

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC FIELD TO THE MISSION FIELD:  
THE DISCIPLINE OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

By  
Laura Welker  
Box 1242

Colleen Taylor  
General Education Internship GE481  
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## OUTLINE

Thesis: The discipline of ethnomusicology, while preserving and continuing world music in a secular sense, is proving to be an excitingly effective tool for evangelism and discipleship on the present mission field.

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The contemporary influx and popularity of world music, ranging from the Broadway smash hit, *Riverdance*, to compact disc recordings of Zimbabwe *mibira* traditional tunes on shelves in Hastings, is only the latest in over a century of interest in non-Western music. This new significance attributed to music in human culture has been achieved through ethnomusicology. The discipline of ethnomusicology, while preserving and continuing world music in a secular sense, is proving to be an excitingly effective tool for evangelism and discipleship on the mission field.

The field of ethnomusicology is relatively new, as disciplines go, and has had a turbulent history since its creation. Up until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans regarded all other musics as “rude, primitive and nugatory”,<sup>1</sup> the random banging of naked natives on their crude instruments. But as colonialization pulled Europeans into all corners of the world, they brought back with them the instruments of and a new interest in the music of the cultures they contacted.<sup>2</sup> At this time, when interest was just awakening and there was no specific training available, people participated from all disciplines—ethnology, psychology, anthropology and physics—to study this intriguing music. Yet, it was not until the late 1800s that serious scholars began to give ethnic music the same attention as they had to European music.<sup>3</sup>

One of the earliest musicologists who focused on ethnic music was Theodore Baker, who studied the Seneca Indians of New York in 1882. He was a forerunner of

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<sup>1</sup> Benjamin I. Gilman, “The Science of Exotic Music,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Marshall, “Two Paradigms for Music: A Short History of Ideas in Ethnomusicology,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 138.

<sup>3</sup> Mantle Hood, “Ethnomusicology,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 134.

contemporary ethnomusicologists, as he placed emphasis upon both musical and cultural information in his examination of their music.<sup>4</sup> But he, and other musicologists who wished to study “exotic” music, were limited by their inability to sufficiently transcribe it, a tedious process as every song had to be repetitiously sung or played in order to transcribe it by hand. The European notational system, as well, was found to be entirely inefficient to notate non-Western music, creating the problem of accurate recording of the data.<sup>5</sup> Finally, there was no means for objective study of ethnic music, for “...musical criticism is only where scores exist; that is to say only in modern Europe. In order to bring accurate method to bear on non-European music some means for reproducing it at will is demanded”.<sup>6</sup> Then, an amazing device was invented that revolutionized the field: the gramophone.

The gramophone, or phonograph, was able to capture the immaterial, fleeting medium of music into replayable and concrete form. For the first time, non-written music could be consistently studied in detail,<sup>7</sup> giving the study of ethnic music eligibility to become a scientific discipline.<sup>8</sup> One of the first persons to use the gramophone for field recordings was J. W. Fewkes, whose recordings were made in 1890 and transcribed by B. I. Gilman in 1891.<sup>9</sup> Using recording technology to capture ethnic music for study

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<sup>4</sup> Norma McLeod, “Ethnomusicological Research and Anthropology,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 101.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>6</sup> Gilman, “The Science of Exotic Music,” 2.

<sup>7</sup> Marshall, “Two Paradigms for Music,” 138.

<sup>8</sup> Willard Rhodes, “Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 37.

<sup>9</sup> Mantle Hood, “Ethnomusicology,” 134.

has continued and greatly increased through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as costs of devices diminish while quality increases.<sup>10</sup>

However, while the problem of capturing music into repeatable form was solved, the problem of transcription has persisted to the present day. Music, while caught on a record, still had to be carried by air to the listener's subjective, and often culturally biased, ear to be notated and described. This was especially true of early recordings, and as a result, many early descriptions of ethnic music were flawed and inaccurate. In 1928, M. E. Metfessel expressed the need for a device that could ". . . register musical sounds objectively, independent of the aural prejudice of the transcriber, showing subtleties of pitch, duration, attack, release, and other details of performance style that resist transcription in Western music notation."<sup>11</sup> This has only recently been accomplished through computer technology.

Another problem of early ethnic musicologists was that their emphasis was solely upon musical analysis, neglecting music's relation to its host culture. While they needed this focus to develop specific methodology and scientific classification for their data, this lack of anthropological background has diminished the scientific value of many early recordings.

At this time, two distinct branches of music study were beginning to form: (historical) musicology and comparative musicology. Historical musicology, the study of the history of Western art music,<sup>12</sup> had long existed by the time interest appeared in the

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<sup>10</sup> Rhodes, "Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology," 37.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 35-36; McLeod, "Ethnomusicological Research and Anthropology," 105.

<sup>12</sup> Rhodes, "Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology," 36.

indigenous music of other cultures. Its influence can be seen in the focus of ethnic musicologists of this time, who sought to find, through musical analysis, the source and spread of music among the “primitive” peoples of the world.<sup>13</sup> Utilizing theories of evolution and cross-cultural exchange from anthropology, they studied places of origin of certain styles of music, reasons for musical change (or lack thereof), and the rate, direction, and nature for change.<sup>14</sup>

In order to distinguish the study of “exotic” music from European music, the term, “comparative musicology” was given to the field of the study of world music. In 1885, Guido Adler defined it as “. . . the comparison of the musical works—especially of folksongs—of the various peoples of the earth for ethnographical purposes, and the classification of them according to their various forms.”<sup>15</sup> The term itself betrays the ethnocentrism of the time, as Westerners studied other musics by comparing them to the standards of their own. The mindset of the time was, “All cultures apparently had the same institutions whether more or less developed; and like the comparative anatomist, the student of culture could compare the same institutions [music] in different cultures.”<sup>16</sup>

Tension grew between these two fields, as the new field of comparative musicology sought to accurately define itself and its boundaries apart from historical musicology. Anthropology was strongly influencing comparative ethnomusicology, an

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<sup>13</sup> Alan P. Merriam, “Ethnomusicology: Discussion and Definition of the Field,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 108.

<sup>14</sup> Bruno Nettl, “Historical Aspects of Ethnomusicology,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 40-41.

<sup>15</sup> Rhodes, 34.

<sup>16</sup> Marshall, “Two Paradigms for Music,” 139.

emphasis that historical musicologists shunned. After World War Two, a new form of students entered the field: war veterans who had experienced nonwestern people and their music, and students with degrees both in music and anthropology. The latter introduced principles such as an emphasis upon generalization and theory, models, and the “. . . idea of culture as an integrated whole. By the application of their anthropological ideas to music they evolved what may be seen as a new paradigm. Music *was* culture, rather than being *in* culture”.<sup>17</sup>

Dissatisfaction with the term for the new field increased until around 1948, when Hollander Jaap Kunst brought forth a new term that would emphasize the role of culture (ethnology) in the study of world music: ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicology is “. . . an approach to the study of any music, not only in terms of itself but also in relation to its cultural context. . . . the term has two broad applications: (1) the study of all music outside the European art tradition. . . ; (2) the study of all varieties of music found in one locale or region.”<sup>18</sup> This term was accepted among practitioners with astonishing ease. In keeping with the new name, musicologists who emphasized the anthropological component of the study of music left the American Musicological Society in 1953 to found the Society for Ethnomusicology.<sup>19</sup>

Though the term “ethnomusicology” was accepted with widespread ease, defining ethnomusicology itself has created great controversy. Definitions have ranged from Jaap Kunst’s own traditional “The study of non-Western music” to List’s scientific “The study

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<sup>17</sup> Marshall, “Two Paradigms for Music,” 142.

<sup>18</sup> Hood, “Ethnomusicology,” 134; Rhodes, “Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology,” 35.

<sup>19</sup> Fredric Lieberman, “Should Ethnomusicology Be Abolished?,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 233.

of humanly produced patterns of sound” to Nketia’s anthropological “The study of music as a universal aspect of human behavior”.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the interdisciplinary nature of ethnomusicology is incredible:

The data and methods used are derived from . . . the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, and the physical sciences . . . . Ethnomusicology can only be defined when we consider what the ethnomusicologist is better equipped to accomplish than the anthropologist, the folklorist, the historian, the linguist, the so-called historical musicologist, the psychologist, or the sociologist.<sup>21</sup>

As practitioners flooded into the field and public interest increased through the cross-cultural experience of WWII veterans, the aid of visual media, and popular performance by folk singers such as the Von Trapp family, the need grew for formal training. In 1954, a new program was begun at UCLA that was specifically geared toward non-Western music theory, performance, and culture.<sup>22</sup> Specialists came on to the scene and brought leaping developments in the “. . . relation of music to culture, and the development of models for musical analysis, the latter mainly taken from linguistics”.<sup>23</sup> Ethnomusicology in the next two decades would experience phenomenal growth.

Yet the problems of definition and boundaries continued to plague discussions among practitioners. As racism and ethnocentrism was combated on the political scene, the traditional restriction of ethnomusicology to non-Western music was challenged. Who is to define what “ethnic” is? Would not an African consider Western folk songs “ethnic”? Why should Western music be excluded from similar ethnology study?

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<sup>20</sup> George List, “Ethnomusicology: A Discipline Defined,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 320; James Hamilton, “Correspondence (Letter to the Editor),” *Pacific Affairs* 66 (Summer, 1993): 260.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 319.

<sup>22</sup> Hood, “Ethnomusicology,” 135.

<sup>23</sup> McLeod, “Ethnomusicological Research and Anthropology,” 105.



Ethnomusicologists were also now emerging from third world countries to study their own music, and they complained of the stigma attached to ethnomusicology. “[National musicians] consider ‘ethno’ synonymous with ‘primitive’, hence derogatory . . . those we study see it simply as a form of demeaning neo-colonialism.”<sup>24</sup> In response, leading ethnomusicologists sought more neutral definitions that would include all musics. One of such definition has been Alan Merriam’s, “the study of music in culture.”<sup>25</sup> Though dreadfully broad, it so encompasses all forms of music, Eastern and Western, folk and contemporary. Yet even with the increase in popularity, ethnomusicology still found this lack of specific boundaries a hindrance to obtaining full recognition among the disciplines. “Employing the techniques and methods of cultural anthropology and musicology, the discipline has struggled along these past seventy years as a stepchild of both parents, a second class citizen in the society of the social sciences and the humanities.”<sup>26</sup>

Further issues that have confronted ethnomusicology in recent times reveal areas that continue to need further clarification. First, though application of ethnomusicology on the field, practitioners have been forced to confront anthropological ideals of the participant observer as a scientist dipping data out of a culture while leaving it untouched and unchanged. On one hand, the ethnomusicologist is preserving and transmitting musical tradition that might normally have died out within a generation. On the other hand, many cultures do not want to give out personal information without something in

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<sup>24</sup> Lieberman, “Should Ethnomusicology Be Abolished?” 227.

<sup>25</sup> List, “Ethnomusicology: A Discipline Defined,” 320.

<sup>26</sup> Rhodes, “Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology,” 33.

return. Reciprocation, rather than noninterference, is necessary, making “. . . the former ‘subject’ . . . an empowered partner in the research process.”<sup>27</sup>

Another issue is that of “mixed” music—a musical hybrid of two cultures. With the onslaught of globalization, this is becoming an increasing problem. Should this “impure” music be counted worthy for study? Some say no, while others like a particular ethnomusicologist strongly states, “We are derelict in our work if we fail to record and study the contemporary changing music of ethnic groups, few of which are free from the impact of alien cultures.”<sup>28</sup>

Now that ethnomusicology has achieved some sort of scientific status, other arts are jockeying for position. Why not create a discipline like ethnomusicology for dance? In most cultures the two go hand in hand, and many are convinced of its usefulness to the disciplines. But why not create one for art? Or for folklore? The question has become where to draw the line for a discipline.<sup>29</sup>

Staunchly academic ethnomusicologists are also being confronted by the vast numbers of performers, teachers, and other persons with minimal formal training associating with ethnomusicology. Numerous bands of indigenous music tour the world, spreading awareness. Elementary and secondary teachers and college professors create appreciation for ethnic music in the class. Music therapists use it to counsel. Musicologists, anthropologists and missionaries practice ethnomusicology on a

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<sup>27</sup> Kay Kaufman Shelemay, “The Ethnomusicologist and the Transmission of Tradition,” *The Journal of Musicology* (Winter, 1996): 35.

<sup>28</sup> Rhodes, “Toward a Definition of Ethnomusicology,” 37.

<sup>29</sup> Anonymous, “Whither Ethnomusicology?,” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 56.

nonprofessional basis. One of the greatest ethnomusicologists of this century, Alan Merriam, wonderingly observes,

Up to the present, books in ethnomusicology have been textbooks, learned expositions, theoretical works, monographs . . . [yet] the discipline is presently becoming a less data-oriented and more theoretical discipline . . . it seems to me I can see a progression . . . from a focus on music sound structure, through a concern with music as a socio-cultural phenomenon, and on now to a preoccupation with musical emotion, feeling, and meaning.<sup>30</sup>

However, within the last twenty or so years, ethnomusicology has achieved something far greater than public recognition or practical use—it has gained an eternal purpose. For missionaries have harnessed the scientific discipline to create a phenomenal evangelistic tool: *ethnodoxology*.

This was not always so. For the last several centuries, missionaries unfortunately exported with them an ethnocentric and nationalistic view of music, as well as missions in general. “Missionaries often burned traditional instruments in public and banned traditional tunes from church services because they were felt to be too associated with the culture’s pagan beliefs . . . they were in effect communication [sic]: ‘Your culture has no value.’ ” Ironically, by doing so they were hindering the very gospel they were trying to convey. Because of their insistence upon the use of Western music in church services, many people in nonwestern countries have viewed Christianity as a foreign, “white man’s” religion up to the present date.<sup>31</sup> But several factors have since awakened missionaries to the value of worship music in the church’s own tongue and style.

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<sup>30</sup> Alan Merriam, “Ethnomusicology Today” in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions and Scope*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1992), 168, 178.

<sup>31</sup> Andres T. Tapia, “Musicianaries,” *Christianity Today* 40 (October 7, 1996): 52.

Following with secular Western society, missionaries began to recognize the value of each culture. Ethnocentrism gradually faded as a much-needed cultural pluralism came to the fore. This was helped by the push for scriptures in each culture's mother tongue among organizations such as Wycliffe Bible Translators. Perhaps most significant for Roman Catholic missionaries, and, ironically, Protestant missionaries, was the ruling of the Second Vatican Council. In 1962, Pope John XXIII ruled through the Vatican II council that all Roman Catholic liturgy should be modernized and offered in the vernacular. This was incredibly revolutionary, as all masses for nearly 1,500 years had been conducted in Latin. Now, the way was opened for making worship relevant to its home culture.<sup>32</sup> A final factor has been a new significance given to music in contemporary culture. Roberta King notes this importance of music in the church and society:

Historically, worship leads up to the sacred moment of the sermon. If you look at the Moody revivals of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Moody recognized the power of music to prepare people for a message...What we haven't recognized in the States is that the music itself can carry the message....in contemporary society, in this postmodern age, music is becoming a major vehicle for communicating a message.<sup>33</sup>

Around the middle of this century, several ethnomusicologist missionaries began to practice their discipline in the context of missions. One of the more well known is Vida Chenoweth, a marimba player and Papua New Guinea missionary from Wycliffe Bible Translators. Her writings have gained recognition among secular ethnomusicologists and brought the creation of indigenous worship songs to Evangelical

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<sup>32</sup> Tim Dowley, ed., *Introduction to the History of Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Lion Publishing, 1977), 667.

<sup>33</sup> Russell G. Shubin, "Worship That Moves the Soul: A Conversation with Roberta King," *Mission Frontiers* (June, 2001): 12 [journal on-line]; available from [www.missionfrontiers.org](http://www.missionfrontiers.org); Internet; accessed 11 May 2002.

attention.<sup>34</sup> Other ethnomusicologist missionaries who are currently considered “movers and shakers” of the field are Dr. Roberta King and Paul Neeley. Dr. Roberta King, who practiced in Kenya, is currently teaching ethnomusicology courses at UCLA and Fuller Seminary. Paul Neeley practiced in Ghana and other West African countries under Wycliffe Bible Translators and is presently teaching mission ethnomusicology at the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in Fort Worth, Texas, along with editing the periodical, *EthnoDoxology*, and conducting seminars around the world.

Ethnomusicology in the context of missions is no doubt frowned upon by secular academia as one of the fringe groups illegitimately claiming to be under the umbrella of ethnomusicology. As a result, a new term has been introduced to distinguish the missions usage from the secular. David Hall, a Hungarian ethnomusicologist and missionary, coined the word, “ethnodoxology” in 1997 and it is gradually gaining acceptance among Christian ethnomusicologists. Roberta King defines ethnodoxology as “The study of the worship of God in the world’s cultures; the theological and practical study of how and why people of other cultures praise and glorify the true and living God.”<sup>35</sup>

How is ethnodoxology actually implemented on the mission field, and what have been the results? Typically, there are four areas of application on the field: evangelism, worship, literacy, and preservation of indigenous music. Most cultures where ethnodoxology is practiced have very low literacy rates and have traditionally been oral societies. In Africa, especially, music has traditionally been one of the main forms of communication and teaching, as well as worship, social activity, and entertainment. While people may not be able to read printed tracts or listen to a Western-style sermon,

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<sup>34</sup> Tapia, “Musicianaries,” 1.

<sup>35</sup> Shubin, “Worship That Moves the Soul: A Conversation with Roberta King,” 11.

they are immediately responsive to their particular form of music.<sup>36</sup> When lyrics taken from scripture or theology are inserted into pre-existing music genres, the extent of communication is far better than that of sermons. As traditional music is becoming rare due to globalization, anything produced in the indigenous style is cause for excitement and concentration. Indigenous people of any religion welcome this music and are more inclined to be open to the gospel after listening to the lyrics.<sup>37</sup>

In the church, long-time Christians find that the new indigenous hymns speak to their hearts far more than the Western hymns they have grown up with. Much of missions today deals with literacy development in order to have readers for the soon-to-be translated Bible. Music is known widely to be a greater aid to memory than any other form of communication, and the same holds true for illiterate countries. Messages concerning healthcare, literacy and Bible studies can be implanted into ethnic tunes, forming audio billboards.<sup>38</sup> While practicing these three forms, ethnic music is also preserved and passed on to the new generation. Elders grieve as their youth reject ancient songs in their pursuit of Western pop culture. Recording traditional songs in “new” forms places an attractiveness about them that draws the youth back to their culture and into the church.<sup>39</sup>

How an ethnodoxologist approaches the creation of indigenous worship depends on the particular setting and the role the practitioner chooses to utilize. There are two

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<sup>36</sup> Sue Hall, “Music as an Aid to Literacy,” *Research Review* 14 (June, 2000): 139.

<sup>37</sup> Interviews in Ghana, summer 2002.

<sup>38</sup> Hall, “Music as an Aid to Literacy,” 142.

<sup>39</sup> Paul Neeley, “Old Styles in Contemporary Contexts: The Revitalization of Traditional Music Through the Buem Churches of Ghana” *Research Review* 12 (May, 1997): 91.

main roles currently used on the field: the analyst and the catalyst. The analyst uses the methods of the discipline of ethnomusicology and computer technology to analyze the music in depth until he or she has mastered the music. This is a time-consuming process, taking up to a year before any music is produced. The scenario for using the analyst role would be areas where the concept of indigenous worship is slow to catch on, or where there are no examples of it for the nationals to imitate, or if music is thought of as coming from dreams or animal spirits. South America and Asia primarily have need of the analyst.<sup>40</sup>

The catalyst role is the more popular among ethnodoxologists today. The catalyst comes to a vicinity for a short term, ranging from a couple of days to a couple of weeks, and holds interdenominational workshops on how to produce indigenous hymnody for the nationals. The catalyst does not compose music, but rather. . .

1) has the original idea of trying to sing Bible verses in the local language and in the local music system; 2) provides the impetus to the composer by suggesting potential lyrics; and 3) suggests a way that the resultant song may be used for a specific purpose in the near future, such as being recorded on cassette or sung at a house dedication.<sup>41</sup>

The catalyst, through discussion with the national pastors, singers, and musicians, and informed missionaries, researches the best song genre (for work, celebration, funerals, old, young, male, female), kind of composer (Christian, Muslim, old, young), Biblical text (narrative, doctrine, worship, encouragement), and usage of the completed song (evangelism, worship, literacy, social event) for the present context.<sup>42</sup> Once the most

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<sup>40</sup> Phone interview with Tom Avery, SIL ethnomusicology director and ethnodoxologist to Brazil, November 11, 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Neeley, "Commissioning Scripture Songs in Africa," *Research Review* 12 (May, 1997): 102.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

appropriate categories have been chosen, the catalyst divides the participants into groups, usually including a pastor or minister in each, and commissions them to compose songs. Sometimes the catalyst works individually with a prominent and respected composer of the genre, which frequently is an animistic or Muslim praise singer.<sup>43</sup> Once an adequate number of songs have been composed, they are checked for doctrinal or musical errors, and recorded in makeshift studios, or performed for social functions. Recordings are mass produced by the catalyst onto cassettes and redistributed among the language vicinity, for many nationals now possess cassette players. Once these examples exist, the nationals are encouraged to continue to produce their own indigenous music in the same manner. This works well in the continent of Africa, where immediate musical composition is traditional and common.<sup>44</sup>

Though much success has been seen with using commissioned scripture songs in missions, the ethnodoxologist is also confronted with several problems and issues. Since Western music has existed in places like Africa for several hundred years, it has been accepted among nationals as their own. In some instances, the nationals themselves resist the return to indigenous music. They feel that “. . . the ethnomusicologists want to keep them from modern ideas and delay their attainment of cultural equality with Westerners.”<sup>45</sup> Should the ethnodoxologist push the value of their traditional music as opposed to imported Western music, or should he or she assist them in producing Western or hybrid songs? Some ethnodoxologists, such as Paul Neeley, insist on

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<sup>43</sup> Paul Neeley, “Commissioning Scripture Songs in Africa,” 104.

<sup>44</sup> Phone interview with Paul Neeley, August 28, 2002; internship experience, Ghana, summer 2002.

<sup>45</sup> Tapia, “Musicianaries,” 2.



traditional songs and instruments.<sup>46</sup> Others say, “. . . music is the universal language and we have the music that is being used in North America [and around the world]. So, we’re going to bring it and bless people with it.”<sup>47</sup> During one of the workshops I participated in during my internship in Ghana, the nationals insisted on using borrowed melodies, and even included an accordion in the recordings! Efforts to convince them to use traditional tunes and instruments were resisted or were misunderstood. During a conversation with a Ghanaian pastor in the northern city of Tamale, I questioned him about this topic. His perspective was that as most Ghanaians in Tamale listen to Western pop music or the Ghanaian hybrid *highlife*, the worship of his church should be geared to meet their interests. In contrast, another workshop I attended was held in a more remote and rural part of Ghana. Traditional music was more a part of the daily lives of those Ghanaians, and indigenous hymnody was much easier to commission. From my experience it appears to depend on the scenario and style of music most used by nationals. However, traditional music is being consumed by Western music with incredible rapidity.

Ethnodoxologists also face criticism for using music and instruments that are traditionally used for pagan, even demonic worship. Westerners call it syncretism and nationals sometimes fear this association. Some insist,

If some of Luther’s hymn tunes came from saloons, can’t songs with pagan associations in other cultures also be adapted? If a culture understands a certain instrument’s association with evil spirits, can’t the instrument be redeemed with the understanding that it can now be associated with the Spirit of God?<sup>48</sup>

yet great care must be taken that misperceptions do not occur on the field.

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<sup>46</sup> Paul Neeley, “Indigenous Hymns Obligatory, Guitars Optional,” unknown periodical (given by Paul Neeley), 22.

<sup>47</sup> Shubin, “Worship That Moves the Soul: A Conversation with Roberta King,” 14.

<sup>48</sup> Tapia, “Musicianaries,” 2.

Finally, in some cultures, temporary bans are placed on music, particularly drumming, during pagan rituals or seasons. Often, to maintain peace, this is enforced by civil discipline. Should the church submit to this ban and refrain from worship? During my stay in Tamale, a drumming ban was enforced among the surrounding Dagomba culture because of the assassination of the Dagomba chief. Churches were allowed, in this case, to continue their use of drums during their services, but drumming was prohibited outside of church. Paul Neeley vigorously calls for disobedience to drumming bans on the grounds that the church should not give up its form of worship in order to submit to pagan religious regulations.<sup>49</sup> I disagree with his conclusion on the grounds of Romans 13:1 and the problems that occur between the church, government, and the surrounding culture.

In spite of the influence of commissioned indigenous hymnody on the field, ethnodoxology is relatively unknown in most Christian circles. Christian graduate and undergraduate schools, such as Prairie Bible College, Bethel Bible College, Fuller Seminary, and Columbia Bible University, along with missions organizations such as SIL and JAARS, have begun offering courses and programs in ethnomusicology, but few Christian musicians or missionaries are yet aware of the possibilities of ethnodoxology in world evangelism and discipleship. As the word spreads, however, hopefully more and more Christian musicians and missionaries will be able to harness their talents and recent scholastic developments within the field of ethnomusicology to spread the gospel to all peoples.

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<sup>49</sup> Paul Neeley, "Drumming and Freedom of Worship or Praising God as Civil Disobedience," *Research Review* 14 (June, 2000), 171.

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