to touch the hearts of your friends.

We need to attend to regional styles as well as overall musical language. The music of the majority of Brazilians uses the same basic building blocks as the music of western Europe, but I believe music in evangelical churches has suffered because so much music was imported and Brazilian styles were rejected wholesale. (This is changing now.) I strongly believe that local musical languages and styles should never be ignored when ministering in a region. But I also believe that there is a place for using translated music in certain circumstances. Here are some suggestions that I believe are both practical and feasible:

For traveling musicians, if you are going to travel in different music regions that appreciate western European music, than learn at least one traditional song for each region that you visit and sing it in the language. This might be a folksong if in Europe—obviously one with a positive message—or even a Christian message if such a song is available for you to learn. This song should be presented in a way that suggests maximum respect for the musical traditions of that region. The purpose of performing this piece is to show solidarity with the local traditions and to demonstrate that the members of the performing group hold those traditions just as equally valid as the ‘foreign’ music that they are presenting. The rest of each concert could be whatever repertoire the group has worked up.

For musicians touring in one region, they should set a goal of having at least half of their concert repertoire in local styles and language. To do this, I think the group will need to develop a relationship with local musicians to learn their songs or develop new ones. This will take some effort, and it might take several attempts before the goal is reached, but I strongly believe that the effectiveness of the music ministry will be both deepened and longer-lasting. There is a lot of “flash-in-the-pan” musical evangelism that goes on and I am afraid that the results are actually quite shallow and it is mainly an exercise in ego-gratification for the performers.

Ethnomusicology Resources

I don’t believe that these suggestions are onerous or impossible, especially because of the growth in resources,

both scholarly and popular. This growth has been explosive since the end of the last century.

Did you know that you can go into a popular electronics chain store in suburban Dallas and buy Aka Pygmy music from Central Africa, or Kayapo Indian music from the Amazon area of Brazil? There are thousands of “international music” CDs from all over the world available by mail order or over the Web as well as in local stores. Also, some companies import hundreds of ethnic musical instruments that can be ordered.

For written research, here are three main places to get you started:

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (2nd edition) has an article on the music of every country in the world, often with separate sections on popular and traditional musics, as well as a bibliography and discography for further research. You can find the set at a large library.

For information about the pop and urban musics of a country, the *Rough Guide to World Music* (2nd edition) is an excellent resource and includes a discography for each country discussed.

Finally, the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (a large 10-volume set) reflects current ethnomusicological research for areas according to continents, and includes articles on urban and rural musics. Each volume includes a bibliography, discography, videography, a CD, and more.

I (Paul) advise all of my interns and students who plan to do serious music ministry of some sort outside of their home country to read about the musics of regions where they will be working in all three of the resources above (this includes those who will work in Europe). Ask a friendly librarian or ethnomusicologist to help you obtain what you need to know to do your work well.

If you can research these three written resources, plus listen to relevant recordings before you enter another culture, you will be miles ahead as far as being an effective communicator in the realm of cross-cultural Christian music.

Also consider contacting one of the archives that collects indigenous hymns from around the world. No longer do you have to search in a musty archive, aided by a balding musicologist with hairy gray eyebrows and a thick German accent to find this stuff!

A long-term missionary working in one region, even where western European music is widely used, should always encourage and aid development of heart-music resources which “fit” that region, whether rural or urban. Music by composers of the region with lyrics originally written in the their language will mean more to the local people. It really bothered me in Brazil to see all the translated songs that were being used in the churches when there were so many competent Brazilian musicians and poets and so many national styles of music from which to choose.

Do your homework so that some of your songs are from the region you have gone to minister in: this shows respect for the people and their music.

When I say these things, I know that I may be “preaching to the choir” and that I am talking to you who are already convinced of the validity of the indigenous approach to musical ministry. I hope that some of my thoughts might be helpful to you when talking to others who might be less aware of the value of this approach. When I speak, many music missionaries will tend to discount what I say, thinking that it only applies to groups that have never listened to a radio or seen a TV set. Not so! It breaks my heart to see this powerful principle—*of using the “heart music” of a group or sub-group*, be it urban, rural, or a mix—unused in so many well-meaning and otherwise well-planned efforts.

Sacrifice and Reward

In the past, some ethnomusicologists have at times alienated people because they spoke so strongly on respecting local traditions and rejecting all else. I prefer a positive, objective approach. At some point, however, we need to face certain challenges involved in the “heart music approach” to music ministry.

Are we willing to make the sacrifice to do music ministry in the way that will have the deepest results, or will we just go back to the way we have always done it? Are we willing to take the time and effort to prepare ourselves to do it? (Taking a week or more of training at one of the Christian schools that offers a course in “applied ethnomusicology” would make a huge difference!) Are we willing to do our homework before setting out on a missions trip? Are we willing to lay aside our personal musical preferences and submit ourselves to the musical preferences of the people we are trying to reach? Is this partially what it means to be “incarnational” as far as music ministry?

For me to propound these questions is painless, since from early in my life I have had a desire to follow the indigenous approach and sought out “exotic” music, which fascinates me in its complexity and beauty. The indigenous approach for me is not a sacrifice but a joy.

But I can guess that for established performing musicians, a move in this direction could involve considerable sacrifice—including the sacrifice of the ego strokes we receive when performing. Could this be part of what it means to “humble ourselves” in music ministry? Carefully count the possible costs, but also joyfully count the possible results.

I think the indigenous approach to musical ministry is applicable in some way to all cross-cultural contexts, not just when working with isolated ethnic groups. It is intended to be put into practice and to bring results in the city slums as much as in the rain forests. I want to do everything I can to persuade people to try this approach. I firmly believe that when they do, the results are going to be so great that the

It breaks my heart to see this powerful principle—of using the “heart music” of a group or sub-group, be it urban, rural, or a mix—not used in so many well-meaning and otherwise well-planned efforts.

extra effort needed will be viewed as one of the best investments that Christian musicians can make—and look at the “spiritual dividends” which will increase exponentially as indigenous worship flourishes in the Kingdom of God!

Perhaps the main barrier is our attitude and pride. Isn’t it time to leave behind the colonialist view of the nineteenth century—the idea that *The West Always Knows Best*? As cross-cultural “musicianaries,” let us come to people first as students—the master musicians of the world have much to teach us if we have ears (and hearts) to hear.

Tom Avery is the International Coordinator for SIL Ethnomusicology, and lived in Brazil for many years.

Worship, Faith, Grace, and Music Making

presentation by Dr. Harold Best at Worship! LA (Christian Worship Conference) held at Biola University, La Mirada, CA, February 26, 1999

Worship, as we know, is on everybody’s mind. Seminars, methods, symposia, textbooks, conferences, even full-fledged academic programs give continuous coverage to the subject. There is no doubt that the typical evangelical has more resources, more options, more ideas, and more liturgical equipment than ever before. Even the historically liturgical churches, the ones that we honor most as being the truly worshipful traditions, have devoted less conscious talk to the subject of worship than we. We may well have been caught up in the words and works of worship far more than in the principles which drive them. We may now be guilty of worshipping worship, a curiously twisted kind of idolatry. Or, if we are not worshipping worship, we are worshipping about it, all too self-conscious about that which should be hidden by its own glory. Consequently, many Christians are thrown into that trap of always wondering if what they are doing is really worship, or, if they have to do even more to enter into that state. And it may even be that we talk more about worship than the Bible itself does.

Even so, this talk is curiously one-sided. It offers almost unlimited information as to what we can do on a Sunday or other “set-apart” times, but it leaves out the primary conceptual territory upon which all the doing depends.

Nonetheless, we should not consider all of this information useless. We must cherish it. But we must hold it in reserve until we sort out a foundational theology from which it more naturally flows. Doing this will teach us that all worship, fallen or redeemed, is a *continuing state*. We have to get our minds off of “church-time” worship, as if it were the only time, and on to the whole picture itself, of which church-time worship is but one part. We must reform our ideas of what “causes” worship. We must develop a theology

of creativity and handiwork in order that we be spared the subtle kinds of idolatry in which aids to worship and acts of worship are confused, in which music is said, on the one hand, to be an aid to—or tool of—worship, and on the other, an act of worship. Biblically speaking, we cannot have it both ways.

Here are a few beginning pieces of the foundation. They follow in a fairly natural sequence. Each, in itself, is rather obvious, but added up in a biblical fashion, the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

- Worship is the continuous act of showing what we consider to be most worthy—that which, by consequence, masters and shapes us.
- We were created to worship continuously, to be in continual adoration of and submission to the One-Who-Is-Worth-The-Most: God alone.
- When we fell, we did not cease our worship. Somehow, the urge to worship remained with us, but was turned upside down and backwards. With worship continuing, we exchanged gods, turning from the only Creator to creature in all of its manifold diversity.
- Consequently, all worship, except the worship of God, is idolatry, in that all other objects of worship (angels, spirits, things, places, jobs, artifacts) are some kind of handiwork. Idolatry, in its most basic state is: 1) the act of being shaped by something we have chosen to shape us; 2) shaping something ourselves and then allowing it to shape us.
- There is not only idolatrous worship apart from Christian worship, there is also idolatry within Christian worship, especially where we confuse acts and aids and where we depend on created things to bring worship about.
- The only solution to these otherwise irreversible evils lies in the finished work of Christ, through whom we can once again turn our continuous, fallen, backwards and upside down worship to the continuous and redeemed worship of God himself. Redemption turns us from the Lie to the Truth, from creature to Creator, and from works to faith
- There is but one call to Christian worship. It comes at the new birth and need not be repeated again, any more than our salvation does. The once-for-all work of Christ is the eternal seal to our salvation, our walking in the Light, our continuous worship, and our perpetual witness. From then on, our worship continues, right side up, at all times and in all places. Thus, we state our worship, but do not call ourselves to it.
- Worship is not entering into the presence of God or drawing near Him, for how can we do these things when Christ is in us, the Hope of glory? Worship is continuing in His presence while we continue to grow up into the stature of the fullness of Christ.

- Thus, we do not go to church to worship, nor are any activities meant to lead us into that state, for that state has already been brought about by redemption. Instead, we go to church, already at worship, but now to continue our worship corporately.
- This kind of worship is by faith alone unto more faith alone. We do not sing in order to worship; we sing *because* we worship.
- Continuous worship being our only possible state, our entire lives then become living epistles in which everything that we do, day in and day out, moment by moment, is marked by being a living sacrifice as we worship in the continuum of spirit and truth and mark our sojourn on the path of the beauty of holiness.
- Consequently, there are no aids to worship, only offerings of worship. The Holy Spirit alone is our Aid. God is at once Means and End. Christ is our Substance and our Center.

Once we learn this, put it in place and rigorously follow it, day in and day out, we can then turn back to the information side of worship: times, places, options, activities, sequences, protocols, artifacts, diversities, and decisions. We are then free to offer them, no longer depending on them. The Giver is in continuous lordship over the gifts. The work of Christ takes precedence over our works of worship and we rest from our works and are free to give them over to the glory of God.

In summary, we can no longer continue to commit the error of thinking of worship as something to do now and then, of thinking of music as a “preparer,” a “tool,” a “lead-in or lead-out.” We can no longer allow sincere but mistaken “worship leaders” to imply that worship is a particularized, music-oriented centrality: “We’ll have a time of prayer, then we’ll worship (meaning “we’ll sing”), then we’ll hear from God’s word and from His servant.” Above all else, worship is simple, not complex. It is by faith, not by works. It is of grace and not earned. It is all the time and everywhere, or God is not God, Christ is not Christ, the Holy Spirit not the Holy Spirit. Once we get this straight, then we can understand that *witness is nothing more or less than overheard worship* and *worship is that which cannot help but witness*.

Note that this article shares a title with a chapter in Dr. Best’s book (reviewed in this issue) but has different content.

WORSHIP IS...

“...the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to his purpose—and all this gathered up in adoration.”

—William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury

“Music Through the Eyes of Faith”

by Harold Best, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993, 225 pages.



This book is meant to challenge you, and may well change you (or your music). Harold Best, retired dean of the Conservatory of Music at Wheaton College, has done a remarkable job of combining closely-reasoned logic, knowledge of the Scriptures, and decades of love for diverse musics into an interesting and well-written study. It is almost impossible to skim; every page is meant to cause the reader to interact with ideas and decide “what do I believe about this?” Although dealing in depth with meaty issues, the writing is clear and arguments follow logically upon one another.

One of the most refreshing elements present, sorely lacking in most books on this topic, is Best’s obvious love and respect for the world’s musics in all their diversity. Shape-note hymns, cantatas, gamelan ensembles, rock and roll: all are invited to proclaim God’s glory! There is no single musical culture or musical style that can, better than all others, capture and repeat back the fullness of God’s glory. God does not want to hear only Beethoven, or Ken Medema, or Christian rap, or Cameroonian drums, or Pakistani chant. “God wants to hear the whole world in its countless tongues and amazingly diverse musics making praise after praise. God accepts not only the offerings of a highly trained choir, but also the song of the arrow maker in Brazil.... God awaits entirely new songs for the first time from a tribe in Cambodia, a Mexican barrio, and a Scottish hamlet.” And Best gives full biblical justification for this perspective. He makes a solid case for wide-ranging musical pluralism, using Creation and Pentecost as models for God’s love of diversity.

Best points to the heart of the musician as being of primary importance in real worship, with the specific sound being secondary. “Because true Christianity cannot be thought of apart from new creation, there should be no kind of music, however radical, however new, however strange, that is out of place in Christian worship, as long as it is faithfully offered.”

The book further makes a case for the three broad themes of musical pluralism, excellence, and creativity within the church, but covers a large amount of ground in dealing with these topics. The issues raised are plentiful and too deep to discuss in a review, so I will whet your appetite by giving some of the questions which I found most interesting (you’ll have to read the book for the answers!).

- Can one music be “better” than another in an aesthetic or functional sense?
- How can we discern quality in music?
- Is beauty equivalent to truth?
- Can music speak propositional “truth”?

- Can Christians use music made by non-Christians?
- Can a certain style of music cause me to sin, or to worship?
- How does a song acquire contextual connotations of being sacred or secular?
- What is the distinction between musical languages, dialects, and styles?
- Can we validate a body of music according to its effectiveness in ministry?
- If Christ were a musician, how would he go about making music in contemporary America?
- Why do some Christians remain content with “milk music” instead of going for “meat music”?
- Are we to be our brother’s and sister’s “musical keepers”?
- What is the nature of biblical worship?
- How can listeners in church “make an offering with their ears”?
- How are music and God’s grace interconnected?
- What “three simple questions” should churches ask themselves before creating musical programs?

As can be gleaned from the above questions, the book considers topics which are of primary concern to all people working to properly relate faith to music in any culture.

Though the book is very useful for Christian ethnomusicologists, it must be remembered that it is addressed primarily to American Christian musicians, and should not necessarily be taken as setting standards for Christian music worldwide. For example, Best feels that congregational song should be central in worship; music literacy is important; and that newness in music is a high value. These presuppositions do not hold true for indigenous hymnody in all cultures. He does rightly emphasize that most musical value judgments are best made by “musical insiders.”

The main point is that within any music system the church is to make music recognized by local standards as good, and to go even further. “While the world might simply make good music, the church rises above this and makes good music for the glory of God, for the edification of those who are right side up, and for the re-creation of those who are upside down.”

Best points out that before evangelizing with an art form in another culture (such as through indigenous music with Christian text), one should study the art to determine how closely tied are the artifacts and beliefs, the form and content, so that a false world view is not simply given a syncretistic veneer. One cannot willy-nilly sing Christian lyrics to every possible type of music without immediately running into cultural implications and interference for the insiders.

The book addresses issues pertinent to individual musicians (such as quality and heart attitude), the culture at large (such as electronic media), and church congregations. For an

example of the last, what is “musically appropriate” for a local body can be understood as determining what music is best for the particular worshipping community at the time, with knowledge that the times and community itself change. Best suggests five principles found in Scripture about making music which can serve as guides for churches.

This book should be standard reading for all people who are serious about making music for God and for God’s people. While I didn’t agree with everything, I thought about things I had never been challenged to think about before. The book is first a call to think differently, then to create and receive music in a different way from before.

In closing, Best issues this challenge to the contemporary church: someone will always be creatively authentic—why shouldn’t it be the church first? He speaks of the prophetic role of music, a prophecy toward new birth in the church and toward reformation in the wider culture. “It is from within the church that word and deed disturb and transform culture,” and these words and deeds are to be accompanied by excellent music in the church’s “many-tongued creativities.” Best has a vision of how excellent, creative music made by Christians of many cultures can change the world. He has clearly communicated this vision in his book. Now it is up to us all to act on it.

For educators: to see a list of assignments based on this book, go to http://www.cccu.org/resourcecenter/rc_detail.asp?resID=849&parentCatID=38

Book & CD Review

“The Raga Guide: A Survey of 74 Hindustani Ragas”

edited by Joep Bor, Nimbus Records, 1999



This multimedia set (196-page book with 4 CDs) does a marvelous job of providing insight into the *raga* system through text, paintings, transcriptions and recordings. Each of the 74 individual ragas has a short introduction dealing with its history, musical analysis, emotional mood and associated time of day; a chart of the ascending and descending notes of the raga; and a transcription of the melodic outline written in Western notation and *sargam* superscript. On the facing page is a detailed transcription of each performance’s introductory *alap* movement, again using both notation methods. From here, each raga recorded on the CDs goes into the next movement in a *tala* (rhythmic framework) which is named, but this part of the raga, accompanied by *tabla* drums, is not transcribed (with one exception). The first raga receives a full 5-page transcription and analysis in the book as a “performance in miniature,” and I have found it very helpful to go over this piece in class with students.

The performers of the music include Hariprasad Chaurasia, one of the most famous *bansuri* flute players in all of India; a *sarod* player, and two vocalists, accompanied by *tabla*. “The model these musicians have used had its origin in the 78 rpm discs which were recorded during the first half of this century. In these recordings, great vocalists and instrumentalists were capable of bringing out the essence of the ragas in just a few minutes. Like their predecessors, the artists recorded for this project have been able to create little raga jewels, masterpieces in which they portray each raga in three to six minutes.”

A set of short introductory essays provides much illumination, dealing with such topics as melodic embellishments, and the back of the book provides scholarly footnotes, a good bibliography and helpful glossary. A beautiful bonus is the set of 40 color plates of old *ragmalla* miniature paintings, visual analogues that correspond to the emotional moods of various ragas.

“What is a Raga?” is explained in terms of structural features, classification systems, the performance of ragas in different genres, and an introduction to *tala*. Song texts are provided in Devanagari script with English translations.

The set has sold more than 10,000 copies, and it’s easy to see why. One knowledgeable reviewer says the Guide’s relevance to contemporary Hindustani musical performance practice is “indisputable,” and that the essays make one of the best concise introductions to the topic available. Taking into consideration the well-written notes, the detailed transcriptions, the exquisite paintings and the more than 5 hours of digital recordings by the masters, it’s a bargain at the list price of about US \$40. (Amazon.com has sound samples to listen to.) If you’re trying to understand the classical music of northern India, Pakistan, Nepal or Bangladesh, this set is indispensable ... and thoroughly enjoyable.



Book Review

“Worship - The Global Hallelujah!”

edited by Barbara Colburn, Orlando, FL: Wycliffe Bible Translators, 2000. 93 pages

Wycliffe Bible Translators has published a new book: “Worship - The Global Hallelujah!” Full of Bible verses and photos, thoughts, prayers, and song lyrics from around the world, the 90-page book paints a panorama of all peoples coming to God “in need, in prayer, in song - in His strength, for His glory.” The book has 28 statements of “Worship is...” completed by various constituent elements with verbal and pictorial illustrations. Examples include: ...God’s children gathering to proclaim his faithfulness, ...both quiet trusting and loud proclaiming, ...listening to God and taking him to heart, ...a heart that sings to God, ...the overflow of God’s

love to the whole world, and much more. The book leads us into reflection on the myriad facets of worship, and what they look like in different cultures. Responses can be written in short journaling spaces provided.

A unique feature about the book is its diversity of sources which have been compiled into a coherent whole. Thoughts from theologians and pastors sit beside song lyrics from nonliterate composers in Africa. Teachings by the likes of John Piper, A.W. Tozer, and Judson Cornwall blend with colorful photos of people dancing to the Lord, singing his praises, celebrating his goodness, living daily life as an act of worship. And don't miss the photo of people literally "leaping with joy" among the Sabaot people of Kenya, where more than 10 cassettes of indigenous Scripture songs using the local instruments have had a major impact in the society.

If you want a book on worship that reflects the global diversity of God's worshipers here on earth, you won't find one better than this. Not only that, pray through the book and consider how God wants you personally to demonstrate "worship is ..." to the world around you. A significant challenge, but one that will bear much fruit.

The book is available from <www.wycliffe.org> or call 1-800-WYCLIFFE in the US.

Book Review

"Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts"

by Steve Turner, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001. 131 pages



It was 1970. Turner was living at Schaeffer's L'Abri community. Examining music by the Beatles, members of the community came up with the conclusion (revolutionary in some circles at the time) that "a lot of art created by Christians was bad and a lot of art created by non-Christians was good... Because the [artistic] work that bore the name Christian was often poor in quality and naïve in understanding, Christianity by implication seemed insipid and uninspiring."

In this book Turner calls us to consider the foundational question: what makes art "Christian"—the subject matter, or the worldview of the artist? Is it marked by a narrow focus on Bible stories, saints, martyrs and the individual's relationship with God? Or is it distinguished by a *regenerated outlook* on the whole of life? (p. 22)

Turner, a poet and rock music journalist, sets forth his vision in Chapter 1, excerpted here:

"I don't believe every artist who is a Christian should produce art that is a paraphrased sermon.... Because art is a record and reflects the questions and anxieties of the time, I would like to see contributions that reflect a Christian understanding of that time. I would also like to see them in the

mainstream arts rather than in the religious subculture.... Debates are taking place in cinema, painting, dance, fiction, poetry and theater on issues where Christians have something to give, and yet they are not even being heard." Because art tends to "show" rather than "tell," Turner does not expect art to convert people, but sees Christians working in the arts as "part of our mandate to look after and care for the world."

The history of the Church demonstrates varying attitudes toward the arts. This is the fascinating subject of Chapter 2. Touching on key points, the chapter goes from the church as *patron* of the arts to the church *afraid* of the arts, from ancient icons to contemporary filmmaker Martin Scorsese, from Dante and Michelangelo (considered "inspired by God") to Paganini and blues guitarist Robert Johnson (both of whom were rumored to have acquired their talent through making a pact with the devil). The artistic ramifications of the Protestant Reformation were huge, and are contrasted with attitudes and interests of Roman Catholics who have worked in the arts.

How are we to be "in the world but not of it" and to demonstrate that dilemma in our art? Chapter 3 wrestles with these questions. One section that was helpful to me is his interpretation of Phil. 4:8, the things we are to think about. If this means we can only look at, listen to, and read things that are noble, pure, right, etc., it seems we would need an abridged Bible – Job, Ecclesiastes, and many Old Testament stories might be severely edited. But since God's Word has plenty in it that doesn't seem to "qualify" under the standards of Phil. 4:8 when applied that way, perhaps there is a different way that God intends for us to use those verses.

Turner suggests that we use these standards to *judge* all that we see, think and do. When we read of David's adultery, he is judged by God's standard of purity. When we read of Judas' betrayal, he is judged by God's standard of nobility and rightness. When we encounter the lives and ideas of people ancient and contemporary (and fictional) through the arts, we compare them to God's values which should be uppermost in our minds. Then we can hold on to what "measures up," whether made by an artist who publicly wears a 'Christian label' or not. "Any honest reflection on life will deal with imperfection. The difference in a Christian artist's work should be that the depraved will seem depraved, the ugly will seem ugly. Christians should be distinguished from those who suggest that depravity is normal, or that evil is good."

Intertwined themes of media, propaganda, persuasion, playfulness, Platonic dualism, art and evangelism are woven into Chapter 4, which has a great deal to say about the CCM scene. All you songwriters, poets, and authors, read this bit!

In Chapter 5, Turner proposes that the biblical themes of creation, fall, and redemption are to be paramount in "Christian art," though all three probably won't be in every work of art. This chapter also deals with specific types of Bible writings which often inspire artists. Communication and the life of a Christian artist are topics of other chapters.

Turner introduces his unique model of five concentric circles, representing "what the Christian could do in art," in Chapter 6. In Chapter 8, a twenty-year corpus of songs by the

band U2 is brilliantly analyzed with this descriptive model (Turner previously wrote an entire book about U2, *Rattle and Hum*). A full explication of the model is beyond the scope of this review, but I will briefly say that the outer ring contains art that doesn't suggest any particular worldview, and the rings move inwards toward art that increasingly demonstrates a Christian worldview, with art that represents the cross in the center ring. I found this model to be a very lucid tool for analysis of all sorts of artistic expressions by Christians and believe it can be applied in other cultures as well. It is important to note that Christians *can* and *should be* making art in all five areas, according to Turner.

This book is of paramount importance to any Christian involved in any form of art, and it uses examples from a multitude of artistic expressions.. When writing this review I kept wanting to say “this section alone is worth the price of the book”—but when I had that scribbled in the margin of almost every chapter I gave up. The writing style is very engaging and the material flows quickly, yet it is deep enough to warrant several re-readings and continuous underlining. It includes a challenging call for artists to leave the ‘Christian ghetto’ and bring light, beauty, hope and salt—and creativity, authenticity, relevancy and truth—into a world that is not particularly welcoming.

Book Review

“Developing Indigenous Hymnody: Key Resources for Cross-Cultural Workers”

by Dianne Palmer-Quay, 1999. Published by the author. 131 pages

[available for \$10 plus shipping from: Dianne Palmer-Quay, 1415 Victoria St. Columbia, SC 29201 or <R_DQuay@compuserve.com>]



Palmer-Quay, in her introduction says:

Encouraging indigenous hymnody may at times require the skills of a detective, midwife, psychologist, musician, grand marshal or diplomat. While struggling with the challenges of this task, we need to remember that God does not choose his servants because of individual worthiness, but so that his strength may work through weakness....

Scripture commands us to worship the Lord with music. Although all human societies have music, cultural differences can be found in its definition, structure and function. Faced with strange sounding melodies, missionaries have tended to rely on the sounds of their home culture when developing songs and hymns for church use. Fortunately, an increasing level of indigenization of worship, in

both Catholic and Protestant congregations, has occurred in the last 30 years. However, the level of liturgical enculturation varies greatly between cultures. In addition, only a limited amount of training on music and worship issues is received by most missionaries.

In this book, Palmer-Quay sets out to make it easier for missionaries to get the information they need to promote indigenous hymnody wherever they work.

Chapter One, the book’s introduction, deals with the use of music in worship and the modern rise in indigenous hymnody. In Chapter Two, the level of indigenous hymnody is evaluated in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas through a review of the published literature. In Chapter Three, the missionary’s role as a catalyst or music system analyst is discussed, along with contemporary issues in hymnody development such as the challenge of multi-ethnic congregations. Chapter Four contains the conclusions to these essays. Chapter Five is an annotated bibliography of fifty key resources for people interested in indigenous hymnody.

Chapter Five’s articles, essays and books represent a recommended reading list for the cross-cultural worker who desires to build an understanding of the concept and processes involved in developing an indigenous hymnody. Each annotation is at least half a page long. These resources were chosen with non-specialists in mind, so that an “average missionary” can read the materials and make use of them.

The second half of the book is a bibliography of more than 560 resources published on indigenous hymnody, mentioning just about everything ever published on the topic in English in the last 100 years. Many of the items contain short annotations.

Two appendices are especially helpful: one is an index to the resources listed in the bibliography by geographic region. With this index, one can look up a particular area of interest, such as India, Zambia, or the Caribbean, and quickly find out what has been published relating to indigenous hymnody in that part of the world. The second index is topical, with bibliographic resources grouped together under themes such as dance, hymn writing principles, syncretistic church music, and worship issues.

All in all, the book is an invaluable listing of resources, saving many hours of research time in the library. As well, the original essays do an excellent job of surveying past and present trends and pointing out contemporary issues.

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**TIDBIT**  
 "Beauty in music is too often confused with something that lets the ear lie back in an easy chair."  
 -- composer Charles Ives  
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“Voices of the World: An Anthology of Vocal Expression”

Le Chant du Monde CMX
3741010.12, CNRS/Musee de
l'Homme, 1996.



This incredible three-CD compilation is essential for your library. It contains a wide-ranging selection of vocal expressions from around the world. More than a hundred selections are showcased in this anthology, which lasts over three-and-a-half hours. A number of archival pieces are available commercially for the first time here, while others have appeared on recordings in previous years.

A selective summary of the contents will give an overview of the breadth and diversity of the selections, and demonstrate the organizing principles of the collection (groupings of tracks are by articulatory or acoustic relations). The first two CDs demonstrate specific vocal techniques, while the third CD is devoted to diverse forms of vocal polyphony. It will be seen that the term “vocal expressions” as used here includes much more than the Western concept of “song”: the notes for one piece speak of the choir accompanying the soloist with a “sort of rhythmic snorting, by means of audible gasping.” Go ahead, be adventurous and listen.

The first CD features “calls, cries and clamours” (Pygmy hunting calls, Romanian funeral lamentations, Swiss cattle calls); “voice and breath” (Inuit throat-game songs, a whispered song from Burundi); “spoken, declaimed, sung” (cantillation of the Koran, Buddhist hymn, sermon by a Philadelphia pastor); “compass and register” (Korea, PNG, Brazil, Bolivia, Malawi).

The second CD features “colours and timbres” (Vietnam, Indonesia, Russia, Spain); “disguised voices” (China, Gabon, Ivory Coast); “ornamentation” (Sioux, Mongolia, Iran, Lebanon); “singing in a musical instrument” (Laos, Australia); “imitation of instruments” (Canada, Chad, India); “harmonics” (Irish jig on a Jew’s harp, overtone songs from South Africa and Mongolia, buzzing of a beetle’s wings held in front of the mouth).

Forms of vocal polyphony heard on the third CD include heterophony, echoes, overlapping voices, drones, ostinati, parallel motion, oblique motion, contrary motion, chords, counterpoint, and “combined techniques.” These forms are visually laid out in a useful chart.

The booklet that accompanies the recordings contains 188 pages, half in French, half in English. Some of the translation into English is a little awkward, but you’ll figure it out. The main coordinator of the anthology is the renowned scholar Hugo Zemp, assisted by about two dozen other ethnomusicologists (most of them associated with the French Society of Ethnomusicology).

The notes for each selection average a few paragraphs each, and refer the listener to other recordings where more of the same type of music may be heard. The documentation is enhanced by sonograms of sixteen sounds represented on the CDs, plus other charts, an introductory essay, an essay on the physiology of vocal sound production, a glossary of technical terms, and a geographic index of the recordings.

This compilation is a sequel to the earlier anthology *Musical Instruments of the World* (LDX 274675), likewise produced by the *Musee de l’Homme* (France) and likewise indispensable to your collection.



Book & CD Review:

Halle, Halle: We Sing the World Round

*compiled and written by C. Michael Hawn,
Garland, TX: Chorister's Guild, 1999. Teacher's edition,
88 pages (+ Demonstration CD) available from
www.choristersguild.org*

Halle, Halle is an inspirational, practical, and well-informed compilation of global Christian worship songs. The author has drawn on his own travels in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as upon work by noted Christian ethnomusicologists such as David Dargie and I-to Loh, to come up with a valuable resource for introducing people and congregations to the riches of worldwide worship music.

The songs are arranged in the book by theme, such as gathering songs, praise and adoration, prayers, psalms, the Christmas season, the Easter season, communion, and a benediction.

For each song, Hawn has prepared some background information, notes on performance practice, and suggestions for use in a church/liturgical setting. Guitar chords are included for songs that would normally be accompanied by guitar in the country of origin (mostly Latin American in this book). The layout of the music is clear and easy to read, partially thanks to the large 9 X 12 pages. The separate “Singer’s Edition” has the song scores and some photos.

The lyrics are included in English and in the original languages, along with a pronunciation guide. To make the book even more practical for church use, it comes with a bibliography, an index of the eighteen countries represented, and an index of Scripture passages alluded to in the songs.

More than half the songs are included on the CD (available separately from the same publisher). This helpful addition demonstrates *oral tradition variations* in almost every song, as well as original instrumentation such as steel drums on the title song from the Caribbean, panpipes, and an African musical bow. Some of the recordings are marked as “authentic” from the country of origin, and other songs are performed by a college choir.

Hawn's preferred method is to teach these types of songs as in an oral tradition—without sheet music—and this process is demonstrated very well on two CD tracks (teaching one song from Tanzania and one from India). I have seen him demonstrate this teaching method in a meeting and it can be quite effective. For all these reasons, I recommend the CD to anyone who plans to make much use of the songbook.

The author makes no claim that all material is 100% “ethnomusicologically correct” but he does offer some brief suggestions that will help singers get considerably closer to the original songs' performance style than they would otherwise. As he says, “Given our particular world view, we are not able to move in and out of another culture's music with total musical and liturgical authenticity.... As we attempt to relate to congregational song from a cross-cultural liturgical perspective, musical authenticity becomes a means for attempting to encounter the living God and pray for the world through the prayers of others...”

I've had some of these songs taught to me, I've taught some of these songs to others, and the responses are always favorable. The book is a great (and easy-to-use) compilation of worship songs from around the world, a “foretaste divine” of the praise scene found in Revelation 5: “to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb—be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever!”

--All reviews in this issue by Editor

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.

Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal in missions. It's the goal of missions because in missions we simply aim to bring the nations into the white-hot enjoyment of God's glory. **The goal of missions is the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God.** “Let the peoples praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee! Let the nations *be glad and sing for joy!*” (Psalm 67:3-4).

But worship is also the fuel of missions. Passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching. You can't commend what you don't cherish. Missionaries will never call out, “Let the nations *be glad*”, who cannot say from the heart, “*I rejoice in the Lord I will be glad and exult in thee, I will sing praise to thy name, O Most High*” (Psalm 104:34; 9:2). Missions begins and ends in worship.

--From **Let the Nations Be Glad!** by John Piper, 1993, Grand Rapids: Baker Books. Used with permission.

My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul...I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations. I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, higher than the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth. Psalm 108:1-5 (NIV)



A Parable

Ron Man, Greater Europe Mission

And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that their worship style was the only acceptable form:

“Four men went up to the temple to pray, two traditional music directors and two contemporary worship leaders. One of the music directors stood and was praying thus to himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not like many other church musicians: untrained, unrefined, undignified, or even like these contemporary worship leaders. I program only the finest art music; I present only those works truly worthy of Thee.’

“One of the contemporary worship leaders was standing off to the other side, praying like this: ‘O Lord, I thank You that I am not like many other church musicians: stuffy, inhibited, stuck in a rut of boring and irrelevant music of the past. I present only the very latest songs and reach people where they're at.’

“In another corner the other music director and the other contemporary worship leader were kneeling and praying together. The music director prayed: ‘Lord God, You know how easily the striving for artistic excellence can become idolatrous. When I use my gifts, may I always remember that they come from Your hand, and that You delight in all of the genuine gifts of worship which Your children bring, in all of their variety.’ The worship leader prayed: ‘God, I only know four chords on the guitar, and I am not a polished performer; but I thank You for Your grace in allowing me to come near in worship, and for the privilege in leading others to Your throne. Thank You for all the different ways that Your people can praise You.’

“I tell you, these last two went away with their offerings of worship received by the Lord, rather than the others; for God is not so much concerned with the style of the musical gifts you bring, as He is with the humility of heart and genuineness of love with which you bring them.”

“The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.” (Romans 14:3)

