

Margot Dias' article makes one very interested to read more about her intensive research accomplished in the last ten years in Portuguese overseas provinces, which are very fertile areas for music research, since — in contrast to many other places — traditional African music is fully alive there.

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“NDWIYO DZECHECHI DZEVU” (HYMNS OF THE SOIL). Music Edition. Edited by John E. Kaemmer. Church Music Service, P.B. 636E, Salisbury, Rhodesia, pp. 56. 1966. 2s.

This is a new publication of the very active ALL AFRICA CHURCH MUSIC ASSOCIATION. The collection comprises 43 samples of African Church Music, given in staff notation together with sol-fa names. The texts are in Shona and, frequently, in its dialect-forms. Eleven of these hymns have already been published in 1963 under the same title.

The specific approach to creating African Church music, chosen by R. A. Kauffman when starting his work in 1961, consisted in arranging traditional tunes for use in church (cf. A.A.C.M.A. Journal, July 1966, p. 3). Such arrangements are found in Nos. 1-3, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 37, 41, as far as I can make out myself, even if they are not specified as such. Such a transcription may consist merely of a new text put to an existing tune (No. 25) or of a Western harmonization of such a tune (Nos. 26, 28, 37) but it may show too some originality (Nos. 1 and 2).

Of the compositions proper, those by A. Maraire show the greatest amount of imagination and technical skill. I would regard the Nos. 32, 33, 12 and 24 as successful creations in an indigenous church music style. Others fall short of such expectations, either because they rely too exclusively on traditional and/or Western harmonies (Nos. 5, 10, 16, 34, 36) or because they are based merely on a rhythmic recitation that lacks the subtlety and finesse of its traditional form in “murevereri” parts (Nos. 27 and 42).

In spite of these critical remarks, I would regard this collection as valuable and very useful to all the Christian churches in Africa. Whoever has worked in this field, is aware of the fact that many steps are needed to create a truly indigenous church music, and, in the case of culture contact, the notions of right or wrong are certainly not applicable.

I would like to add two suggestions:

- (1) It would have been more accurate to base the time signature for the Nos. 17, 21 and 34 on quarter notes than in eighth notes.
- (2) It would be very useful to give the duration time of each piece in minutes and seconds to indicate the ideal speed, since a watch is easily available for song-leaders.

J. LENHERR.

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YORUBA RELIGIOUS CARVING. Pagan and Christian Sculpture in Nigeria and Dahomey. by KEVIN CARROLL. Foreword by WILLIAM FAGG, GEOFFREY CHAPMAN. 172 pp. £4 10s.

More than any other mission in Africa, the Catholic Church has tried to understand African culture and has consciously attempted to relate the new religion to local ideas. Father Tempel's famous book *Bantu Philosophy* immediately comes to mind, and Father Haazen's *Missa Luba*. What these Belgian fathers have done in the fields of philosophy and music Father Kevin Carroll is trying to achieve in the field of the visual arts. His purpose is to use local talent and tradition in order to produce a new Christian art in Nigeria that will be adapted to local needs. He takes his lead from the Vatican's *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy* which states that “The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her own; she has admitted styles from every period according to natural disposition and circumstances of her peoples.”

Father Carroll believes that traditional Yoruba woodcarving — though its style was evolved in a pagan setting — is perfectly suitable to be adapted for Christian use. He points out that this is a humanistic art, that much of it illustrates daily Yoruba life and that there is no reason why even a pagan carver could not illustrate the life of Christ if given the stories.

His views have not gone unchallenged, but Father Carroll did create a workshop in which he employed young Yoruba carvers trained in the pagan tradition and used them to produce crucifixes, madonnas, Christmas cribs, church doors, decorated screens and so on. His three main artists all had different backgrounds: George Bandele was in fact a nominal Christian, but Lamidi Fakeye was brought up a Muslim and Otoro of Ketu had never left the pagan tradition. Yet all three were willing to work for the church.

The book is richly illustrated and gives many charming examples of their work, at the same time comparing it to the work of the great carvers of the past, like Areogun and Gbamboye. The new Christian work has been compared unfavourably with the old pagan work; but in fact Father Carroll makes no exaggerated claims for his carvers and points out with good reason that but for his efforts and the contract work supplied by the church, these carvers might not be working at all. Moreover, if they have not produced great Christian art, but merely agreeable decoration, this is still preferable by far to the sentimental imported oleum prints and plaster *kitsch* madonnas that are still found in far too many African churches and which, tragically, are often preferred by the local congregations.