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The Church Music, Transition and Reforms in the  
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## The Church Music, Transition and Reforms in the Ghanaian Christian Church

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The discourse examines the origin of Church music, its transition and reforms in the Christian church in Ghana in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The paper explores the seeming connection and embodiment of elements of Judaism as well as features characterized by the early Patriarchal Church Music policy. It also seeks to unravel the forgotten process that unpins the transition characterized by these musical reforms in the church in Ghana.

**Methodology:** To do this, the paper engaged in a desk study review of the existing empirical literature on the origin of church music and specifically, the various transitional periods between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries.

**Findings:** It became evident from the study that the church in Ghana, just like in many other African nations broke the imposing dictatorship of Patriarchal Church Music policy giving birth to new movements in church music reforms. This major breakthrough was achieved through the indigenization activities such as the integration of traditional features and acceptance of secular music into the church by the locally formed independent churches.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice:** The discourse, therefore, concludes that the church in Ghana made considerable strive with heavy transformation in gaining musical autonomy despite the intensity of resistance. However, ironically the Ghanaian church music scene remains the embodiment of converging cultures; partly Western, partly Ghanaian. This must be a major concern for further study.

**Keywords:** *Transition, Embodiment, Patriarchal, Reform, Synagogues.*

## INTRODUCTION

Music is said to be living and central to many worship activities worldwide, including in Ghana. A famous theologian of the 20th Century, Ralph Martin is believed to have said that the Christian church was born in song (Heavenor, 1968). Smith (1984) in an attempt to describe the musical culture concerning the early Christian church noted that the early church was a singing church - where a song was not an accompaniment to worship, but worship itself - a means of access to the One who “dwells in the praises”. The origin of church music in Ghana can be traced as far back as the early contact with the Europeans who brought trade to Ghana under the cover of Christianity.

According to history, the early Christian church experienced a musical dilemma. Even though the music was experienced in both temples and Synagogues, the church perceived spectacles featuring lavish choral singing, instrumental music and dancing as evil and classified as lust-provoking drama (Esteireiro, 2014). Adedeji (2001:48), in his analysis of the characteristics of what is term ‘church music’ is ‘music by the church and for the church’ (see also Eniolawun, 2020:2) and hence ‘Christian music’ is a generic term that embodied all types of music with Christian texts in and outside the church. However, Eniolawun explains that the term is ‘inexhaustible in its interpretations’. In an attempt to interrogate the concept of gospel highlife in Ghana and Nigeria, Emielu and Donkor (2019: 30) refer to various terminologies associated with the music in the church as ‘church music’, ‘Christian music’ and ‘gospel music’. They argue that the associated terms are synonymous, and have contextual elucidation.

Additionally, Grudem postulates that the comprehension of the term “church music” is more revealing in its theological context. Theologically, as hypothesized by Grudem, “church music” has four major mandates: as a ministry to God through worship, ministry to believers through nurture, and ministry to the world through evangelism and mercy. In his assertion, whichever way music is performed in the church (either sung or played) must satisfy the mandate of the church in the form of ministry, worship, evangelism, and mercy (Grudem, 1994: 867-868). Russell (1990) quite agrees with Grudem in conceptualizing three indispensable drives for Christian worship which use music as a propelling force as glorifying God; inspiring, uplifting and transforming the worshiper; and drawing visitors closer to an encounter with Jesus Christ, the foundation of Christianity. Eniolawun (2020), drawing attention to critical assertions made by Estrella (n.d), reveals that “Church music” is a kind of religious music performed during Christian liturgical services. Again, it is a time-tested phenomenon that also includes works performed outside the church (see also Emielu & Donkor, 2019:41). Attesting to Grudem’s concept, Estrella concludes that Church music is liturgical in a phenomenon and is performed as worship expression of worshippers. In view of the above assertions, one can deductively infer that “church music” has multiple dimensions and its appreciation and performance depend on the context; whether inside or outside the church. However, for any

music to assume the accolade of “church music”, the content must reflect the beliefs and practices of the church.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

The essence of this paper is to find out the unrevealed process that underpins church musical reforms through the various transitions in the Ghanaian Christian Church and subsequently document the findings.

### **Research Objectives**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the origin of church music in Ghana?
2. What was the nature of church music reforms in Ghana between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries?
3. What were the features of church music reform transitions in the Ghanaian Christian church between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries?

### **Methodology**

The research engaged qualitative design through the lens of a desk study review of the existing empirical literature to explore the origin of church music, reforms and the features that characterized various transitional periods between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The desk study approach refers to secondary data that is devoid of fieldwork. The design gives optimum opportunity to collect and review existing data and resources. The desk study review was chosen because of its effective conduct, quick result and manageable economy.

### **The Early Patriarchal Church Music and Policy**

A brief historical analysis of the early church makes a critical reference to the Jesus of Nazareth (Christ). He was a Jew. The church in the early days and present is said to be mandated to proselytize as enshrined in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). In the quest of fulfilling this charge, the apostles and disciples (followers of Jesus Christ) across continents and nations met strong persecutions. According to Chow (2017), in the year 313, Emperor Constantine I issued the Edict of Milan as a way of legalizing Christianity and subsequently in the year 392, Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the official religion at the expense of others except for Judaism in all Roman jurisdictions. These Roman-controlled areas also called territories were referred to as dioceses and local churches under the leadership of the Patriarchs in Rome and Bishops and Archbishops respectively. The analogous existence of Judaism as the oldest religion and Christianity reflects a clear synchronization of some musical elements of Judaism in Christianity such as the chanting of Scriptures as seen in the singing of psalms (poems of praise from the Hebrew Book of Psalms). The syncretic phenomenon that characterized the early

church was the reason for the musical forms of the early Christian worship being Jewish in nature. Melodic principles used for singing psalms were derived from Jewish cantillation. This practice of singing psalms formed the central element of the early church (Smith, 1984).

### ***The policy of inspired word vs pagan practice***

In one of his theses, Marcelino D'Ambrosio indicated that in the early church were scholars and writers referred to as Church Fathers. These church fathers in their inspirations identified the power of music as inspiring divine thoughts and the ability to influence the character of listeners. They strongly believed that it was unbiblical to use music for pleasure instead; music should be used as a means to access the supreme deity (God) hence the strong opposition to listening to music for pleasure. The Church fathers, therefore, encouraged music for sacred purposes. St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (345-430) is said to have feared music's ability to arouse strong feelings. As stated in his confession, feeling strongly about the subject of Psalms because of musical performance was a good thing. He is believed to have said that it is sinful to be moved more by the song than what was sung (Ariana, 2006). The church fathers prohibited instrumental music because they believed that it lacks words and could not convey Christian teachings. One other reason for the dislike and prohibition of instrumental music was the fear of its ability to evoke pagan practices such as spectacles involving dancing.

Elesha Coffman (2008) in expressing views on the state of music integration in the early church noted that the multiple backgrounds from which Christianity evolved such as Greek, Roman, Egyptian and many others, negative connotations were ascribed to the use of instrumental music and dancing. The process of integration of instrumental music is therefore perceived as debauchery. To emphasize this *The Story of Christian Music* written by Andrew Wilson-Dickson (2003) reveals:

*..in blowing on the tibia (pipe) they puff out their cheeks...they lead obscene songs... they raise a great din with the clapping of scabella (a type of foot percussion); under the influence of which a multitude of other lascivious souls abandon themselves to bizarre movements of the body (p. 28).*

### ***The policy of sacred vs theatrical art***

The concept of “sacred” verse “secular” music engages a fashionable discourse in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Historically, records indicate that Pope Pius X set criteria by which any music to be admitted into the liturgy subsequently referred to as “sacred art”. This perception underpins the fact that the church wanted a clear demarcation between the “sacred art” and the “theatrical and profane art”. It was commonly believed that the Pope’s concern was a proper effort in restricting the musical influences of opera that were making waves in the Catholic liturgy by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Again, the church’s concept of sacred music presages music free from all profanity in context and performance. According to the Catholic church, certain styles are forbidden while



vocal music was more conceived as proper, acceptable and perceived as the supreme model for the church's liturgy (Esteireiro, 2014).

Equally, as the pagan religions gave such prominence to women, the early church also forbade women from singing in choirs and instituted the 'castrati', young castrated boys replacing women in the choirs - a practice that continued in Europe until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. This situation persisted in the Catholic Church until Martin Luther's Protestantism broke the chain for congregational singing- men and women. Indisputably, the greatest single change that occurred in the history of Christianity, and in relation to liturgical worship and music, came with the Protestant Reformation.

### **Transition in the Patriarchal Music Policy**

The proselytization of the 'heathen nations' as purported by the early missionaries and experienced in the Americas and Sub-Saharan Africa for that matter Ghana is believed to have disguised apparel. History postulates that the initial intention of the Europeans in the Gold Coast and many other sub-Sahara African countries were to trade in gold, ivory and pepper by the 1500s. Nmah (2010: 490) notes:

*The missionaries were, however, part of a larger programme of European colonization of Africa. Their activities cannot be properly appraised unless seen in the light of their connection with the European trader, diplomat and settler.*

The change of trade direction occurred as a result of the need for manpower to feed the plantations in the New Found World. Many indigenes of the then Gold Coast, as well as other nations in sub-Saharan Africa, were captured as slaves to the West Indies and America. According to Richard Reddie cited by Jagessar (2007), religion became a driving force to subject the African slaves to compliance. Christianity, therefore, came to Ghana (then Gold Coast) through the castles. The slave masters-built castles in Cape Coast and Elmina as well as other coastal towns in the then Gold Coast. These castles contained chapel compartments sometimes ironically direct above the slave dungeons. It was believed that churches located in the castles were officiated by the clergy initially responsible for the welfare of the Europeans within the castle.

### ***Ghanaian early church music scene***

Proselytization began with the clergymen baptizing the indigenes envisioned for the mission of civilization (Pope-Hennessy, 1968). The inculturation of the church in Ghana and its musical tradition was not different from the patriarchal tradition in the West. The early converts were forbidden to sing songs in the vernacular. Indigenous musical instruments were prohibited as well as the wearing of local costumes or attire to the church. Music, therefore, was dominantly Western and hymnody. Amuah (2018:90) states:

*On a successful attempt to start the church, singing remained a powerful means of spreading Methodism in Ghana, and most of the songs were hymns of the British Methodists. Thus, the Methodist Mission accomplished its evangelizing work through the hymns that the congregation sang.*

The early missionaries perceived indigenous Ghanaian instruments as a fetish. The early converts were isolated from their families into established settlements referred to as “Missions”. Among the Ewe ethnic group, these settlements were known as “Kpodzi”. The community musical entertainment and all traditional drumming and dancing were banned in the said settlements. A typical intriguing record of one of the early converts to the Basel Mission attests to the rejection of the culture into which the early church was born. To corroborate the aforementioned, Miescher’s account attests that the biography of John Yaw Atta (a Basel Mission convert and royal) read at Abetifi Kwawu in 1915 revealed that when he was offered a position of the *Ɔmanhene* by his relatives, Miescher indicates:

*Atta confronted the kingmakers with a list of conditions, among them his insistence that he lives in Christian Quarters and not marry any stool wives. He demanded that all "subjects" cease making libations and doing other rituals and instead attend church (Miescher, 2007: p. 258).*

All that one could hear and enjoy as a form of music were the tolling of the church bells, the singing of the Western hymns and in rare cases the melodies from the pianos. This assertion was further elaborated by Ocran (2019: p. 33) when he writes: “Historically, Christian Churches in the 19th century and 20th century often opposed certain types of dances. C.F.W. Walther and other Lutherans in America for example, prohibited dancing that included close embrace, suggestive gestures and acts, and accompanying music that tended to arouse passions”. These records have expounded the stand of the church fathers which trickled down the Ghanaian early Christian church musical culture over centuries and remains one major consideration for any apparent reforms.

### **The Church Musical Reforms in Ghana**

Several reasons accounted for the reforms in church music tradition in Ghana. Nmah (2010) vividly catalogues myriads of reasons underpinning and precipitating this phenomenon as almost the same as general reasons for the church reform in West Africa. He states: “The attitudes of the missionary enterprise towards the basics to certain time-honoured institutions such as family unit, family land, polygamous economy, the lineages, traditional religion, the ancestor cult, the magical world-view, divination and the like was deplorable. The widespread missionary disparagement of tribal religion is a further case in point” (p. 484-485).

In the 1880s, the European trade revolution hit the shores of Africa leading to the ‘Scramble for Africa’. The then indirect rule allowed the European masters to operate directly

through the chiefs without the trained middlemen. This happened after the frequent death of Europeans in West Africa as a result of the lack of anti-malaria drugs. Ironically, Ghana, the then Gold Coast together with some other sub-Saharan African countries was referred to as the “Whiteman’s grave” due to several deaths of Europeans recorded (Öberg and Rönnbäck, 2016). By 1887, an anti-malaria drug (Quinine) was developed from Quinine tree plantations hence the paradigm shift in trade operational direction. The local commissioners (the elites) for that matter the middlemen lost their job and became rejected. A source from U. S. Library of Congress states the following:

*Indirect rule tended to preserve traditional forms and sources of power, however, and it failed to provide meaningful opportunities for the growing number of educated young men anxious to find a niche in their country's development. Other groups were dissatisfied because there was not sufficient cooperation between the councils and the central government and because some felt that the local authorities were too dominated by the British district commissioners.*

This led to both the rise of early West African nationalism amongst the local Christened elites and reform movements in the church (formation of Independent African Churches) and in church music in Ghana (I.e., Vernacularisation of Hymns). This paper took a keen interest in looking at the various stages of these revolutionary reforms in the church and its musical tradition.

### ***First Movement***

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, the rejected elite middlemen broke away from the European churches to form independent churches and movements such as the Native Baptist Church and National African Church. According to Nmah “In Ghana, the first secession occurred over a century ago in 1862 near Cape Coast, when a small group among the Fanti tribe seceded from the Wesleyan Methodist Mission to form the short-lived Methodist society. Other separatist churches include the Church of the Twelve Apostles founded by Prophet Harris’s disciple John Nackaba; the large Army of the Cross of Christ Church (1922) and in 1939 Prophet Wovenu’s Apostolic Revelation Society, a body with 60,000 active members mostly from the Ewe tribe” (Nmah, 2010: p. 483). The first movement of the reform was characterized by the Africanization of church music in the context of Choral and Art music. This phase of church music was tested with the indigenization of hymns in vernacular. In his discourse on the changes in the music of the Methodist liturgy, Ocran indicates:

*Notwithstanding the factors responsible for the change in the music of the Methodist liturgy, one can moreover mention the western missionaries’ influence on the African music, the emergence of vernacular liturgy, the introduction of formal education and the use of computer technology in the Christian churches.*



*While 'change' is a persisting factor, not everything changes completely. Most of the time, elements of the past are always carried into the present and future (Ocran, 2019; p. 32).*

The system at the time experienced nationalistic agenda which was mirrored through Church Music. However, *Ebibi-Ndwom* the oldest vernacular songs were devoid of political undertone. They were not harmonized in the Western mode but sung in Akan style in parallel thirds (Collins, 1996).

Additionally, the death of the Western priests of malaria during the early and middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century allowed local Fanti Christians to adapt and use some of their traditional music for church services. The first movement of the reform provided a fertile ground for the formation of some local popular music types. However, this was not achieved without resistance from the Western missionaries. The church frowned on some elements that involved communal dance by males and females of newly formed popular music. The acceptance of any local popular music in the church was based on the fact that their instrumentations were ultimately Western. Again, the dance elements of popular music (like highlife) were at first not countenanced.

According to Collins (1996), in vernacularizing the Western hymns the pioneers fused Western idioms with local languages. He indicated that the teething problem faced in the process was the tonal expression in vernacular with Western harmonies. This phenomenon did not only happen in churches in Ghana but also in other sub-Saharan African nations such as Nigeria shared common features of the musical reforms. Notable among the pioneers and nationalists of this movement were Ephraim Emu, Pappoe Thompson and J.H.K. Nketia.

### ***Second Movement***

In the 1920s, there was another revolution occurring within the church and its musical tradition. This was the proliferation of Independent, Apostolic and Spiritual churches formed by the common people like urban migrants usually farmers. Some of these new churches integrated traditional features like polygamy into their doctrinal beliefs. They incorporated spirit possession, exorcism, drumming and dancing which was denied by the first separatist churches (Collins, 2004). In these low-class spiritual churches, the then-perceived pagan/secular drums and percussion were permitted and the church saw a great change in terms of the Africanization of worship.

The period recorded the emergence of Churches like the Church of the Twelve Apostles, Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC) and the Ethiopian Zion Church. They were referred to as Apostolic or Spiritual and later Pentecostal churches. It was in these types of churches that High Life music trickled into church worship. The early churches also used Brass band music even in the early 1900 but they simply could not prevent their congregation from using these

instruments for playing secular highlife and *adaha*, popular dance music. Collins (2004), reiterates that the Ghanaian churches only really began using brass band music again in the 1950s. He writes”

*While the spiritual churches began to utilize local dance and popular music from the 1940s, commercial popular entertainment also continued to be influenced by religious music – not only in the instrumental and technical aspects mentioned earlier but also in the lyrics of Highlife songs and texts of concerts plays (p. 411).*

### **Third Movement**

Another wave of change happened well after independence in the church in Ghana. When the church music began to go ‘gospel music’ form and adopted the dance mode both inside and outside of the church. The musical types that had previously been considered sinful seemed booming in the church. In the 1970s and 80s, Ghana was facing military coups and economic collapse and many local popular artists and music found refuge in the local churches. Incidentally, a similar process of economic recession resulting in popular music moving into the black churches also occurred in the United States in the 1930s due to the ‘Great Depression.

The phenomenon brought about the loss of livelihood and many Jazz and Blues musicians had to seek refuge for survival under the church. Musicians like Thomas Dorsey and Mahalia Jackson changed the lyrics of Blues into biblical texts to be accepted into the church and make a living. This led to the rise of danceable African American ‘hot gospel’ that in the 1960s found its way to Ghana and other parts of Africa which influenced the local gospel music of their separatist churches. Similarly, like the Great Depression in America, in the 1970s, Ghana experienced a series of military uprisings which brought great destruction to the music industry. A great number of musicians became unemployed and others left the country. The musician, Jewel Ackah for instance entered the church and like many other musicians set up gospel bands and recording studios since the church was free from income tax as well as import duties.

The first recognized Ghanaian Gospel Band, Joyful Way Inc. was formed in Cape Coast as a result of inspiration drawn from Black American musicians that visited Cape Coast University. Popular music, therefore, entered the Ghanaian Christian church in the fashion of Black American Gospel music that itself was influenced by the emergence of secular ‘soul music’ of the 1960 whose musicians, like James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Dionne Warwick and others had been trained in the American black churches. Likewise, not only American ‘hot gospel’ but also soul music (non-religious music) influenced Ghanaian gospel music (Collins, 2004). Collins states: “In both the American hot-gospel and Ghanaian Gospel-Highlife cases, the black churches provided an avenue for professional female performers and recording artists.

Indeed, in Ghana, it would be true to say that local gospel music singing is now dominated by women” (p. 420).

The third generation of the reforms was characterized by negotiation between the church and the secular dance band musicians, although there was a recontextualization of secular lyrics to express a sacred message. In other words, popular dance song was ‘anointed’ to be accepted in the church. The musical reforms that came with the church’s acceptance of popular dance music have helped in the training and provision of job opportunities for local musicians. Therefore, today the local Ghanaian Christian church draws on popular music and much of the country’s popular music operates within the church. The recontextualization of secular music was to help the church to recover economic strength and for the musicians to make survival on the other hand. Corroborating the aforementioned, Emielu and Takyi-Donkor state:

*With the massive movement of highlife into church music during the period of the economic crisis in Ghana, incorporating highlife into church music otherwise intended for a congregation of various social classes, highlife music lost its signature as a music of a particular social class (namely, the middle class) (2019:36).*

This process brought about the explosion of gospel music in both native Africa including Ghana and the African Diaspora in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was attested to when Zosim (2020) stated:

*Of particular importance in this style, a conglomerate is a pop music, which, through its pronounced entertainment focus, until recently, was of little use to accompany the service. Nevertheless, today, pop music, if not a leader among musical styles, is very significant among the possible stylistic options for the musical filling of Christian worship. The style of pop music gained particular importance in the Protestant denomination; however, other branches of Christianity today use it more and more often, trying to speak a musical language that is understandable to our contemporaries (p. 228).*

The dichotomy of “sacred” and “secular” by the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries began to dwindle and assumed a hair strand. Emielu and Takyi-Donkor in their discourse made reference to Barber (1987:5-6) describing the “secular” and the “sacred” in multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious native Africa such as Ghana and Nigeria as “fugitive categories, characterized by [their] all-inclusiveness and infinite generic elasticity”. Collins also expresses the thin-line paradigm between the “secular” and “sacred” by stating that in modern Ghana, whoever wants to enjoy popular dance music will find comfort in the bosom of church services where “the local churches have reclaimed the cathartic release of communal dance found in traditional African worship” (Collins, 2004:420).

## **Conclusion**

The seemingly forgotten part of Church music in Ghana is the process that underpins the various movements within the reforms. Early church music experienced in Ghana came through the Western Missionaries. In the early days of the church, the music culture then was purely an imposition of Western styles with its strict melodic and harmonic structures. Instrumental music was regarded as an abomination and dancing was the highest crime in the church. Western instruments gained prominence within the confines of the church and became the preserve of the elites. The musical reforms that engulfed the churches across West Africa including Ghana in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries could be categorized into three reform movements. Each of the movements experienced a unique transformational factor and characteristics distinctively. The major reason that accounts for the success of the reform was the 'indirect rule'.

The first kind of these movements saw the Ghanaian Christian convert (abandoned elites during the European trade revolution) form native independent churches and subsequently initiated indigenization or vernacularizing of the Western hymns. The Ghanaian church musicians experimented with local choral and art music free from Western harmonies but a fusion of Western idioms vehicle in local languages and sung in the mode of parallel thirds. The second part of the movement under the reforms evolved out of the migration of common people (particularly farmers) to urban settlements coupled with the formation of further Separatist churches such as the Apostolic, Spiritual and Pentecostal churches. The period remarkably integrated traditional features such as polygamy, spirit possession and drumming and dancing. The later movement that occurred between the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries was characterized by a series of military uprisings and economic depression across Africa and Europe. The Christian church in Ghana began engaging secular musicians in church activities and services. The Ghanaian church music culture was greatly influenced and affected by the gospel artists from the diasporas respectively. Traditional and popular music emerged triumphantly and became part of the church. The church became the safe haven for jobless secular musicians and an experimental ground for different styles of music traditions. Females' participation in church music is very much outstanding breaking the gender stereotype instituted by the patriarchal policies of the past in the early churches.

Authors such as Collins reiterates women's participation in church music and indicates that the phenomenon is open and devoid of restriction and negative response from society, however, it is mirrored in less participation of women in playing certain musical instruments; some sort of hegemony in societal perception of gender roles. Even though the gospel music scene currently favours women, much is yet to be seen in terms of women's participation in instrumental music amidst the churches. In any case, the reform was not free of petty resistance as marked by the early church. The fact remains that the intensity of the resistance culture dwindles with time and the church, therefore, made considerable strides in gaining musical autonomy over the period under review. Despite the heavy transformation brought by the reform,

paradoxically the Ghanaian church music scene remains the embodiment of converging cultures; partly Western, partly Ghanaian.

Finally, the findings of this research have opened up further discourse on the process of indigenization of church music in Ghana for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The issue here mainly bothers what is truly Ghanaian in the face of indigenization in view of the beliefs and practices of the church. Can all musical elements bequeath the church pass the test of indigenization? Could the church have a total indigenization paradigm devoid of the fusion of indigenous and European musical elements? How can further research distinguish or categorize the mixed elements and that of purely Ghanaian through the pinhole of indigenization against generalization? This study has given the research community the opportunity to comprehend the process and features of church musical reforms and the transitional elements in the Ghanaian Christian church hence preparing a base for a comparative study for the same trajectory in uncovered and the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Recommendations**

The study covered only the church music scene in Ghana, including the origin, reform and transition, and the process of indigenization. In order to effectively generalize the findings of this study to other West African countries that experienced similar trajectories, the paper recommends replication of the study across the region for fair representation. Even though the desk study review was chosen because of its accessibility, quick result and economy, some information accessed might be out of date. For this reason, the paper suggests and recommends a more ethnographic approach for further study into the area.

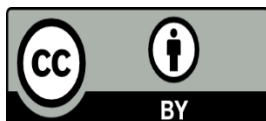
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