

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF WORSHIP IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF  
CENTRAL AFRICA COMPARED TO AN ETHNODOXOLOGICAL TEMPLATE

BY  
LLOYD D. HARTER

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PROF. JAMES P. TIEFEL, ADVISOR  
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY  
MEQUON, WISCONSIN  
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## **Abstract**

Prior to this paper, a documented history of worship in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa did not exist. It is a wonderful history richly detailed with God's continued blessings. Its worship is continuing to develop within the cultures that it lives. Zambia and Malawi are one of many places in which the WELS carries out its world missions, and the Lutheran Church of Central Africa is one of many worldwide church bodies with which the WELS is in fellowship. Some of these church bodies are only beginning to develop their own form of worship and need professional ethnomusicologists to help them do this within the specific culture. To provide the materials to adequately do this in WELS world missions certainly goes outside the capability of any paper. This paper does serve to provide a case study in worship development in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa. This case study uses materials from the field of ethnodoxology. This paper also serves as an introduction to the resources within the field of ethnodoxology, showing these resources to be helpful in building culture specific worship in any culture around the world.

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## 1. Introduction

How should we worship Jesus? That question really goes back to Genesis in what is the first documented act of worship ever—Adam giving thanks when the LORD brought Eve to him. After Adam sinned, the sacrificial form of worship didn't take long to develop as clearly shown in the rivalry between Cain and Abel. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob continued this inherited form of worship they received from their forefathers. Israelite worship was reborn, so to speak, at Sinai with the very specific Sinaitic law code God gave to Moses. During this Old Testament form of worship in the promised land, synagogue worship began to take shape in the general form of Psalms, prayers, reading of Scripture, exposition of Scripture, more prayers, and blessing. This synagogue form of worship carried into the New Testament and formed the basis for New Testament worship, which was greatly expanded in what came to be standardized in the mass by Alcuin and Karl the Great. This wasn't significantly changed until the time of the Reformation with Luther's *Formulae Missae* and then the *Deutsche Messe*, and also with Calvin's reformation of worship in Zürich, and then a little later with the Anglican church's *Book of Common Prayer*. The next most significant change in worship came from *Vatican II* and its emphasis on worship in the vernacular accompanied by more congregational participation.

Why this whirlwind tour of worship? The culture: think of all the different cultures from Abraham, Israel in the time of David, all the different cultures the apostles encountered, all the different cultures caught up in the Roman Catholic Church, the worldwide Anglican church, the worldwide Lutheran churches, Reformed churches, Presbyterian churches, Baptist churches, Methodist churches. How should all of these different churches worship? For a long time, that was the only question asked.

Church bodies for a long time just assumed that the people in their church will worship in a similar way and that wherever they spread, the people will adopt their form of worship. When the Spanish colonization of the Americas started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, European Spanish Roman Catholics implanted their worship onto the native Americans, worshiping in Latin, in a brick church, led by a man in ornate garb, especially on Sunday. When the Anglican church brought their worship to Africa, they brought the Book of Common Prayer with them and their English hymns which were eventually translated into various African languages, but were decidedly European in their music and structure of the worship service. When Lutherans started doing mission work in Africa, they brought their chorales with them and translated them into the native

languages, but retained their Western music. The Baptists taught their hymnody, and the Presbyterians taught their hymnody, both eventually translating their texts into the vernacular, but both retaining Western melodies.

How should all these different churches worship? More and more Christian missionaries are challenging that question. More and more Christian missionaries are now asking “How should all these different cultures worship?” In 1914 when a Liberian prophet-evangelist by the name of William Wadé Harris was doing mission work in southern Côte d’Ivoire, he boldly stated the following about mission work in his setting to his people:

“I have never been to heaven,” he wisely told the crowds, “so I cannot tell you what kind of music is sung in God’s Royal Village. But know this,” he continued, “God has no personal favorite songs. He hears all that we sing in whatever language. It is sufficient for us to compose hymns of praise to him with our own music and in our own language for him to understand.” Encouraged by these words of counsel, the new believer set to work, transforming their traditional music into songs for praising God. The repertoire of hymns sung by the Harrist church today numbers in the thousands, all set to music by members of the church, for the church, and in a language that the church can well understand.<sup>1</sup>

At his time, William Harris was the exception. It wasn’t until about the late 1960s that various Christian denominations began to challenge the manner in which they did mission work. As a missionary in Malawi from 1971-1978, Steve Valleskey was very mindful of this. He was part of a team of missionaries that were very sensitive to the Bantu culture(s) maintaining itself in its own form of worship (The Bantu people are the majority indigenous people of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa, and their primary language is Chichewa). In a personal interview, he commented, “You have to understand the time of the 70s and what was happening in the 60s and 70s in this country and in Vietnam and academia. The world was resolved that Christian missions were destroying the cultures of the people that they worked with. So we were really sensitive about it because we did not wish to do that.”<sup>2</sup> Missionaries in and outside our church body were beginning to question whether they had the answer to the question, “How should all these different churches in our missions worship?” They began to ask, “How should all these different cultures in our missions worship?”

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<sup>1</sup> James Krabil, ed., and Frank Fortunato, and Robin Harris, and Brian Schrag, *Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), 146.

<sup>2</sup> Steve Valleskey, Interview by Lloyd Harter, Skype, 21 September 2015.

Why has it taken so long for the mission-minded Christian church to ask this question? Robin Harris in his essay “The Great Misconception: Why Music Is Not a Universal Language” gives some possible explanations:

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as European and other Western Christians traversed the globe, they took with them the prevalent philosophies of their home cultures—in particular, the idea of “cultural evolutionism.” As late as 1962 Theodosius Dobzhansky, in *Mankind Evolving*, wrote that “biological and cultural evolutions are parts of the same natural process.” Due to ethnocentrism, Western culture was considered to be the most highly developed of cultures, further along the evolutionary scale than other, more lowly, “tribal” societies and cultures. These ideas often resulted in the musical expressions of the newly encountered cultures being labeled as “primitive” and “heathen.” Some Western Christians even tried to “help” local music makers by encouraging the translation of Western songs into indigenous languages and by teaching new converts to sing in four-part harmony or in unison.<sup>3</sup>

As the title of his essay suggests, part of this missiological issue is the impression among early missionaries that music is a universal language.

Because of the widely accepted view of music as a universal language, it never occurred to most early mission workers that, just as they needed new, complex, and “strange-sounding” languages in order to communicate with local people, so also did they need to study and understand the local music and other artistic dance and drama as well as visual and verbal arts like proverbs, poetry, and storytelling. Instead many workers simply brought their Bible in one hand and their hymnbook in the other. The Bible was generally translated into vernacular languages, as were many of the sung texts from the hymn books. But the musical language of these hymns remained unchanged in their original, Western form.<sup>4</sup>

Concerning music in the mission setting, Vida Chenoweth makes his point from theology:

As for the theological point, unless we believe that individual cultures have a unique and valid contribution to make to Christian worship, the significance of ethnic music—along with all other means of expression— will escape us entirely. We must accept that the Holy Spirit can inspire and speak through vernacular music expression just as through vernacular prayer and Bible translations... God speaks through every language and every musical system, regardless of whether the missionary has an aesthetic response to it.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Harris, 84-85.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Krabill, 119.

## 2. Overview

In WELS world missions today, this question is very much on the radar, “How should all these different cultures worship?” Not a single missionary or missions counselor claims to have the answer for this question, but they are seeking for its answer. This paper serves to introduce to this discussion the field of ethnodoxology. In his critique of previous mission strategies, Robin Harris continues:

Concerned by the charges of “music colonialism,” a number of mission workers have over the past few decades begun to resist this trend by incorporating into their thinking and practice the principles of ethnomusicology/ethnoarts (the study of music/arts and culture), mission minded anthropology (Scripture-grounded critical contextualization), and elements of the burgeoning field of global worship studies. At the nexus of these three disciplines, a new field is beginning to emerge, that of ethnodoxology.<sup>6</sup>

Harris recounts how the field has continued to grow:

In more recent years the term “ethnodoxology” has gained increasingly wide usage... By 2003 when I, along with a few colleagues, launched a network for this global “tribe” of worship and mission focused musicians and artists, the charter members expressed their desire to use the newly emerging term “ethnodoxology” as part of the group’s identity, thus giving birth to the network’s name, the International Council of Ethnodoxologists—or ICE, as it is more commonly referred to... Various seminars, tracks, and task forces on ethnodoxology—using the term in either title or approach— have been launched at mission conferences such as the Global Consultation on Music and Missions, the International Orality Network, the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance, and a regional meeting of the Evangelical Mission Society held in 2012 at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

To apply the resources from the field of ethnodoxology to all WELS world missions certainly goes beyond the purposes and capabilities of this paper, however, an extended case study may be helpful. The basis of this extended case study will be the well-documented and extremely fruitful area of WELS world missions in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA). The first part of the paper will give a history of the development of worship in the LCCA. This is partly documented in the chapter “Blessings beyond Expectations: Central Africa” in the book “To Every Nation, Tribe, Language, and People: A History of WELS World Missions.” The history also stems from extensive interviews with missionaries who lived this history, the most extensive interviews being with Katherine Wendland, Dr. Ernest Wendland, and retired missionary and

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<sup>6</sup> Harris, 85.

pastor Steve Valleskey. Other former African missionaries who were very helpful and supportive include sainted pastor and missionary Richard Mueller, current missionary to India Mark Rieke and his wife Sue Rieke, Prof. John Hartwig of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, and Pres. Paul Wendland of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary who suggested the LCCA as the extended case study. The second part of the paper will give a relating of this history of worship in the LCCA according to the resources in the field of ethnodoxology. To what extent was the goal of culture specific worship fulfilled? Where does room for improvement continue to exist?

### **3. History of worship in the LCCA**

The account of worship in the LCCA begins in Lusaka in 1953. Pastor and Mrs. A. B. Habben arrived fresh from the fields of Hastings, Nebraska, where Pastor Habben had just finished serving as a stateside pastor. The executive committee's written report a few years later recounts:

Quite unexpectedly, our first contact was with European settlers of Lutheran background living in the Lusaka area. One day as Habben parked the mission truck with the words, "Lutheran Mission," on it on the streets of Lusaka, he was approached by a resident of the city, a woman of European background, with the question, "Are you really a Lutheran missionary?" Assured that he was, the woman asked if he would conduct services for a few Lutherans living in and around Lusaka and baptize their children. One of these families had traveled 1100 miles one way to South Africa to have its children baptized by a Lutheran pastor. So it came about that on June 20, 1953, our mission's first service on Northern Rhodesian soil was held, not in an African village, but in the home of a European family by the name of Kleusch.<sup>7</sup>

#### **3.1 The Beginning: 1953-1957**

The first worship of what would be called the LCCA was in English, probably using *The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)*, which, ironically enough, would provide the foundation for the development of liturgy in the LCCA. "The first African worship service was held December 6, 1953 in a rented hall in Matero, a suburb of Lusaka with a government housing project for African workers."<sup>8</sup> The location of this rented hall was strategically placed because it was estimated that over half of the 25,000 Africans employed in Lusaka lived in Matero. It is unclear whether this first worship service was in Chichewa or English. It is likely that it was in English both because the first missionaries worked through translators and didn't know the native

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<sup>7</sup> Harold Johne, and Ernst Wendland, *To Every Nation, Tribe, Language, and People: A History of WELS World Missions* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1993), 177.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, 179.



language, and also because English is more common in Zambia than in Malawi (the neighboring soon to be explored mission field). If the service was in Chichewa, it would've been through an interpreter.

In April 1957 Richard Mueller arrived in Zambia having previously served in Nigeria. “In many respects Mueller became a field missionary par excellence, as this writer learned in working with him and had seen the groundwork laid by him and Raymond Cox for the work in Malawi. The first to master the language of the people, Mueller became a champion of the cause of missionaries learning the vernacular.”<sup>9</sup> This last comment is very significant because it shows that missionaries before Mueller did not function in Chichewa. Mueller was likely the person who first translated the liturgy from *The Lutheran Hymnal* into Chichewa. The central African mission had taken its first step in considering, “How should this culture worship?” Mueller was making the first effort to put both the hymns and the liturgy into the vernacular language.

### **3.2 Worship in the Vernacular**

The next chunk of time to consider is the beginning of Mueller’s work in 1957 until the early 1970s. For the purposes of this paper, this time frame is necessary because of the sources available. Steve Valleskey arrived in Malawi in 1971. Not including the bits of worship related history in “To Every Nation,” no missionary is still living who is able to relate the history of worship in the LCCA before that point. During this roughly 10-year period, the church was growing. Undoubtedly Mueller was instrumental in increasing and arranging worship in the vernacular language. The very first worship services among the nationals were more like Bible studies and Sunday school lessons. Richard Mueller recounts: “When we did realize the need for a liturgy in which we would add the confession and absolution of sins, we turned to *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the liturgies in it. These orders were translated word for word.”<sup>10</sup> Why use *The Lutheran Hymnal*?” “I did not feel that I knew enough about the African culture at that time to be able to create a liturgy that would match their life style. I also felt that *The Lutheran Hymnal* liturgy had all that we look for in a worship service. It had places for hymns, confession and absolution of sins, prayers, Scripture lessons, sermons and a benediction.”<sup>11</sup> Both Valleskey and Dr. Wendland relate that the earliest liturgical resource was a translation of the services on

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<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, 187.

<sup>10</sup> James Tiefel, Interview by Lloyd Harter, email, 24 December 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Tiefel.

page 5 and page 15 from *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Valleskey relates that this translation was a bit wooden because conversation between the Africans and the missionaries was pretty wooden. In other words, somebody like Mueller would think of the exact words he would use to say something in English, and then translate it word for word in Chichewa. Valleskey recounts how the Africans would say this is a more elevated form of language because they viewed the missionaries as more culturally sophisticated, but it was still unnatural to Bantu ears. It wouldn't be until Dr. Wendland's translation work with the Africans that a more natural translation would be produced in Chichewa.

In this early use of the liturgy, everything was spoken. This was different both from the standpoint of the source of the liturgy (*The Lutheran Hymnal*) and the receptors of the liturgy (the Bantu people). In *The Lutheran Hymnal*, sung liturgical responses pervade both liturgies, both shorter liturgical responses and longer responses and canticles. These sung responses never made their way into the first LCCA liturgies as sung responses: they were spoken. This continually spoken nature of the liturgy was curious to the nationals in the LCCA. They are a very musical culture, and the use of song pervades their daily activities, so it seemed very unnatural for them to be speaking so much in the worship service. Though this certainly is not ideal, it is an improvement from the first African worship service in 1953 that was probably in English. The missionaries worked with what they had. They knew that African music, specifically Bantu music, was very different from western harmony and western music. It would be a suppressing of their musical culture to insist on song in the liturgy that was decidedly western, and they certainly were in no place to compose sung responses in the indigenous musical style. They chose the lesser of two evils. As the introduction already showed, these first missionaries were very sensitive to implanting western culture on the Bantu people.

The first hymns used in the worship of the LCCA were from other church body's hymnals. These hymnals translated the respective church body's hymnody into Chichewa, but they kept the original music. Dr. Wendland relates that sometimes they would use these hymnals directly in worship and sing out of them. This would be fairly easy for the missionaries not only because the translations of these hymns were phonetic, meaning they were spelled how they sounded, but also because you don't need hymnals for everyone. Most of the Bantu people are illiterate. They learned the music and the texts for their hymns by rote. The only person who really needed a hymnal was the missionary/pastor and possibly the choir director. It wasn't until

1964 that documentation shows the first hymnals in the LCCA: “Already by 1964, the Publications Committee was producing sermons, hymnals, liturgies, catechisms, adult instruction materials, Sunday school lessons, tracks, and various certificates and forms in English and for vernacular languages.”<sup>12</sup> Before the time of these hymnals’ printing, the missionaries just used hymns from other church bodies’ hymnals. This resulted in hymnody that was in the vernacular language, but not the vernacular music. The missionaries taught the Africans using the original, western tunes.

Again, the missionaries were doing the best with the resources and training they had. They were accommodating to the culture in putting the text in the vernacular, and they were also accommodating to a musical culture in giving them hymns that they could sing and understand, but this was not ideal in two respects. First, these translations were very often wooden and awkward because they were forced to fit the meter in the western music. Second, the music was not vernacular—it was not in a fashion and style the Africans were used to. Valleskey states that the early missionaries purposely did not compile a collection of hymns because they did not want to supplant their hymnody in text and tune onto the African people; they would much prefer more naturally translated texts, as well as texts and tunes that came out of the local culture.

What the missionaries saw was a demand with no supply, and since they did not supply the Africans with a body of hymns, the people would borrow them from their fellow Christians in the surrounding Christian communities. The Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Anglican presence in Africa was much older than the young churches and preaching stations in the LCCA. Though the nationals seemed to enjoy singing these hymns, the texts were poor. It is a similar situation to borrowing hymns from other denominations in the United States. If a text is poor, it is either because it is not doctrinally sound, or it has little substance to it in law and gospel content. To address this, the leadership in the LCCA decided to begin printing a collection of hymns.

This collection of hymns also showed cultural sensitivity in the choice of its hymns. Lutheran chorales are very edifying to born and bred German Lutherans who have been singing them their whole lives, but they are countercultural to the Bantu people both in their music and in their texts, but both issues of text and music really center around the lack of refrains in Lutheran chorales. It is very difficult to teach these hymns to the Africans, and it is very difficult for the

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<sup>12</sup> Johne, 201.

Africans to memorize these hymns because they have so many stanzas and no refrains; that texts have little to no repetition to help with memorization. The Bantu people thrive on refrains. This accommodates to memory retention because of their lack of literacy, but this preference for refrains goes beyond issues of literacy. The orality of their culture seems to have shaped them in that, literacy aside, they just prefer to sing things from memory. In doing this, they prefer a simple song that they can build and build on in their way of singing. Our Lutheran way of building to a climax in a song is the progression of thought in the stanzas very often resulting in a doxological last stanza. The Bantus prefer to have just one stanza or refrain repeated over and over again in different ways. Because of this contrast between Lutheran song and African song, the earliest missionaries came to a compromise in their collection of hymns. They chose hymns that were in common with other church bodies' hymnals and *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Thus their first collection of hymns really didn't contain many Lutheran chorales but hymns from the wider corpus of Christian hymnody. Most of these hymns were also in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, but some of them were also just Christian songs that the nationals liked to sing, that they had likely heard other non-Lutheran Christians sing, had learned, and had retained.

### **3.3 Music in the Vernacular**

The next period of time this paper will address is the roughly 20 year span from 1971 until 1992. During this period of time missionary Steve Valleskey served in Malawi from 1971-1978, and thus he is able to give personal perspective. This 20-year span ends in 1992 because of a major workshop/revision of the hymnal that took place in that year, giving the LCCA the current content in its hymnal. During the 1970s, the liturgy was becoming increasingly more vernacular in its music. The missionaries deliberately refrained from teaching the Africans the melodies to the various sung portions of liturgy in *The Lutheran Hymnal*; the reasons for this are already stated, but what this musical vacuum allowed was room for the Africans to develop their own music for some of the canticles and versicles. The man who spearheaded this effort was Daison Mabedi, a Malawi national who was trained at the Bible Institute in Malawi. This is Valleskey's recollection of how this happened:

Mabedi worked with the people to develop some responses that were sung... Mabedi was very instrumental in that he got people to sing responsively, and I think they developed the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* in their own way for the Malawians with a leader singing the refrains and the people repeating that in their own way of singing. He did this in his churches, and that spread to some of the other churches... [He] was creative and worked

with his people to get them to sing certain things in African style, but they were never sung according to [Anglican] chant... When Mabedi was doing that stuff with the congregation, it was interesting to listen to them, because they were doing it in an authentic African fashion... They worked at it in their own way, and that was fun [to watch]... The music was never written down... They did use the choir somewhat liturgically, at least with Mabedi's attempt to develop some sung portions of the liturgy.<sup>13</sup>

The missionaries' patience had paid off. In leaving the liturgy empty of sung responses, the Malawians, led by Mabedi, filled in these gaps with their own music. The simple responses of "hallelujah" after the first lesson and the brief statement of praise after the gospel would be truly in the Malawians' musical style in text and tune. The missionaries really did not need to supply a translation. Singing the word "hallelujah" in many different fashions already had a strong history in their culture, and the statement of praise after the gospel was a very simple statement that they could modify to fit their own music. These little versicle responses were the first examples in the LCCA of an indigenous song and text.

It is uncertain how Mabedi lead the people in singing the *Gloria* and the *Kyrie*. The translation he had to work with was a very straight, wooden translation of both the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* as they appeared in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. From Valleskey's recollection, it seems that Mabedi decided on a refrain for the *Gloria* and used this to engage the congregation in some type of call and response singing. It doesn't seem that Mabedi followed the printed translation of the *Gloria* very strictly, but manipulated the translation as he saw fit in order better to fit the music. It is also uncertain as to whether this singing of the liturgy extended outside of Malawi. Dr. Wendland recalls that before the revision of the hymnal in 1992, most of the liturgy was spoken and not sung, which must have been true for much of Zambia, but less true for Malawi. In the 1992 revision of the hymnal, responses which were to be sung were notated as such with dashes between the syllables of the printed words. Since these don't appear in the editions of the hymnal before 1992, Dr. Wendland states that they would have been spoken.

During this time, the hymns also began to take on a life of their own within the Bantu culture. The people learned their hymns from two different sources, either from their local congregation, or from their Christian friends. When they learned hymns from their congregation, they learned these either from their pastor or their choir director, but most often their pastor would teach the hymns to his church's choir director, and both the choir director and pastor

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<sup>13</sup> Valleskey.

would teach the hymns to the congregation. The pastors and choir directors learned the hymns from either the Lutheran Bible Institute in Malawi, or from Martin Luther Seminary in Lusaka. The faculty wives would teach the hymns from the LCCA's hymnal. The texts were in Chichewa, but the tunes the Africans learned were still the western tunes, but only the various melodies, not the harmonies. Kathie Wendland was involved in teaching these hymns to the choir directors. "I worked with the Bible Institute and seminary on liturgy and, I was teaching the melodies [for the hymns], and I would ask them how they sing it in their congregations: they didn't sing it that way [according to the *TLH* tune] in their congregations."<sup>14</sup> Kathie recounted that most of the time, when she would ask one of the people to sing a specific hymn, it usually would sound nothing like the original western tune from *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Sometimes she would be able to recognize a tune, but most often it would change so much in transmission that it was no longer recognizable to her ears; nobody, including Kathie, saw that as a bad thing. Valleskey commented on this and said, "Their tonality is a little different than ours. They would sort of adjust the melodies into their tonality and sing things at their intervals."<sup>15</sup>

Whether the missionaries intended it or not, the music of these hymns took on a life of its own among the Africans because their pastors and choir directors did not take the tunes to these hymns back to their congregations using the notation in a hymnal like churches in Europe or America do. Their only source of reference to the tunes of these hymns was their memory, which certainly would not reproduce the tunes of the hymns with 100% accuracy, and the tunes would also change because of the specific culture's musical tonality. Valleskey describes their tonality as "not fitting into *Bach's Well-tempered Clavier*."<sup>16</sup> In addition to the melody taking on a life of its own, the harmony truly arose within the people's culture. The pastors and choir directors would only learn the melodies from the Lutheran Bible Institute or Martin Luther Seminary. When they brought the tunes back to their villages, the people would fill in the harmony in their own fashion, which certainly did not follow the harmonic progressions and voice leading of Western harmony.

Before 1992, the hymnals printed had a straightforward translation of the liturgy from page 5 and 15 of *The Lutheran Hymnal*. After this portion of the liturgy in the front, the earliest

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<sup>14</sup> Katherine Wendland, Interview by Lloyd Harter, Personal Interview, Two Rivers, WI, 7 November 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Valleskey.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

hymnals had 174 hymns, the majority of them being from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, though not necessarily Lutheran chorales. In 1982, the hymnal was expanded in its liturgy and the hymns. The portion of the liturgy in *The Lutheran Hymnal* that contained the combination of the *Gloria Patri*, *Kyrie*, and *Gloria in Excelsis* previously was translated in a straightforward, fairly wooden manner into Chichewa. In the 1982 hymnal, this part of the liturgy, in addition to the straightforward prosaic translation, also appeared in metrical form. This appears to accommodate the nationals who were singing these parts instead of speaking them as was begun by Mabedi. In addition to this, approximately 50 more hymns, the vast majority of them not coming from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, appeared in this revision of the hymnal. Various churches were already singing these additional hymns; the people had learned these hymns on their own from their Christian neighbors. These additional hymns accommodated more to the use of a refrain and filled a significant void. Even in the 1992 revision of the hymnal, the number of hymns was not changed.

Hymnody has been a significant challenge to address in the worship life of the LCCA. The first missionaries were very hesitant to provide any hymnal, and as a result the members of the church started assimilating hymns from all kinds of different sources and from different Christians who sang them. When the leadership provided a hymnal, the people were very slow to learn them. Dr. Wendland comments:

I would say that certainly in the earlier years, they [the pastors] would know only a handful of hymns that the people would actually sing. The pastor had to actually teach the words and the music to the people. About 50% of the pastors are pretty good at it, but others are not really prepared to teach them. One of the needs we are going to address in hopefully the next couple years is to get a trained musicologist who can take some of the good Lutheran hymns and try to develop indigenous melodies that can go with them that we can teach the people and actually expand their repertoire of hymns.<sup>17</sup>

Dr. Wendland emphasized that no surveys exist to document that perception, but that is his perception after doing pastoral visits to the congregations in the LCCA. Although surveying is needed to address this perception more accurately, Dr. Wendland estimates that any congregation probably knows only 25% to 50% of the hymns in the hymnal. In addition to the hymns that the congregation would sing, the choirs would probably know a few more hymns, but the same

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<sup>17</sup> Ernest Wendland, Interview by Lloyd Harter, Skype, 21 November 2015.

problem occurs in having good hymnody that is both edifying and contains law and gospel content.

Our congregations do not really depend on the hymnal for their music and their choirs... You'll sometimes get a service where you have two or at most three hymns that the people know. The choir is something we have to work on—to make sure that the pastors are working with the choirs to sing good Lutheran hymns [in content]. This is a big problem, because I would go around and visit congregations, and I would notice that they were singing hymns and singing them very robustly, but the texts were very poor— not all were even based on Scripture. They sing well, but the problem is to try and get hymnody that the people know and can sing well. You don't want to discourage the choirs because there are so many of them and so many involved in the service.<sup>18</sup>

The leadership in the LCCA continues to teach hymns from their hymnal to the students at the Bible Institute in Malawi and Martin Luther Seminary in Lusaka. A musicologist on staff, especially one who is a nationally trained pastor, would aid them very much in helping develop a more distinct Lutheran hymnody among the people that is still indigenous in its music and in the format of its texts.

### **3.4 Further Developments**

The next section of worship history in the LCCA will be from 1992 until the present. In 1992, the LCCA hired a trained musicologist to come and lead a workshop helping the worship leaders in the LCCA revise the liturgy in their present hymnal. The student body also took part in this worship. The main goal was to provide sung responses throughout the liturgy just as sung responses appeared in the liturgy of *The Lutheran Hymnal*, but the goal was to put the music in the vernacular, in music that matched their culture. Present at the workshop were Pastor Mabedi, who was in charge of the process, Pastor Deverson Ntambo, who was teaching at the Bible Institute in Malawi, Benford Kawaliza who was the first graduate from the seminary in Lusaka, and his son Sam Kawaliza, who was also a pastor in the LCCA, Ernst H. Wendland who was serving as a professor at the seminary in Lusaka, Wendland's wife Katherine Wendland, and Carol Dietrich who was the wife of missionary Joseph Dietrich. The musicologist they hired was a national who had also studied Western music and harmony in Europe. Kathie Wendland's comment about him was "he was simply outstanding."

About the first three or four days it was just music theory that he was giving. It was music theory from the perspective of this Zambian who knew [African music]. He had

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<sup>18</sup> Wendland.



studied in Europe, so he knew his heritage. He also knew the language so that we could understand what he was doing. He had written some books. His points about the music really talked about how important the rhythms were in the music. He said you could identify where the music came from by the rhythm, and it's that simple. These are very complicated rhythms because each tribe had its own rhythm identities, some of them were on the beat music, and some were before the beat music, and some were after the beat music.<sup>19</sup>

As Kathie demonstrated, this was a man who was raised in Africa and new knew African music. His primary task was to equip the members of this workshop with the information and tools they needed to compose and notate sung liturgical responses in the African idiom, specifically in a manner that sounded natural to Bantu ears.

Carol Dietrich was a trained musician who knew western musical notation and harmony. Her primary task was to notate the composed music. “Carol Dietrich was really important because she could hear the notes and write them down. She could write down what they were actually singing.”<sup>20</sup> The men writing the music were the four national pastors, Mabedi, Ntambo, S. Kawaliza, and B. Kawaliza. The training these men received at this workshop is very significant because it was continuing the work they had already begun in composing Bantu music that the people would recognize, sing, appreciate, and in which they could take pride. Valleskey had commented on how much pride the Malawians had already taken in Mabedi's music in the liturgy. They really viewed it as their music, taking ownership of it. Pastor Ntambo had already composed several hymns that were in common use in LCCA churches, including the seminary favorite “We Are Workers of the Lord.” The senior and younger Kawaliza were very active in always teaching more hymns to the congregations they served and encountered. Sam Kawaliza was also receiving training from Carol Dietrich in western music and notation. Katherine and Ernst H. Wendland were content to sit in the back and watch. Kathie would be instrumental in helping teach these new sung responses in the liturgy to the pastors at Martin Luther Seminary.

Dr. Wendland presented a workshop on translation in the liturgy. “Dr. Wendland presented on taking the information that was in this book and then putting it so that you kept the pronunciation true to the specific language—how you would use elision, and how you would use

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<sup>19</sup> Katherine Wendland.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

a contraction.”<sup>21</sup> Dr. Wendland had already set to work on revisions of translation in the liturgy. The liturgy had already been translated into Chichewa, Tonga, Bemba, Luvale, and Tumbuka. The revisions of these translations served to provide as natural of a translation as possible in each language. To do this, Dr. Wendland would ask a national pastor to prepare a draft of the translation, and then Dr. Wendland would work with the pastor in revising it and polishing it.

Prior to this workshop, the parts of the liturgy the people sang in Malawi were the *Gloria Patri-Kyrie-Gloria in Excelsis*, the versicles after the first lesson, and the versicles after the Gospel. It seems that new melodies were composed for everything, including the three-part *Gloria-Kyrie-Gloria*. In addition to this, these men composed or arranged music for the response following the invocation, the two responses in the invitation to confession, the response to the salutation, the response to the sermon (Psalm 51), and the response to the blessing (the triple amen). In the communion liturgy, the Song of Simeon was now also sung, as well as the response to the statement of Thanksgiving after communion. Of all of these, the most significant compositions in terms of their length are Psalm 51 and the Song of Simeon after communion. The basic principle was that if *The Lutheran Hymnal* had a sung response, this team of men composed a response the Africans could also sing in their own musical idiom.

The Publications Committee of the LCCA translated these revisions of the liturgy into the major languages: Chichewa, Tonga, Bemba, Luvale, and Tumbuka. In each translation, it seems that the newly composed music had dominance. Dr. Wendland described how the texts in each language needed to be modified to fit the meter of the tunes that they chose. This is very interesting because it seems to be the first time in the worship of the LCCA that a text served the tune. The music was indigenous, composed by national pastors of the LCCA, and now, for the first time, a translation—an African text—was not forced into any western tune, but a translation was made to serve indigenous music. This is indeed a significant step forward in worship of the LCCA since the first western translation of western texts made to serve western music.

Around the same time as this workshop, one Baptist musicologist and one Roman Catholic musicologist came to the seminary in Lusaka and gave the leadership assistance in forming their hymnal. “We would invite them in as well, and they would give some technical details for how you adapt these texts into a more vernacular music system... We’ve always

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<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*

really lacked a good musicologist on the faculty, but we're hoping that we can get one of our nationals better trained in this who can take up the steam."<sup>22</sup>

To teach these new sung responses to the people, the team from this workshop produced recordings on cassettes that they brought to their congregations, and that other pastors also brought to their congregations so that the people could hear the new music and learn it. Missionary Mark Rieke taught these new sung responses to the students at the Lutheran Bible Institute in Malawi. They caught on in some places in Malawi, but not in others.<sup>23</sup> Dr. Wendland comments "The Liturgy Committee would go around and teach the congregations how to sing one version—the standard version— of the Chewa. Each congregation would learn it and add their own additions."<sup>24</sup> This comment is very significant because it shows the continued flexibility the missionaries and the leadership in the LCCA had toward music in their churches. Little doubt exists that these newly composed sung responses took on slightly different nuances in the different congregations, and it is reasonable to suspect that these nuances were sometimes more than slightly different; the leadership had no problem with this.

The goal of this revision of the liturgy was to build up indigenous music in the LCCA. Kathie Wendland comments on this when she says, "I couldn't interfere with what they were doing [in the churches]. Having someone [like myself] who knows what questions to ask and a little bit about the music was probably the hand of God because I couldn't really interfere with what they were doing, because we couldn't mess it up."<sup>25</sup> Kathie described a practice of radio broadcasts from the seminary in Malawi. These broadcasts would have a Christian message for the people, and it would have the seminary choir as background. The seminary choir in Lusaka sang music that was closest to western music, and although the African people liked it, Kathie was still conscious of the possible risk. In using that music, the leadership at Martin Luther Seminary did not want to give the impression that western music was superior to African music, nor were they trying to replace African music with western music. Commenting on those radio broadcasts, Kathie Wendland says, "People loved it because you take good music from any

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<sup>22</sup> Wendland.

<sup>23</sup> Mark Rieke, Interview by Lloyd Harter. Email. 22 November 2015.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Katherine Wendland.

culture, and it's going to be very pleasing, but you don't necessarily want that to become the foundation of what the indigenous sings."<sup>26</sup>

### **3.5 Analysis of Worship Developments**

That is the account of the development of worship in the LCCA. From the beginning of WELS missions in Zambia and Malawi, a clear concern on the part of the missionaries to have indigenous worship is evident. The missionaries never wanted to impose western culture on the nationals, and they especially did not want to impose western music on a culture that has such a distinctive and lively heritage of song. Two assets of this development in worship are truly outstanding. Firstly, the LCCA is a fairly young mission church, especially as compared to much longer established Christian churches in Africa. Within the first 30 years of the church body, having no trained ethnomusicologist, it already had indigenous hymns and indigenous sung liturgy developing from leaders within its church body. Within the first 40 years, it had trained ethnomusicologists hired as consultants in building up indigenous music in their worship. By God's grace, a developing church body made worship a priority, and God blessed that priority. Secondly, the development of worship in the LCCA mirrors the development of leadership organization in the training of its pastors. The Publications Committee made hymnals possible in 1964.<sup>27</sup> This printing press at Lusaka would continue to provide all the worship materials in the upcoming years. The first printings really only had several hundred copies printed at a time, but by 2002, 15,000 hymnals were being printed at one time. The first revisions of translating work in the liturgy were only possible after the training of national pastors who were capable of putting the text of the liturgy into smoother and more natural language. A greater variety of song was possible as the training of national pastors developed who were exposed to a wider variety of music at the Bible Institute in Malawi and the seminary in Lusaka. Dr. Wendland comments:

It was not until we had some experienced pastors available that we could think about developing the liturgy and hymnody of the church. We also had to find pastors who liked to work with music—not so easy to find and encourage, especially when we did not really have any specialist at the seminary or the Bible Institute to focus on this ministry. But by the grace of God, this ministry did develop, especially with the help of women staff members/wives.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Johne, 201.

<sup>28</sup> Wendland.

The writer of this paper vividly remembers the conversation with Steve Valleskey who took so seriously the danger of imposing western culture on nationals in a mission setting. Valleskey said, “Whatever you were, that’s all you had to offer. We came at a later stage in the game, and in central Africa we were not [willing] to do that [impose western culture and worship], so that led to a lot of soul-searching on the culture question.” In response to his statement, this writer said, “I’d say a tradition the western Lutheran culture and the African culture share in general is a dedication to congregational singing. From what I’ve heard from Kathie Wendland, Dr. Wendland, and you, the missionaries did their best to cultivate congregational singing, and where that took on a life of its own, with the people altering melodies and creating melodies to fit their culture, you never fought against it; you let them do it, and it’s a song of the gospel that took on its own life in a specific culture.” The worship of God that he has let grow in the LCCA is certainly a cause for rejoicing, but as Dr. Wendland has made clear at multiple points, the work needs to be continued; progress still needs to continue.

#### **4. Introduction to Ethnodoxology**

The second part of the paper will focus on a reaction to development of worship in the LCCA from the field of ethnodoxology. This reaction includes further detailing the progression of culture specific worship in the LCCA. It also details where the LCCA has room for continued progress in culture specific worship. Lastly, this reaction details how to approach that progress from the resources available in the field of ethnodoxology. The field of ethnodoxology primarily draws on the resources available from the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE). The two most extensive resources available from the ICE are James Krabill’s book “Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook” and Brian Schrag’s book, “Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals.” As the titles imply, one is a handbook, and the other is a manual. From this writer’s perspective, the first book shows the need for the second book. “Worship and Mission for the Global Church” is a collection of essays from ethnodoxologists around the world which shows the importance, philosophy, principles, and some history of culture specific worship. “Creating Local Arts Together” details how to put culture specific worship in action.

## 4.1 Worship and Culture

In considering the field of ethnodoxology, let us first consider the general intersection of worship and culture. The Lutheran World Federation produced the *Nairobi Statement* “in an attempt to navigate away from the checkmate crisis points between Christianity and culture. [The writers] produced this document to help churches view the tension as a beautiful dance to be protected, preserved, and even promoted.”<sup>29</sup> The *Nairobi Statement* was a three-year culmination of a study team from the Lutheran World Federation, consisting of members from five continents. The content of the *Nairobi Statement* describes fairly well the intersection between worship and culture, as was its original purpose. “Christian worship relates dynamically to culture in at least four ways. First, it is *transcultural*, the same substance for everyone everywhere, beyond culture.” Anne Zaki, one of the essayists from “Worship and Mission for the Global Church” comments on the *Nairobi Statement* in her essay “Shall We Dance: Reflections on the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture.” On this first premise, concerning worship as transcultural, she says “In all its diverse expressions, it is beyond culture. This is true not only of the central actions mandated by Scripture [Law], but also of the centrality of the person and work of Jesus Christ [Gospel].”<sup>30</sup> The law and gospel content of Scripture in every Christian culture certainly makes Christian worship transcultural. The power in God’s Word to convict people of their sin, and the power in God’s Word to create faith in Jesus, the Savior from our sin, is the power of God that is present in every Christian culture. We give thanks for the transcultural content in Scripture that has allowed such growth in the LCCA and has brought over 50,000 baptized souls to Jesus.

“Second, it is *contextual*, varying according to the local situation (both nature and culture).” Zaki comments:

Worship reflects local patterns of speech, dress, architecture, gestures, and other cultural characteristics. Jesus’ incarnation into a specific culture gives us both a model and a mandate. The gospel and the church were never intended to be exclusive to or confined to any one culture. Rather, the good news was spread to the ends of the earth, rooting the church deeply into diverse local cultures. ‘Contextualization is a necessary task force for the church’s mission in the world.’<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Krabill, 66.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, 67.

Her emphasis on the good news spreading to the ends of the earth highlights the power of the gospel to do exactly that, and because of that, the gospel is always intersecting with culture. “In his book on global worship, Charles Farhadian stresses how important it is ‘to appreciate the immense variety of expressions of Christian worship in order to take seriously the social and cultural context that plays such a significant part in worship... [with] emphasis on culture as the potential, not the problem of worship.’”<sup>32</sup> In pursuing contextualization, the *Nairobi Statement* describes two concepts:

First, *dynamic equivalence*—which involves re-expressing components of Christian worship with something from a local culture that has an equal meaning, value, and function. For example, the Lordship of Jesus is taught among the Maasai tribe in Kenya by painting a black man dressed in a red robe, since red is the color of royalty and is always worn by the village chief. The second approach is *creative assimilation*, which involves enriching worship by adding pertinent components of local culture. For example, in Egypt the harmonic sound of an *oud* (lute) is used to add a fuller expression to Psalms of lament.<sup>33</sup>

Zaki also comments that there must be a balance between worship as contextual and worship as transcultural, specifically that the ways a culture contextualizes worship does not take away from what makes worship transcultural. Steve Valleskey commented on this contextual nature of worship. “[Sometimes] maybe we were acting under the misguided notion that you could present the gospel cultureless, and that that could be done, and that the indigenous culture would take the pure gospel and would add its culture to it, but things practically don’t work that way.”<sup>34</sup> This paper has shown how the WELS missionaries were conscious of this from a very early date. The history of worship in the LCCA has shown the desire of its leadership to always make worship more contextual; this desire to make worship contextual continues today.

“Third, it is *countercultural*, challenging what is contrary to the gospel in a given culture.”<sup>35</sup> Worship will always be countercultural because, if it is faithful to God’s Word, it will always contain law that convicts sinners. St. Paul’s words in Romans are helpful in this discussion. He writes “The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.”<sup>36</sup> No culture on earth will ever warmly receive God’s law without an individual

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<sup>32</sup> Krabill, 67.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Valleskey.

<sup>35</sup> Krabill, 69.

<sup>36</sup> Romans 8:7 NIV 1984.

first being convicted by the law and comforted with the gospel. Zaki says, “Again Christian worship must resist the idolatries of a given culture. This doesn’t mean that we become anti-cultural; rather, it challenges us to become careful readers of our culture in light of biblical truths.”<sup>37</sup>

This paper has demonstrated multiple countercultural aspects of worship in the LCCA that go beyond just God’s word as law. Asking Africans to sing Western melodies is countercultural. Africans have an entirely different tonality that overlaps in different ways with western tonality, but asking Africans to sing straight Western tunes is kind of like trying to pound a square peg into a circular hole. If you try hard enough, you can make it work, but it is abrasive to the Bantu ear. Reading prayers off a sheet or out of a book is countercultural to the Bantu people. Their prayers are always *ex corde*. The confessional Lutheran practice of fellowship is also very countercultural. The people don’t understand why they can’t sing in four or five different choirs of different churches, and they don’t understand why other Christians shouldn’t sing in their choirs. Taking them through the biblical teaching of fellowship as St. Paul taught and practiced it is very challenging. In some respects, a strictly ordered liturgical service is also countercultural to the Bantu people because it allows for little flexibility in the format of the service. “On the other hand, other churches have the same [type of liturgy] (Catholics, Anglicans), so people have gotten used to it, especially longtime members.”<sup>38</sup>

“Fourth, it is *cross-cultural*, making possible sharing between different cultures.”<sup>39</sup> Zaki encourages the value of cross-cultural worship when she says “Sharing worship resources cross culturally expands our view of God and the church in transcending time and space, develops our repertoire of worship expressions, and crystallizes our understanding of the kingdom of heaven.” Certainly any congregation will continue to find any variety of practices from another culture’s worship to be engaging. This is the basic premise: if a certain form of art in worship engages a believer with God and God’s Word, how am I to know that the same will not be true for me unless I try it? C. Michael Hawn has a very helpful comment in this matter: “Liturgical plurality is not denying one’s cultural heritage of faith in song, prayer, and ritual. It is a conscious effort to lay one’s cultural heritage and perspective alongside another’s, critique each, and learn from the

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<sup>37</sup> Krabill, 69.

<sup>38</sup> Wendland.

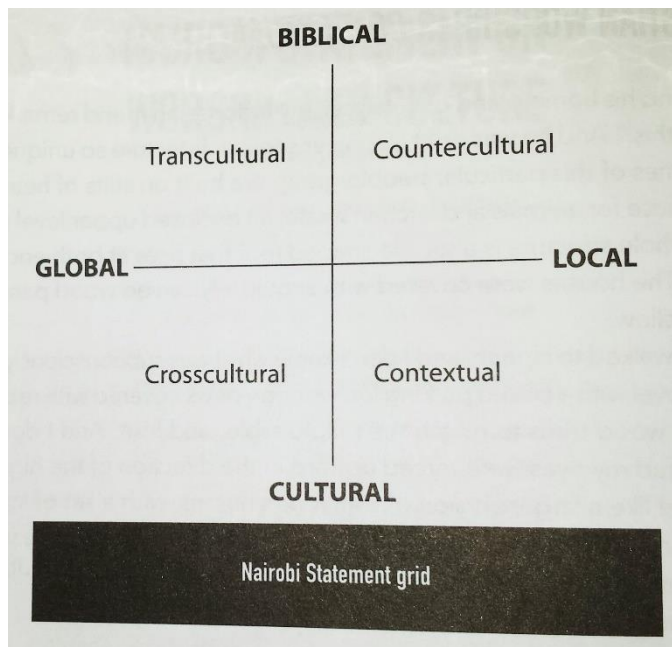
<sup>39</sup> Krabill, 69.



experience.”<sup>40</sup> It is especially helpful for stateside churches to see worship from other cultures, and hopefully experience worship from other cultures, because it connects them to their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ across the ocean or south of the border.

Worship in the LCCA has taken on some life in worship in the states. One example is the hymn, “His Battle Ended There,” in *Christian Worship*. It is in African folk melody sung in the LCCA. Pastor Ntambo’s hymn “We Are Workers of the Lord” was also sung by the *Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Chorus*. The nationally trained pastors in the LCCA have also regularly visited the states, preached, described worship, and have given presentations on the work happening in the LCCA.

The following diagram helps illustrate these issues of worship and culture explored in the *Nairobi Statement*:



This diagram helps us understand the concepts that create the four categories of transcultural, cross-cultural, countercultural, and contextual worship. Worship is transcultural because it is both global and biblical. Worship is cross-cultural because it is both global and cultural. Worship is contextual because it is both cultural and local, and it is countercultural both because of its biblical content (in Law), and its distinctive local content that doesn’t always mesh with other culture.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, 71.

## 4.2 Artistry between Cultures

After considering the overlap between worship and culture, let us take a look at artistry between cultures. Brian Schrag nicely sums up how artistry between cultures takes place:

“Just as most people in the world speak more than one language, they also perform and experience music, dance, stories, and other arts from multiple traditions and geographical locations. Each community—and each individual within a community—has a unique, changing blend of local, regional, national, and international artistic activity. So how do you know where to join in? Historically, missionaries have answered this question in three ways: Bring It-Teach It, Build New Bridges, and Find It-Encourage It.<sup>41</sup>

In the first method, Bring It-Teach It, one culture teaches its artistry to another. This is what the very first Christian missionaries in Africa did; they taught what they had—their way of worship in the liturgy and song. After a little while, there was a little cultural accommodation in putting the language of the liturgy and the hymns in the vernacular, but the music remained western, not in the vernacular. As the missionaries in the LCCA tried to teach the pastors and choir directors more hymns, musically, this is also what they did. These missionaries did not have any African tunes to use, so they used what they had—their western tunes with text in the vernacular.

Reversing the direction of transmission, this is also what Pastor Mabedi did for our missionaries. When he composed music for different portions of the liturgy, he taught it to the missionaries so they could sing with the people. “It also sometimes contributes to satisfying and pleasurable fusions.”<sup>42</sup> An example of this is the pastors and choir directors of the LCCA learning Western hymn tunes, but in teaching them to their people, they became something else entirely that was based on the Western tunes, but became altered so much that the missionaries were not even able to recognize the tune without its text.

In the second method, the Build New Bridges approach, “Someone will learn enough about another community’s arts to influence how they use their own arts in ministry.... This approach could also include collaborations between artists of different cultures for common purposes, where what is produced has characteristics of more than one tradition... The Build New Bridges model often requires a relatively short time before making initial progress... It may also promote healthy interdependent relationships where everyone equally shares their arts.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Brian Schrag, and James Krabill, ed., *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach Their Kingdom Goals* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2013), xxi.

<sup>42</sup> Schrag, xxi.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, xxii.

As demonstrated in this excerpt, this interchange of arts between cultures can be very beneficial. Schrag gives an example of it, “Art therapists, for example have used local materials and songs to guide children through a healing process from suffering.”<sup>44</sup>

In the third approach, Find It-Encourage It, “the missionary learns to know local artists and their arts in ways that spur these artists to create in the forms they know best.”<sup>45</sup> In this approach, the missionary has very little exchange of artistry with the target community; he only serves to help the target community develop its own artistry further. “You can think of this missionary as a catalyst for someone else’s creativity, helping give birth to new creations that flow organically from the community. The approach usually requires longer-term relationships with people and an irrepressible commitment to learn.”<sup>46</sup> Although on a lesser scale in the terms of an ethnomusicologist’s work, the missionaries in the LCCA did this. Though they were not able to analyze the music and the culture as thoroughly as an ethnomusicologist would, they did function as an arts advocate. Steve Valleskey was a missionary trained in western music, but he did all that he could to encourage the musicians in the LCCA to build up their music in their culture. Schrag comments “If you are an artist, you may need to find outlets to express your own gifts; that’s a great thing, but again: your primary job is to help others make new artistic things.”<sup>47</sup> Valleskey had this outlet in the passing time he spent with his wife who played flute while he played piano or harpsichord, but he let this be his own passing time; he was very sensitive to let the people build up their own indigenous music.

### **5. Building up Artistry within a Culture**

The remainder of this paper will be dedicated to expanding on the last approach to artistry between cultures: Find It-Encourage It. As Schrag emphasized, this involves building up longer-term relationships. This is the hope of Dr. Wendland, to have a native pastor trained as a musicologist who knows how to coordinate and specifically encourage the people in his church body towards a fuller heritage of music within the LCCA.

The purpose of Schrag’s book, “Creating Local Arts Together” is to help anyone who has musical and/or other artistic training to build up the artistry within a specific culture to serve their “kingdom goals,” as he calls it. Schrag’s book will dominate the remainder of this paper.

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<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, xxiii.

His purpose though, is much larger than just building up music within a specific culture, though this is absolutely integral, and in many cases, will probably have the most significant presence within a culture's use of artistry in worship. He states "People communicate in almost 7000 languages around the world, not just by spoken words, but also through artistically rendered song, drama, dance, visual arts, story, and other special forms."<sup>48</sup> In order to do build up artistry within a given culture/community, he outlines seven steps on which this paper will expand: (1) meet a community and its arts, (2) specify kingdom goals, (3) select effects, content, genre, and events, (4) analyze an event containing the chosen genre, (5) spark creativity, (6) improve new works, (7) integrate and celebrate for continuity. In all of these steps, and in all of the steps within a given step, Schrag gives one real-life example after another on exactly how he or another ethnodoxologist fulfilled his directions. For the purposes of this paper (and its brevity), those examples remain for reference in his book.

### **5.1 Meeting a Community and Its Arts**

In order to build up artistry in a specific culture, the researcher must meet a community and its arts: these are Schrag's comments:

The meet component entails getting to know basic information about a community, first making relationships with people, and listing the kinds of arts that run through the community. We draw on research methods from fields like anthropology, ethnography of communication, and performance studies to help you get to know the community. But most of these fancy research methods ultimately boil down to building relationships with other human beings.<sup>49</sup>

Within meeting a community and its arts, it is first necessary to think about what a community is. According to Schrag, a community shares a story, they share an identity, and they share ongoing patterns of interaction. Communities also are always changing. "Every community has internal variation and changes over time. So beware of saying things like, 'Community X sings like this.' It may be true for a majority of the group today, but some people may be advocating for a very different kind of singing. In five years things may be very different."<sup>50</sup>

Meeting a community and its arts involve starting a community arts profile. "A Community Arts Profile (CAP) is a place for you to gather everything you and the community learn about its arts. Each community should have its own CAP."<sup>51</sup> To determine this involves

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<sup>48</sup> Schrag, xv.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*, xxvi.

<sup>50</sup> Schrag, 2-3.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, 3.

asking questions like “Where’s the community and how many of them are there... what ties the community together... how do they communicate with each other and how often... how do they share their artistic creations... how did they get there?”<sup>52</sup> Schrag even provides a template in a Word document which contains the pertinent information in a CAP.

Meeting a community and its arts involves taking a first glance at a community’s arts. Gather together a few knowledgeable people in the community and make a quick list of artistic genres. Questions to ask include, “When do people in this community sing? Play instruments? Dance? Tell stories? Act? Carve? Paint? Use their bodies in unusual ways? Play games? Build special structures? Do people in this community do anything special surrounding the birth of a child? Someone’s death? Someone’s passage from childhood to adulthood?”<sup>53</sup> For each question, Schrag recommends “[asking] them to describe what special things happen and make note of the arts involved.”<sup>54</sup>

After this task, discover artistic communication acts by researching likely social contexts for their performance.<sup>55</sup> Schrag calls this extending the list from the “outside in.” This is where the field of anthropology comes into play. “You begin with an anthropologist’s knowledge that cultures often mark important events and transitions with artistically rendered communication.”<sup>56</sup> This is more complicated than just recognizing any given community has different songs, ceremonies, and dances, etc. The documentation involved is more to the point. Is the song a lullaby? Is the dance a specific dance that happens at a specific time and place each year? Multiple times a year? What is the name of the ceremony?

Extend that list of specific artistic acts from the “inside out.” “In the ‘inside out’ approach, you begin with knowledge you have about art forms themselves, often from your own insights as an artist. You’ll recognize many of a community’s arts because they have characteristics of singing, dancing, acting, carving, or other arts you’re already familiar with.”<sup>57</sup> The purpose is to make a more critical evaluation of the actual art forms used and the artistry used. These artistic events will have a physical performance context. They may expand or contract the density of information—does this little form of art have a much larger meaning

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, 4.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, 7.

(poetry), or does this large display of art have a more simple meaning (dance for victory or war)? Other critical criteria to consider is that “the arts may assume more or special knowledge, arts exhibit special formal structure, arts may elicit unusual responses, and arts may require unusual experts.”<sup>58</sup> All of these criteria have guiding questions to lead the researcher into considering the nature of the local artistry.

Meeting a community and its arts involves exploring a community’s social and conceptual life. Schrag recommends reading a standard book on anthropology to aid the researcher in this step. “For our purposes, we list here several important anthropological concepts and a few related questions to stimulate your thoughts.”<sup>59</sup> The concepts and questions Schrag includes are: in what context do people use different languages or types of languages? How do people use and value objects? How do people produce, distribute, and use goods and services? How is labor distributed among genders, classes, and ages? The concepts to consider include kinship, marriage and family, social organization, power relationships, religion, and worldview coupled with values.<sup>60</sup> When reading through such a list, the thought probably occurred to the reader, “What does all of that have to do with worship?” These things seem to be a little outlying to the core concern of building up arts in worship. The key concept here is knowing the local artistry to build up the local artistry in worship. “To understand an artist and her arts, you have to understand her cultural context. To understand a cultural context, you have to understand its arts and artists.”<sup>61</sup>

Meeting a community involves using research methods to learn more. Some of these research methods are as simple as watching and doing, and doing while watching. “Painting, playing an instrument, dancing, taking part in a drama, learning to tell stories properly [in the specific culture]: these are all activities that might be part of participant’s observation for an arts researcher.”<sup>62</sup> Interviewing is an essential part of this research, especially ethnographic interviews. Though notetaking would seem to be obvious, Schrag also gives some helpful principles to keep in mind. “The *verbatim principal*: record everything in the exact words used by the person you’re talking with. The *concrete principle*: use concrete language.”<sup>63</sup> Schrag also

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<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*, 9.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, 10-11

<sup>61</sup> Schrag, 9.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, 11.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, 15-16.

emphasizes the importance of using good audio and video recording. He is very specific all the way down to the recording settings, the jacks, and common media along with all the specific auxiliary equipment needed such as tripod mounts, external microphones, and headphone jacks. In his suggestions on photography, he is equally as specific.

Meeting a community, lastly, involves celebrating a community's arts from the start. Good artistry is tedious. Research into good artistry is tedious and can quickly become mindless and even boring. Schrag provides a helpful premise from the start: "We start with the premise that all people reflect God's [creation]: who they are and what they do now are also inherently valuable. So as you document a community's existing arts, celebrate them."<sup>64</sup>

This writer is not aware of any systematic documentation of all the different forms of artistry among the Bantu people within the LCCA. This certainly could be very helpful, but it is also a daunting task. "Bantu" is a larger designation for the nationals in the LCCA, but the Bantu people also have various languages into which its publications are translated. This variety of languages shows the variety of specific cultures within the LCCA; documenting the various arts and the use of those arts would be an extensive and ongoing process, but it would provide a foundation on which to build the appropriate culture specific art in the worship of the LCCA's congregations.

## **5.2 Specifying Kingdom Goals**

In order to build up artistry in a given culture, the first step is to meet a community and its arts. The second step is to specify kingdom goals. Because this paper is written for a confessional Lutheran seminary, this section will have the most theological content. Schrag spends quite a bit of time in this chapter focusing on the different ways artistry can affect society as well as the governing authorities. Not that we would expect him to, but Schrag does not show the differentiation between the two kingdoms in which a Christian lives: the earthly kingdom, and the heavenly kingdom—Jesus' reign in our hearts and the hearts of all believers. A confessional Lutheran reading this chapter definitely gets the impression from Schrag that what happens in the heavenly kingdom should affect the earthly kingdom. While individual Christians are certainly interested in letting their light shine in the society around them, and most definitely to do that through artistry, the organized church (visible church) impacts society and the

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<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, 21.

government through its individual members, not through the organized efforts of the church itself. Schrag makes no distinction in this respect.

Notice these statements by Schrag that confuses the roles of the church and of government/nonreligious societal organizations: “Where the kingdom of God thrives, communities respond to social, emotional, and physical challenges in healthy ways... Where the kingdom of God thrives, communities reconcile with each other and with outside communities... Where the kingdom of God thrives, communities love and strengthen the poor and others in their margins.”<sup>65</sup> In expanding on the last statement, Schrag says, “Communities can work toward kingdom justice by drawing on their arts’ abilities to instill hope, speak unwelcome truth to those in power, and encourage solidarity.”<sup>66</sup> Schrage seems to be most interested in how the church through its worship can maintain justice and influence change in society and government; he seems far more interested in changing government and society than changing sinful hearts with the gospel. At best, he is ambiguous.

Notice these statements by Schrag with which a confessional Lutheran could agree:

Where the kingdom of God thrives, communities read and listen to the Bible and other literature...communities translates Scripture...communities access Scripture through familiar forms...Christ-followers gather to worship in ways that promote deep communication with God and each other...communities understand and remember Scripture...nonbelievers in communities learn about Scripture...individuals have vibrant prayer lives...Christ followers experience spiritual growth...individuals examine Scripture accurately and faithfully...communities apply the Bible to their lives.<sup>67</sup>

It is unclear what Schrag means by “communities” in these statements. Does he mean the church? Does he mean Christian members of the community? Does he mean the community itself composed of Christians and with Christians rally around the arts? Schrag’s overall point is worth noting: the goal of cultivating artistry in the church is not absolute in itself. It has specific aims. In the LCCA, specific goals would include a better understanding of church fellowship among the people, a larger retention of hymn texts and melodies, natural translations (however free they might be) of Lutheran texts set to indigenous melodies, a greater understanding of the gospel in preference to focused attention on reaction to the gospel, and a greater use of visual arts

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<sup>65</sup> Schrag, 27-31.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, 31.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, 35-47.



in worship. No doubt, as a trained ethnodoxologist looks into the culture, he will find opportunities in the culture to further the goals of the church.

### **5.3 Selecting Effects, Contents, Genre, and Events**

In order to build up artistry within a given culture, the first step is to meet the community. The second step is to specify kingdom goals. The third step is to select effects, contents, genre, and events.

Once a community has identified a goal or goals that they want to work toward, it's time to figure out how their arts can help them get there. Each genre is particularly apt for communicating certain kinds of content and producing certain kinds of effects. So in step three we explain the process that you and a community can follow to choose the desired effects of new artistry, choose the content of new artistry, choose a genre that has the capacity to communicate the content and produce the desired effects, and imagine events that could include performance of the new works in the genre that would produce the effects in its experiencers.<sup>68</sup>

The content in this section calls for some commentary. When we're talking about achieving results in the kingdom of God, a confessional Lutheran uses the tools God has given us to do that: law and gospel. Lutherans communicate this law and gospel in artistry, and we leave the effects of it to God and the power of his word. That being said, let us focus on these helpful recommendations from Schrag.

“Choose the content of the new artistry.”<sup>69</sup> This is an opportunity not only to specify law and gospel in artistry, but to specify specific law and gospel. The following is an example of a train of thought from step one through this current point in step three: what sins does this community particularly struggle with and need help in combating Satan's attacks? In the LCCA, adultery is very common, and even regularly works its way into the clergy. Are root factors consistently showing themselves in this phenomenon? What satisfaction in these Christians' lives is not being met that they seek to be satisfied in a spouse that is not their own? What specific gospel content can combat this? Perhaps the personal, perfect union every Christian will have with his or her Savior in heaven serves best to combat this, placing every relationship in this light, looking for relationship satisfaction in heaven with Jesus, and on earth with Jesus. Is there a hymn text that teaches this specific gospel clearly that needs a new tune? Would

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<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, 54.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, 55.

commissioning a painting that specifically portrays this gospel content be a useful teaching tool? This last question brings us to the next part of step three.

“Choose a genre that has the capacity to communicate the content.”<sup>70</sup> “Every artistic genre has characteristics that affect of the messages it conveys...”<sup>71</sup> Schrag recommends making a list of all the artistic genres from “Take a First Glimpse at a Community’s Arts” in step one. “Would a new artistic work in this genre communicate the content we’ve chosen well? If not, why not? Remember that all artistic genres have characteristics that can be redeemed for God’s purposes, but that not all are appropriate at a given moment in a community’s life... Don’t force a genre into new uses in a community unless leaders involved see it as wise and you are certain that God wants it to happen right now.”<sup>72</sup>

Lastly in step three, “Imagine events that could include performance of new works in the genre...”<sup>73</sup> In this step, the researcher needs to think critically about the context for the specifically chosen genre. Some of the contexts Schrag lists are “worship services, Bible study, Sunday school, home group, outreach, weddings, funerals, baptisms, harvest celebrations, courting rituals, birthrights, rites of passage, teaching contexts, listening to an audio recording, watching a video recording, viewing a sculpture in a museum...”<sup>74</sup> In the 1992 LCCA workshop on revising the liturgy, the musicologist who came to present talked about the “pounding songs” of the African women. In “pounding songs,” African women got together and pounded maze, and they would sing songs to the beat of the pounding. The musicologist suggested incorporating this genre of music into the music of the liturgy, hopefully prompting the women to also sing these songs during this ritual. This is an excellent example of applying step three in a specific context.

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<sup>70</sup> Schrag, 55.

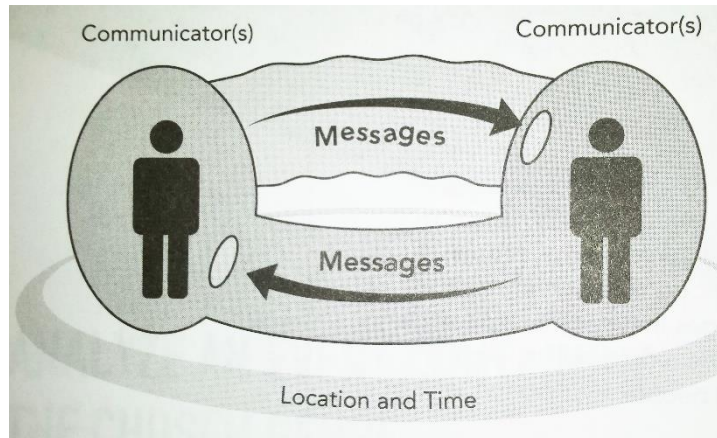
<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, 55-56.

<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*, 56.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.*, 56-57

The figure below sums up the content of step three “This figure illustrates how people interact by directing messages through various artistic genres to other communicators at particular places and times.”<sup>75</sup>



The tubes enclosing the people represent artistic genres. Note that some genres are more regular and predictable than others—these are depicted in the front with smooth lines. Others include more variability or improvisation, which we’ve shown with the curled edges. Messages are the thoughts or feelings that take form when mediated by a genre... Finally, you’ll see that communication happens in particular directions (indicated by the arrows), but is always eventually reciprocal... It’s this response that so often feeds back into the performance, resulting in more energy, pleasure, and creativity.<sup>76</sup>

This is perhaps a more pragmatic way of what Schrag means when he talks about a genre of artistry producing the desired results. When different forms of communication and communicators are involved, results are going to be different, but that doesn’t necessarily make them more predictable. That being said, the phenomena of communication Schrag is describing involving the communicators and the messages at specific locations and times is necessary to consider. It aids the researcher in choosing a specific genre to match a specific kingdom goal attended by a specific context.

In order to build up artistry within a specific culture, the researcher(s) meet a community and its arts, specify kingdom calls, select effects, content, genre, and events, and next—they analyze an event containing the chosen genre. The goals in this step are to “think more clearly about genres and events, and decide what analysis to do.”<sup>77</sup> Schrag gives some helpful

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<sup>75</sup> Schrag, 57.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, 60.

terminology in thinking about an artistic genre. “An *artistic genre* (which we often shortened to *genre* in this manual) is a community’s category of artistic communication characterized by a unique set of formal characteristics, performance practices, and social meanings. A *genre enactment* is an instantiation of a genre during an event.”<sup>78</sup> An example of a genre in the LCCA would be congregational singing. A genre enactment would be the specific congregational singing at any given worship service, whether that is the congregational singing on Christmas, Easter, or the first Sunday after Pentecost. Schrag gives some helpful principles to keep in mind concerning genres and genre enactments; “Events may contain enactments of more than one genre... Events are longer than enactments of a genre...enactments of genres may be found in more than one kind of event...many events entail strong expectations of what kinds of genres they can include... Genres and events are always changing.”<sup>79</sup>

#### **5.4 Analyze an Event Containing the Chosen Genre**

By far, Schrag dedicates the most space and amount of writing to step four. Step four is the most complicated as well, but when viewed in the perspective of the previous steps, its purpose becomes a little more clear. Basically, step one observed all the artistry happening with the given native culture. Step two set the goals for the artistry you are about to choose. Step three matched up specific artistry with specific goals. Step four takes that specific genre of artistry from step three and looks at it in extremely intricate detail, deciding its use in the worship life of the church based on either its use outside of the church, inside of the church, or both.

A short example may help the perspective. In observing the culture in Zambia, you notice that proverbs (not biblical) are a strong tradition among the people (step one). In setting a goal, you decide that the people need a better hook to get them engaged in the specific topic of the sermon for the day (step two). You decide that the telling of proverbs might be a good way to do this (step three). You decide to regularly use the statement of a proverb (the *genre*) at the beginning of the sermon (*genre enactment/event*) to get the people to think critically about the subject for the day (step four). What proverb do you use? How do you let the people clearly know you are using a proverb? Where do you tell the proverb? From the pulpit? From the middle of the people? Using a conversation with a single individual to grab the attention of the group? Does this fit with how the people are accustomed to a proverb being used? If it doesn’t grab the

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<sup>78</sup> Schrag, 60.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, 61.

people's attention, what is the most likely cause? Is it worth repeating? What steps do I need to repeat to answer these questions solidly? Step four walks the researcher through answering all of these questions.

Step four could be especially helpful for the LCCA. Even a surface glance at the Bantu culture shows that it is a culture rich with the arts. What forms of arts in their culture are not being used in worship; which arts are most suitable for worship? If a given art is suitable, how should it specifically be used? The following information about step four shows in intricate detail how to answer those questions and advance a greater use of culture specific arts in a given culture's worship life.

An outline will probably serve best to understand the organization and process of step four. Before looking at the outline, some vocabulary Schrag uses in this part of his book will be helpful. When Schrag refers to a specific *lens*, he is referring to one of the following: space, material, participant organization, shape of the event through time, performance features, content, and underlying symbolic systems. When Schrag refers to an *artistic domain*, he is referring to one of the following: music, dance, drama, oral verbal arts, and/or visual arts.

Step Four: Analyze an event [genre enactment] containing the chosen genre

- A. Describe the event and its genres as a whole as it relates to each lens.
  - a. **Space** is the location and physical characteristics of the area used.
    - i. **Basic description** of the lens
    - ii. **Research questions** to guide exploration of the event through each lens
    - iii. **Research activities** that are particularly relevant to answering the previous research questions
    - iv. **Artistic domain connections** highlight the important connections between each lens and arts domains
    - v. **Meaning connections** relate your findings to meanings, symbolism, and broader cultural themes.
  - b. **Materials** are all the tangible things associated with an event.
    - i. Basic description
    - ii. Research questions
    - iii. Research activities
    - iv. Artistic domain connections
    - v. Meaning connections
  - c. **Participant Organization** focuses on the people involved in the event and the ways they interact with each other through the time and space around them.
    - i. Basic description
    - ii. etc.

- d. **Shape of the event through time** is splitting the event into sequential segments in a hierarchical fashion. You could identify the time at which one segment ends and the next begins by noting significant changes in elements of the event as viewed through each of the other lenses. These changes are called the *markers*.
    - i. Basic description
    - ii. etc.
  - e. **Performance features** are observable, pattern characteristics of a performance that emerge from an event's unique combination of physical and social context and participants' actions.
    - i. Basic description
    - ii. etc.
  - f. **Content** is the subject matter or topic of an artistic event.
    - i. Basic description
    - ii. etc.
  - g. **Underlying symbolic systems:** Participants draw on all sorts of rules, expectations, grammatical structures, motivations, and experiences to decide what to do at any given moment of a performance.
- B. Explore [each of] the event's genre(s) through artistic domain categories [Any given event will feature various artistic domain categories]
- a. Music
    - i. Space
    - ii. Materials
    - iii. Participant organization
    - iv. Shape of the event through time
    - v. Performance features
    - vi. Content
    - vii. Underlying symbolic systems
  - b. Drama
    - i. Space
    - ii. Materials
    - iii. Participant organization
    - iv. Shape of the event through time
    - v. Performance features
    - vi. Content
    - vii. Underlying symbolic systems
  - c. Dance
    - i. Space
    - ii. etc.
  - d. Oral verbal arts
    - i. Space
    - ii. etc.
  - e. Visual arts
    - i. Space
    - ii. etc.
- C. Relate the events genre(s) to its broader cultural context

D. Explore how a Christian community relates artistically to its broader church and cultural context.<sup>80</sup>

Now that we have looked at the general outline of step four, let's take a closer look at the last two parts of it which relate the event genre to its broader cultural context and explore how a Christian community relates artistically to its broader church and cultural context.

We've chosen some categories of cultural investigation that have helped other people gain insights into the workings of artistic activity. Each topic consists of the following sections: the central question or questions that should guide your investigation of the topic; and a discussion of the aspects of the topic that have proven to be relevant for others, with research activities to get you started.<sup>81</sup>

The first topic Schrag explores is artists. The questions he asks include "Who are the artists related to this kind of event... How do artists in this genre relate to their community... How do people become artists in this genre?"<sup>82</sup> Interviewing the artists, creating a biographical study of an artist's life, and interviewing knowledgeable members of the community who know the history of a specific genre in which an artist works: Schrag recommends these steps to answer the "artist questions" he proposes.

In relating the event genre to its broader cultural context, the next topic to explore is creativity. "Who are the creators of new works? How do new examples of this form come into being? What does 'new' mean in this art form? Where do the components of creativity for this genre live?"<sup>83</sup> Commissioning a new work in the specific genre is key to answering these questions. The researcher should ask the artist specific questions during the whole creative process, seeking to discover principles, wisdom, or proverbs that guide their creativity, as well as seeing how the new piece of art compares to previous pieces in the genre. How is it similar? How is it different?

In relating the event genre to its broader cultural context, the next topics to explore are language, as well as transmission and change. "What language, dialect, and register are appropriate for this form?... What status and identity are associated with each language choice?"<sup>84</sup> Key to understanding this specific form of artistry is understanding its transmission and change. How did the artist learn or inherit his artistic skills? Has this form changed at all

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<sup>80</sup> Schrag, 67-158: the outline follows the headings as they progress in this material.

<sup>81</sup> Schrag, 159.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, 160-161.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*, 162-163.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, 165.

over time? Especially research any media that contains audio or visual recordings of the specific art form.

In relating the event genre to its broader cultural context, the next topic is cultural dynamism. “Cultural dynamism happens when artists masterfully use the most malleable elements of their arts to invigorate the most stable.”<sup>85</sup> *Malleable artistic elements* are “art forms that occur with less predictability and are more loosely organized.”<sup>86</sup> Opposite of malleable artistic elements are *stable artistic elements* which are aspects of the art form that occur more regularly with less variability and tight organization. In short, this is living artistry. In Western music, living artistry can be a different interpretation in the performance of a Bach cantata. Someone not familiar with Western music might listen to two different interpretations and not think this is living artistry at all because they see no difference. Recognizing the subtleties of the artistry is highly important because it helps the researcher identify where the artistry is living, breathing, growing, changing, and influenced by its malleable artistic elements.

In relating the event genre to its broader cultural context, the next topic is identity and power. “What kinds of people identify with this form and what characterizes their identification... How does this form relate to social stratification, gender, or other distinct cultures that relate to it?”<sup>87</sup> These questions are similar to “Exploring the Surrounding Community and Culture” in step one. Again, Schrag is to the point in why this matters when seeking to build up worship in a specific culture.

We express who we are or who we want to be by choosing what, how, and where to communicate artistically. This means that every dance step, song, story, proverb, hairstyle, piece of jewelry, and woven cloth is an act of identity affirmation. These affirmations relate to social power structures in different ways, which can cause controversy. It is important, then, to know how an art form fits into its local and wider communities, so they can make informed decisions in expanding the kingdom of God.<sup>88</sup>

In relating the event genre to its broader cultural context, last topics to explore are aesthetics and evaluation, time, emotions, subject matter, community values, and community investment. In the aesthetics and evaluation, it is important to remember that “there is no formal

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<sup>85</sup> *ibid.*, 166.

<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, 167.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*



characteristic or artistic communication that is intrinsically pleasing, beautiful, or good,”<sup>89</sup> but it is important “to find out how the community you’re working with approaches correction and evaluation in general.”<sup>90</sup> In evaluating time, Schrag is referring to the amount of time the event occupies in all of its completeness (hour, day, month, year, location), and he is also referring to the use of time within an event, such as the use of rhythm. Regarding subject matter: “Sometimes artistic communication reveals information about subjects available almost nowhere else... Other times, it communicates the values of the community in memorable form... The references of textual content may be metaphorical or cryptic, so your first understanding may not be the only one, or the deepest.”<sup>91</sup> Community values and investment are related to the issue of identity and power in that it is a way of digging deeper into the culture and of the meaning of a specific form of artistry.

The last part of step four is to explore how a Christian community relates artistically to its broader church and cultural context. Because the whole purpose of step four is to actively integrate artistry into the worship life of the church, this last step is helpful in evaluating the artistry a church is seeking to integrate. This last part of step four is closely related to step two—Specify Kingdom Goals. This step also provides a sounding board off of which to bounce further ideas of incorporating additional forms of artistry into a Christian community. Schrag also provides what he calls the “Worship Wheel” which can be useful in a church’s perspective of its artistry as a whole.

The “Worship Wheel” exercise helps churches see a broader range of worshipful activities in their lives that can be animated by integrating their local arts. We have divided these activities into four categories: Arts for the Lord; Arts for self; Arts for others; and Arts for

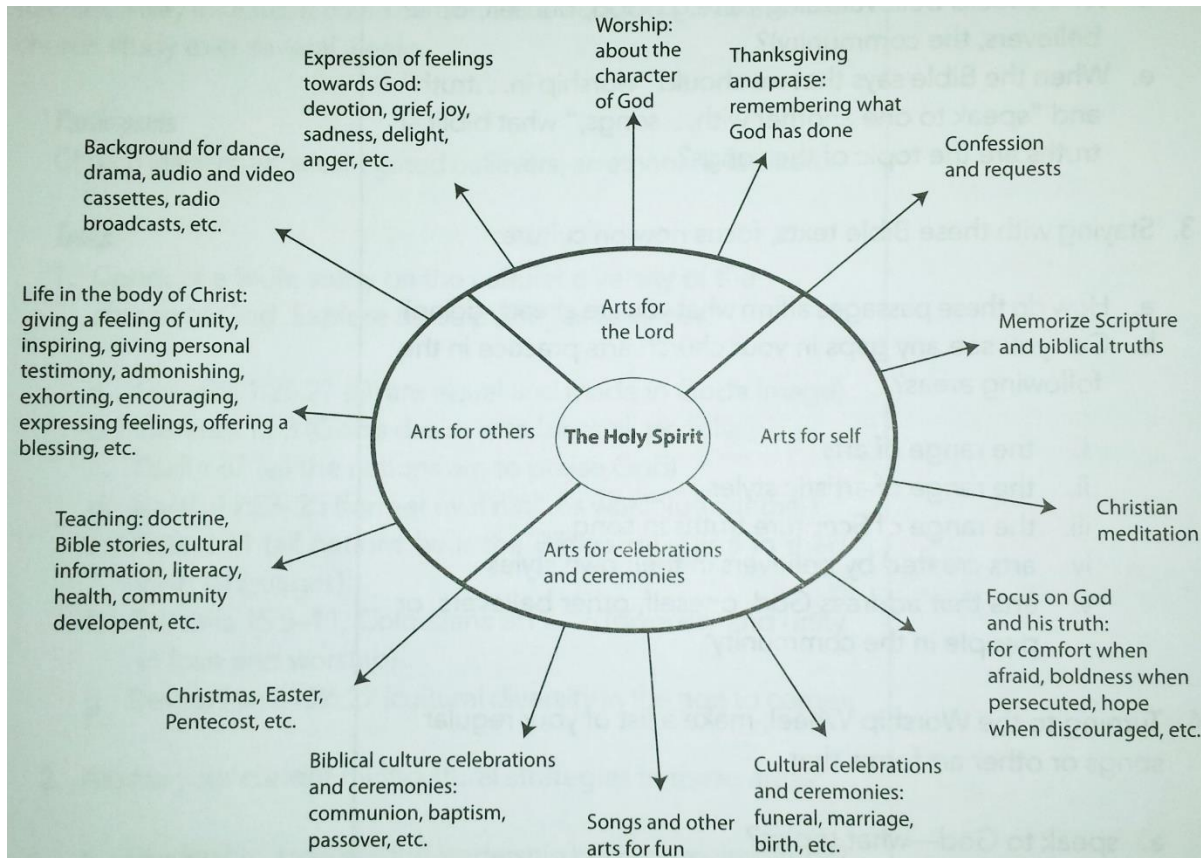
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<sup>89</sup> Schrag, 168.

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *ibid.*, 170.

celebrations and ceremonies. Note that the Holy Spirit needs to animate every action, and that we have provided some examples in each category.<sup>92</sup>



All these aspects of step four show why an ethnomusicologist/ethnodoxologist is essential to world mission work, especially the LCCA. Knowing the various artistic domains and lenses requires specific training that has not been present in the LCCA. In addition to this, the leadership in the LCCA has always been more than occupied in helping the rapid growth of the church body to continue. The leadership has not been able to allocate the manpower to do a systematic study of the arts in the Bantu cultures, but it is now a priority. Training a national to do this is the best possible scenario because of the relationships the ethnodoxologist builds with all kinds of different artists inside and outside the church body. A national is also best placed to understand the breath and the life these various arts take in their social and economic context. Thus, he is best placed to develop a specific, realistic strategy to incorporate specific arts into the worship life of the congregations.

<sup>92</sup> Schrag, 181.

## 5.5 Sparking Creativity

In order to build up artistry within a specific culture, the researcher(s) meet a community and its arts, specify kingdom goals, select effects, content, genre, and events, they analyze an event containing the chosen genre, and now they spark creativity. In sparking creativity, first think about what sparking activity is. “A sparking activity is anything anybody does that results in the creation of new artistry.” It can be a formal request from the church, and it can be an informal request to a friend. It is a welcoming atmosphere in the church where the leadership takes new artistic creativity seriously and promises to evaluate it in an objective way like any other piece of artistry. The content in step four certainly provides the church with a manner in which to conduct this, and Schrag will give even more specific content in this matter in step six.

In sparking creativity, prepare to draw on familiar methods of composition, and think carefully about the meristem. This paper explored the various methods of composition present in a culture both in step one, and in step 4C (relating the events genre to its broader cultural context). Think carefully about the *meristem*. “A meristem is the region in a plant in which new cells are created—the growth point. Likewise, the growth point in artistic production usually consists of one or a few key people from whose mind and body the art actually emerges.”<sup>93</sup> Considering the meristem certainly relates to thinking about what a sparking activity is, only this part of step five focuses more on the “who” than the “what” of artistry and creativity in artistry. It can be challenging to find a Christian who is an experienced composer in the specific artistic genre. The church might need to think critically about commissioning a non-Christian. In Western culture, different groups of Christians commission John Rutter very regularly, and his works have proclaimed the gospel from a man who doesn’t even believe in it. The Christian church has always been free like the Israelites exiting Egypt to “plunder the Egyptians”— take the best from the world around them. Because building up artistry within a Christian community is essential to the living artistry within a church, commissioning a non-Christian artist certainly should not be the default option, but it is an option.

As previously mentioned, maintaining an environment in the church where artistry is encouraged is essential. Schrag gives specific suggestions to accomplish this: commissioning, workshops, showcase events such as a festival or competition, mentoring, apprenticeship, creators’ clubs (artists’ formal associations, clubs, and fellowships to encourage each other,

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<sup>93</sup> Schrag, 194.

critique each other's' work, share resources and ideas, perform, and collaborate on products) and publications. Concerning publications, it is interesting that certain choirs in the LCCA will record their music. To what extent these recordings are distributed is not certain.

### **5.6 Improving New Works**

In order to build up artistry within a specific culture, step six is to improve new works. “Follow comforting guidelines for deciding what’s good and bad... Design an evaluative process using a conceptual approach... Design a recurring cycle of evaluation... Evaluate Scripture infused arts.”<sup>94</sup> Schrag advocates using a conceptual approach working with local social structures, defining—as a group—the criteria for deciding how good a work is and how it can be improved, identifying the elements and purpose of an artistic communication event, identifying the people who provide a focal point in reference for the discussion, and working together to affirm the aspects of the creation that went well while encouraging the creators to do something even better based on the Evaluation. This would be one of the lasting contributions even a temporary ethnodoxologist would make to the LCCA; a collaborative system of constructive criticism, and evaluation for the use of any given art form in worship. This especially would help channel the highly creative energies of the different choirs in the LCCA. They need guidance not only in their choice of music in worship, but they also need more careful guidance toward serving the congregation with their music, and they need more guidance away from merely showcasing their music to the congregation. Dr. Wendland comments, “They [the choirs] sing well, but the problem is to try and get them to be so that the people know [the hymns] and can sing well. You don’t want to discourage the choirs because there are so many of them in so many involved in the service.”<sup>95</sup>

### **5.7 Integrating and Celebrating for Continuity**

In order to build up artistry within a specific culture, the last step is to integrate and celebrate for continuity. Schrag makes a special appeal:

Encourage continuity in arts that are most fragile. Diversity and fragility are closely connected. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) states that nearly 2500 of the world’s approximately 7000 languages are in one of five levels of endangerment: unsafe, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically

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<sup>94</sup> *ibid.*, 241.

<sup>95</sup> Wendland.

endangered, and extinct. Other aspects of these communities—including artistic forms of communication— normally experienced similar fragility.<sup>96</sup>

Schrag gives eight possible phases in which an artistry lives: international (used across the world), national or regional (lives beyond its home community), vigorous (“This is the pivotal level for artistic vitality. In this level, oral transmission and largely traditional contexts of education are intact and functioning. People have sufficient opportunities for performance, and young people are learning by observation, participation, and appropriate educational contexts. An art can exist comfortably at this level without needing to move higher”<sup>97</sup>), threatened (the art is still being performed but has noticeable changes and diminishing performance contexts), locked (the art is known by more people than just the grandparent generation, but is not integrated into everyday life of the community, and the performance repertoire is fixed), shifting (the grandparent generation is proficient in the art, but very few younger people are), dormant (no longer performed but has recordings and ethnographic descriptions), and extinct (no longer performed with no existing documentation). “The closer it is to state eight (extinct), the more it would require to spark creativity.”<sup>98</sup> Diagnosing the current phase of an artistry not only helps in considering its feasibility as artistry in worship, but it helps identify the “where” and “who” of the artistry.

In addition to this, it is also the church’s privilege to encourage continuity in arts that are most likely to flourish. To achieve this sustainability in our history, four conditions of social dynamics are integral: function, acquisition, motivation, and environment. Though these things are all related to content this paper has discussed, maintaining their continuing presence in the middle of all the steps outlined in this paper—and the many, many more outlined in Schrag’s book—is essential:

*Function* concerns solidifying or creating social uses for artistic activity. The more positive uses an art form has, the higher status it enjoys... *Acquisition* consists of the way that the skills, competencies, and the knowledge associated with an artform are passed on to others. Without acquisition, no one knew will ever learn to create in the form, and it will die.... *Motivation* determines why people choose to use certain parts for social functions... *Environment* affects how the surrounding society supports the use of an art form or not.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Schrag, 252.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*, 259.

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Schrag, 257.

The LCCA has an especially neat opportunity to preserve certain aspects of their cultural heritage in their worship life. As Western music continues to pervade more of Christian worship in Africa, the LCCA has an opportunity to preserve the music of the Bantu people in the worship life of its congregations.

## **6. Conclusion**

The second part of this paper serves only as an introduction to the much, much more extensive content outlined in Schrag's helpful book: "Creating local arts together." He is extremely thorough in each part of the process. Much of the content in both "Worship and Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook," and "Creating Local Arts Together" is integrated into the *Master of Global Arts* degree at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. Its content also finds its way into the *Master of Arts in Ethnomusicology* from Liberty University, as well as in the *Brehm Emphasis* at Fuller Theological Seminary.

The history of worship in the LCCA shows a sensitivity on the part of the missionaries and leadership in the church body to let the people worship according to the artistry in their own culture. The leadership in the LCCA continues to show this and desires to make more progress in this. The field of ethnodoxology has many resources to fill this need. It is a need. How should we worship Jesus? Christians have been worshiping Jesus in hundreds and thousands of ways for thousands of years that are impossible to fully document. In each time and in each way, a specific culture was worshiping Jesus. How should these different cultures worship Jesus? Let cultures stand side-by-side and ask this question together, building each other up in the infinite amount of ways to worship our Savior.

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