

**THE INDIGENOUS MUSIC OF CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN NIGERIA AND THE DIASPORAS: A PROOF OF CHRISTIAN TRANSFORMATIVE MUSICALITY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*One of the distinguishing identities of any Church movement is music. Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C) in Nigeria and the Diasporas at her inception came with her peculiar music firmly rooted in the Pentecostal theology of the church and in indigenous African musical culture. It became a great tool in the spirituality, evangelisation and proselytisation processes in the Church. Today, not only has C.A.C. influenced Nigerian Christian music greatly, but also dominated the gospel music, one of the most popular music genres in Nigeria. This paper, hinged on transformative and functionalism theories, aims at exhuming the philosophical theology, performance practices and the evolution of this Pentecostal brand of music, both at home and abroad. Employing theological, musicological and historical approaches, the paper as a sacred musicological study, discovers that C.A.C. music is highly functional with deep metaphysical connotations. From indigenous native airs, anthems, hymnody, art music and lyric-airs to gospel music, its style forms one of the manifestations of indigenous Pentecostalism; as it has been instrumental to the diverse operations, spread and acceptability of the Church. The Church extended overseas through migration, had her music ‘carried’ along, though not without re-contextualised modifications. This paper concludes on the note that the Church, bearing in mind her leadership roles, should strive to uphold the legacies that earned her identity; especially her musical culture.*

**Key words:** transformative music theory, Christ Apostolic Church music, indigenous music, Pentecostal music.

**INTRODUCTION**

A sad defect of several historical works on Christ Apostolic Church is the neglect and under-treatment of music (unarguably an indispensable aspect of worship) in their scope. The neglect is obvious in Okpaise (n.d), Orogun (n.d), Steward (n.d), Oloye (1974), Alokan (1975, 1991), Adegboyega (1978), Adegoroye (1978), Mala (1980), Babajide (1987a, 1987b), Ojo(1988), Adedeji (1990a, b, c), Olusheye (1995, 2009), Oludare (1999), AriJesudade (2000) and Idowu (2008, 2010a, 2010c). Other historical and doctrinal literature

that bother on C.A.C. or African Independent Churches are Turner (1967), Omoyajowo (1978), Mala (1983), Oshun (1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1989), Vaughan (1991), Olusunmbola (2001), Ositelu (2007), Olaniyi (2007), Ogunrinade (2009) and Sepo (2011). The fact remains that no history of any Church is complete without music. Alternatively, we may ask, is there a Church without music? What an unpardonable oversight! Works that featured music did not give it major treatment. What is obtainable are scanty information mentioned in passing. For instance, Ogunranti (1964) mentioned the deep interest of Late Oba Akinyele in the choir and that he produced sanctified choristers at Olugbode, Ibadan. Ayo (1967, p. 8) revealed that Apostle Ayo Babalola always ‘sang a lot of hymns and lyric airs including one that no one had heard before’. He also listed about 80 songs used in the early period of the Church (18-21). C.A.C. Ikare Council (1968, p. 19) remarked on the development of the choir in C.A.C. Ikare between 1934 and 1951, and ‘how the Holy Spirit mightily came down and the Church building shook mightily as they sang on Sundays’. Latunde (1967a) buttressed his points with some hymns and lyric airs and in (1967b). He also cited some roles of singing in deliverance and comforting of souls. Ademakinwa (1971, p. 116) revealed the competence of some earliest C.A.C. pastors on the organ and how he (Ademakinwa) played in ‘Ebute metta and Lagos Churches as early as 1930s’. Babajide (1981) listed 65 lyric airs sung at the early period of C.A.C. Oyelakin (1989) narrated divine messages she received from God to the C.A.C. choirs. Olujobi, 1993, p. 30; 1995, pp. 35-37; Idowu, 2007, pp. 120-123 and Olowe, 2007, pp. 131-132 listed some of the songs used at the great revival of 1930. Oluwamakin (1996) mentioned some positive and negative functions of music in the Church. Idowu (2012) however was an improvement by devoting a chapter to music, where the musical contributions of Babajide were documented. Finally, the 1998 edition of the Church constitution did not do justice to music; as no general committee or recognition of the choir was provided for, unlike other areas that are considered important.

However, the above information, though skeletal, are useful. The onus then lies on the musicologist who has been trained to recognize, extract musical patterns in a historical milieu and to intelligibly and chronologically analyse them. That is the task in this paper. Christ Apostolic as a Church is unique and outstanding in many ways, even in her music. For instance, ‘the Church possesses her uniqueness and identity in liturgy hinged on praying and singing of hymns, anthems and choruses’ ([www.cacworldwide.net/history.asp](http://www.cacworldwide.net/history.asp), accessed on 12/01/2012). The music is so peculiar as to justify the term ‘C.A.C. music’. The peculiarities make the music so functional and consequently transformative.

### **PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS**

C.A.C. music is guided by some unique theologies and ‘strange’ philosophies, all of which foster the transformation of lives of her converts. First, songs rendered in the Church must be ‘given’ by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is in conformity with the Church’s pentecostality, which believes in the authority of the Holy Spirit. It has been established that the Holy Spirit ‘gives’ songs during prayers, sermons, in the dreams and visions (Idowu, 2012, p. 37).

Second, songs must be biblical. It means that the Church believes that both the texts and the style of songs rendered during the liturgy must conform to biblical standards. The Church also believes that an ideal music should edify the members. This is also biblical. It is in view of these that the Church upholds that songs should be devoid of vain words and must not feature the praise of any personality, whether living or dead.<sup>1</sup> Sequel to the above, the Church recognizes and believes in ‘*isoji orin*’ (musical revival), a term used to denote special programmes devoted to the promotion of sacred music (C.A.C. Supreme Council, 1961, p. 34).

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<sup>1</sup>Some songs that feature the names of Apostle Ayo Babalola serve as contradictions to this law (see Appendix). Some of them were rendered while he was alive.

In addition, Apostle Ayo Babalola through the Holy Spirit revealed that it took the heavenly choir 600 years to rehearse the songs that would be used to welcome the saints to the millennial reign of Christ (Emmanuel, n.d, p. 19; Oluwamakin, n.d, p.8). The implication of this is that not only does the Church believe in the existence of active musical activities in heaven, but also in the role of music in eschatological events.

Another important but controversial belief is the rejection of *gangan* (tension or talking drums). The use of talking drums is fundamentally forbidden. According to Apostle Ayo Babalola, God said any member who beat or dance to them will suffer tension just as the drums suffer tension in order to produce sound (Emmanuel, n.d, p. 19; Idowu, 2010b, p. 32). Given the above doctrines, it is a laid down principle that pastors must always screen songs that are composed by the choir before presentation in the Church (See Babajide, 1988, pp. 57-58).

Furthermore, the Church strongly believes in the separation of sacred and secular music. Both are separate and must not intermix. As a result, it is a taboo to bring secular music into the Church. Besides, no C.A.C. member may play, dance to or participate in secular music (Adedeji, 1990b). It is important to state that the secular music style that reigned during the enactment of the doctrinal statements was the one cited. By implication, all contemporary and future evolving secular music styles are included in the prohibition. It should be mentioned also that this divine rule applies to all music associated with idolatry and traditional religions. In addition, the Church disallows ‘partying’ or use of social music for any social function. The penalty for contravening any of the above rules is punishable by six-month suspension. These rules are forcefully presented in the statements below:

*O je eewo ati ohun isina fun olukuluku omo Ijo yii lati jo ilu dundun, gangan, kokoma, iya ilu, ojoge ati awon ilu aye miran. A ko fi aaye fun egbekegbe lati lo si ode ijo tabi fun eniken lati ba egbe alaigbagbo lo si ode ijo. A ko fi aaye fun eniken lati gba ilu fi se ariya fun ohunkohun, ibaase igbeyawo tabi isinku, oye jije, ati beebee lo. Jak.3: 1 – 6. ... Bi a ba ri omo ijo ti o se lodi si eyii, a oo da a duro fun osu mefa. (Babajide, 1988, p. 33).*

(It is a taboo and apostasy for all members of the Church to dance to the music of *dundun, gangan, kokoma, iya llu, ojoge* and other secular drum ensembles. We do not permit any group in the Church to attend dance party, or any member to join secular club in their dance parties. We do not allow any member to hire a band for any celebration; be it wedding, burial, installation, etc. James 3: 1 – 6.... Any member that disobeys this instruction shall be suspended for a period of six months). (Babajide, 1988, p. 33).

As contained in the Church doctrines, the Church embraces the use of organ/keyboard, strings that comprise guitar, mandoline, banjo; winds such as trumpet; percussions like cymbals and bell; and traditional drums like *bembe* and *omele* for special musical programmes such as music anniversaries and concerts. It is however stressed that the users must ensure they did not use them in a way that would draw the minds of the faithfuls to secular and carnal music that were prevalent in those times. The inclusion of *omele* here is confusing since it is also attached to *bata* drums used for Sango<sup>2</sup> worship. The quotation below bears it all:

*Ijo ko lodi si awon ohun elo orin bii duru, gita, mandoline, violin, banjo, cornet, bembe, omele, kimbali, agogo ati beebee fun akans eorin, bi awon ti n se akoso re ba lee see lona ti ko fi nii fa okan si awon orin aimo, ati ti ara ti o kun inu aye isinsinyii (Kol.3: 16) (Iwe Ilana ati ti Eko, 1961, pp. 35-36).*

The Church is not against the use of musical instruments such as the organ, guitar, mandoline, violin, banjo, cornet, *bembe*, *omele*, cymbals, bells, etc for special music programmes if the organisers would use them in such ways that would not draw people's minds to secular and carnal music that are prevalent in the present world (Col.3: 16) (*Iwe Ilana ati Eko*, 1961, pp. 35-36).

The same view is expressed in both the old and the 1998 editions of C.A.C. constitution 'the Church welcomes the use of musical instruments with anthems provided they would not be used in the same way as public orchestra which draws people's minds away from the Holy

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<sup>2</sup>Sango is the traditional Yoruba god of lightning and thunder.

Spirit, and such musical instruments shall exclude talking drums' (C.A.C. Supreme Council, 1961, p. 43; p. 118).

The above theological beliefs do not negate the presence of African identity in C.A.C. music. For instance, in terms of the cultural affinity, C.A.C. music possesses some African musical elements as identified in Adedeji (2000a). However, what give C.A.C. music its identity include: the name of Patriarchs (like Joseph Ayo Babalola, Daniel Orekoya), spiritual warfarism, radical evangelism, prayer, radical evangelism and Holy Ghost derived inspiration and power.

### **Evolution**

The evolution of music in C.A.C. followed the metamorphoses of the Church. As a praying group that started in 1917, the music then consisted of CMS hymns and prayer songs. Later, native airs composed by Rev. J.J. Ransome Kuti, Ajisafe and the likes (from Anglican and African Churches) were borrowed through interaction. Apart from hymns and their translated versions, there were neither impositions from Faith Tabernacle Congregation nor The Apostolic Church in Bradford to which the Church affiliated at different times. However, later, C.A.C. voluntarily adopted the Western hymnody of the latter.

Sequel to the adoption of Western translated hymns of The Apostolic Church, the authentic C.A.C. indigenous music evolved in the 1930s (both in Nigeria and in Ghana)<sup>3</sup> with the advent of the great revivals under Apostle Ayo Babalola, Prophet Orekoya and the likes. The ministers 'received' and sometimes, composed lyric airs to inspire, admonish, pray and to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. These spread to other ministers and lay leaders. In no long a time, there had been several such songs that were used on crusade grounds, street parades and at special prayer and deliverance programmes (Adedeji, 2004). In addition,

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<sup>3</sup>A faction of Christ Apostolic Church in Ghana claimed a different historical legacy(<http://cacintl.org/history.html>).

Babajide, whom Idowu (2012, pp. 35-45) described as the ‘singing bird of C.A.C.’ composed several indigenous airs and hymns in the 1940s, thus marking the birth of indigenous hymnody in C.A.C.

By 1950s, there were C.A.C. members that served as teachers in schools. Some of them that had studied music, organized music bands and prepared their pupils for Christmas and end of the year drama/music entertainment. One of such people was Elder Adeosun of C.A.C. Yaba, Lagos State. In addition, they developed the Church liturgical music through their indigenous compositions of airs, anthems and hymns, playing of organ and leading of the choirs. The indigenous works of Rev. Ola Olude<sup>4</sup> was a source of inspiration to those musicians.

The 1960s witnessed the rise of gospel music in Nigeria, with Elder Adeosun as one of the major pioneers. Although started in the Church, it later became professionalized and used more in non-liturgical functions (See Adedeji, 2004). In 1970s, C.A.C. in non-Yoruba speaking areas started developing their vernacular hymnodies, while C.A.C. gospel artistes like Mrs. D.A. Fasonyin took their music abroad as Nigerian Christian music ambassadors. It is noteworthy that women played prominent roles in gospel musicianship in C.A.C. (Akintunde, 2001). In addition, the United Association of C.A.C. musicians started in the 1970s in Lagos<sup>5</sup> and flourished in the 1980s, but was proscribed by the Church authorities in the 1992. English services began in 1980s and ushered in the use of English songs in the liturgy, but it was in the 1990s that praise ‘n’ worship singing started in C.A.C.

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<sup>4</sup>Rev. Ola Olude was a Methodist minister in 1950s and 60s.

<sup>5</sup>The responsibility was assigned to the Association of C.A.C. Musicians, Lagos, which in turn appointed Elder C.O.W. Awolaja, the then Choirmaster of Yaba Choir as the chairman of the Hymn Book Committee. With Elder OladipoOludare, then Choirmaster of Itire Choir and Elder F.O. Onagoruwa, Assistant Choirmaster of Ebute metta Choir as the key members. The committee set to work to produce the present work. Other members who contributed toward the making of the book include Elder C.A. Osukoya, President, Association of C.A.C. Choirs; F.O. Oyebadejo, Chairman, Association of C.A.C. Choirs, Lagos District; G.O.E. Okafor, Chairman, Association of C.A.C. Choirs, Mushin District; Elder YinkaOyesanya, Secretary, Association of C.A.C. Choirs, Lagos District; Elder I.O. Ojo formerly Assistant Choirmaster, Yaba Assembly; E.N. Neboh, Chairman, Association of C.A.C. Choirs, Enugu District; Sam. Olu. Olukunle of Kaduna District; I.O. Ibiedhe and AremuOlusanya of Mushin District; Elder M.O. Onabanjo and E.O. Efunsoola of Lagos District.

Today, there seems to be a decline in the use of hymns during the liturgy. This is due to several reasons. Firstly, the early morning and evening prayer meetings have stopped in many branches because most members have now become civil servants unlike when the Church started. Second, the Sunday services have incorporated more activities. Third, in most homes, morning and evening family altars that made use of hymns have waned drastically. In addition, the effect of American musical culture on the C.A.C. Youth for whom the English Assemblies were established is a great factor that reduced the singing of hymns.

There were notable Church choirs that contributed significantly to the development of music in C.A.C. over the years. These included C.A.C. Ebute Metta, a centre for the development of serious Church music tradition, where Oba Adeosun and Elder Owoaje featured prominently and C.A.C. Itire, which featured great musicians like Adeosun and F.O. Oyebadejo as the Organist/Director of music. Others were C.A.C. Adewale Street Yaba, where Pope Dopemu and Pastor Soile served as pioneering Choirmaster and Organist respectively; C.A.C. Mushin; C.A.C. Agege; C.A.C. Tabernacle, which retained orchestral music exclusively until recently; and C.A.C. Olugbode, where Pastor Ogunranti and later his son, Dr. Ayo Ogunranti (Now Oluranti) were choirmaster and Organist respectively. More so, there were choirs like C.A.C. Moore, Ife, that produced great Organists like Osinaike and Egbeyemi; C.A.C. Bethel that featured Directors such as Dr. Abayomi and Prof. Omideyi; C.A.C. Oke Igan Akure which produced Tope Dada; C.A.C. Oke Isegun Akure that produced Organists like Kehinde Mogaji and Tope Arije and C.A.C. Oke Ibukun, Oke Ado, Ibadan, under the leadership of Elder Adetoyinbo and assisted by Omitinde; C.A.C. Agbokojo, Ibadan and C.A.C. Sango, Ibadan, which later developed Orchestras along with their choirs.

Several Association choral groups that evolved over the years included Good women, Children, Youth, Light of the World and C.A.C. Students' Association Choirs. They all contributed in the development of music in the Church. For instance, in the early 1980s, the



C.A.C. Students' Association (C.A.C.S.A), National Choir under the leadership of Bro. Mosaku developed classical music for use in C.A.C.S.A. conferences. The Akure axis featured great musicians like Tope Dada (a great choral director/conductor), and Ayo Adeusi and Tunde Omojuwa Adanri as Organists. The Lagos axis produced people like Remi Collins, Dele Ajibola and the likes. At those times, it was classical singing at its best, before the great crisis that rocked the Church in 1990. The Youth Fellowship also published a special hymn book used for worship (Ogunranti and Obabiyi, 1980).

Gospel music giants produced by the Church included Elder Adeosun (one of the pioneers), Shola Rotimi and Bola Are (ex-Presidents of Gospel Musicians' Association of Nigeria), Mrs. D. A. Fasoyin, Evang Niyi Adedokun, Evang. Ojo Ade, Dumni Olanrewaju of Opelope Anointing fame, Pastor Adelakun of Amona tete bo fame, Rev 'Femi Adedeji of Ona Abayo fame, etc. (Adedeji, 2003a). It is important to state as claimed by the practitioners that so many souls were won to Christ through their gospel music.

### ***Ebute Metta***

We shall examine some of the special contributions of C.A.C. Ebutemetta choir that had produced so many giants of C.A.C. music. As mentioned earlier, Oba Adeosun and Elder Owoaje featured prominently as Organists before they later moved to C.A.C. Yaba. One of the foremost C.A.C. musicians that laid solid foundation for choral music was Elder D. B. Oshunwho served as Choirmaster/Organist as from 1954. He was then assisted by F.O Onagoruwa. Yinka Oyesanya served then as Assistant Organist. Elder Oshun and Oyesanya were products of T.K.E. Phillips, a renowned Nigerian musicologist and Church music expert that trained abroad.

The revolution started in early 1960s with the introduction of classical music and informal training in music theory and singing. Elder Timmy Ademakinwa joined in 1967 and sang

Halleluyah Chorus in 1968. Oshun retired in 1970s and became the Patron and later, the Grand Patron. Onagoruwa took over from him while Oyesanya served as assistant Choirmaster. In the late 1970s/80s, Mr. Fawole, a very good Organist, attempted to establish a music school. The attempt however failed due to logistic reasons.

The 1980s witnessed the incoming of Ayo Adeusi, who joined as assistant Organist around 81, while on National Youth Service. He had already trained himself under Mr. Ologunde, a music lecturer at College of Education, Ikere Ekiti before joining the Ebute Metta choir. Onagoruwa retired in the mid-1980s and Oyesanya succeeded him as Director of music in 1985/6. Ayo Adeusi then served as assistant director. Ayo as multi-instrumentalist introduced orchestral music. Sight-reading became compulsory in late 1980s to early 1990s under his coordination. Through his efforts, the choir became affiliated to Royal School of Music, London in early 1990s, thus becoming the first C.A.C. Church to have such. Ekundayo Phillips was invited to assess the choir as Commissioner for Royal Schools of Music in Africa and marveled at the high standard of performance. Many of the choristers received medals of honour. Ayo revolutionised C.A.C. choral music in Lagos through training, and groomed a lot of choirmasters, Organists and singers; including Sesan Agbabiaka of C.A.C. Agege. He also trained Ayodamope Ogunranti (Now Oluranti), who is now based in the UK. Ayo was Director of music until his sudden demise in 2011. He was assisted by Segun Ogunbeku as Assistant Director of Music (Administration) and Bidemi Oyesanya as Assistant Director of Music (Technical). C.A.C. Ebute Metta choir has distinguished herself as a highly standard choir in classical music by performing various works of great composers. For instance, the choir has performed the full version of great oratorios by Handel and others.

Other notable musicians included Deji Oshun, who was trained as Organist in Trinity College. He was a student of Kayode Oni. Ayo Adeusi, Bidemi Oyesanya and Ayodamope Ogunranti (Now Oluranti) developed indigenous art music composition in C.A.C.

Composers such as Onagoruwa, Solomon Gbadebo, Egbeyode, Olufemi distinguished themselves in native airs. Elder Yinka Oyesanya was one of the great indigenous hymn composers.

### ***Other Developments***

At C.A.C. Yaba, Elder Adeosun, a great Choirmaster and Organist released several albums of gospel hymns and indigenous songs. At Abuja, the choir of C.A.C. Garki Headquarters rose to stardom, with the contributions of Ayo Adeusi who came to Abuja on transfer in the late 1990s.<sup>6</sup> In addition, through his efforts, the choir became an affiliate of Royal School of Church Music, London (Borokinni, 2003).

Several music schools were founded in the 1980s in addition to that of Ebute Metta, in different parts of Lagos, Ibadan, Ile Ife, Ilorin and in Kaduna. For instance, in Ile Ife, Dr Abayomi of C.A.C. Mount Bethel and this writer floated a music school for C.A.C. choristers in 1985/86. This writer registered candidates for the ABRSM Theory Examinations in 1986. The effort could not continue for some logistic reasons. In addition, serious music studies were incorporated into the curriculum of C.A.C Theological Seminary in 1988 by this writer. Those schools contributed greatly to the development of music education in C.A.C. In addition, the works of Adedeji (1991a, b, & c) were unique eye openers on the place of music education in the Church.

The history of C.A.C. music would not be complete without mentioning the contributions of Pastor S.O. Olukunle. Apart from publishing tonic solfa editions of C.A.C. hymnbooks (1983 and 1991), he taught several choirs, tunes that were not known before. In addition, Olukunle has been very instrumental to the development of indigenous hymnody of C.A.C. In addition,

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<sup>6</sup>This writer was invited as the guest preacher during the choir's anniversary and concert in 2003, events which showcased Church music per excellence.

worthy of mentioning, is the solfa edition produced for C.A.C Youth Camp meetings at Ibadan (1980).

*Diasporic Development*

C.A.C. music in the Diasporas started on tripartite dimensions. The first and major was the missionary activities of C.A.C. Prophets/Evangelists like Obadare, Akande and Ayo Omideyi, more lately, Abiara; all of who used the indigenous Nigerian music effectively during their overseas' crusades and in the Churches pioneered afterward. The second dimension was through the ministering of C.A.C. gospel artistes such as Mrs D.A. Fasonyin, Bola Are, J. A. Adelokun, Shola Rotimi and the likes who were invited abroad to minister at special programmes. The third dimension was through the migration of skilful musicians who relocated abroad, some of who became Organists and choirmasters there. C.A.C. music in the Diasporas at the early stage of 1970s involved the singing of Yoruba hymns, indigenous lyric airs and anthems. Later it incorporated English lyric airs, 'classicals' and gospel songs. As a way of solving serious problems such as immigration, marital and other socio-economic problems, the indigenous prayer songs used in Nigeria became unavoidable, as led by the Evangelist/Prophets.

The diasporic C.A.C. music retains the functionality of the home-based Church. For instance, C.A.C. Mount of Redemption in Philadelphia states that the members do God's work through music ([www.cacpenn.com](http://www.cacpenn.com), retrieved on 10/01/2012). Also, according to [www.cacbethel.org](http://www.cacbethel.org) (retrieved on 19/01/2012), 'music is one of the powerful and effective means used by Christ Apostolic Church (Bethel) UK to minister and to spread the good news of Christ Jesus'. In addition, C.A.C. (Bethel) UK states that 'We are strengthened by the power of our praise and worship services and the use of various types of biblical musical instruments to glorify God' ([www.cpo.org](http://www.cpo.org), retrieved on 12/01/2012).

In terms of stylistic forms, in North America, the Chicago and Brooklyn Churches developed choral music first before spreading to other branches. In the UK, C.A.C. Seven Sisters and others like C.A.C. (WOSEM) carried on the indigenous traditions from home. Apostle Ayo Omideyi of C.A.C. (Bethel) maintained the Bethel tradition of classical, English hymn singing and English airs. Also, as stated on [www.cpo.org.uk](http://www.cpo.org.uk) (retrieved 10/01/2012), Segun Omideyi arrived in England in 1969 and studied music formally at the Royal School of Church Music. He co-founded the first ever branch of Christ Apostolic Church in Britain in the London Borough of Haringey in 1974, was ordained as a pastor in 1983 and was the Superintendent Pastor in the C.A.C. branch in Hackney, East London until his death in 2008. Pastor Omideyi continued his career within the Church as an Organist and choirmaster teaching classical music to people of all races and backgrounds.

According to [www.cacbethel.org](http://www.cacbethel.org) (retrieved 0n 19/01/2012), there are two main choirs in the Church: the C.A.C. (Bethel) Mass Choir and The Reapers Gospel Choir. The C.A.C. (Bethel) Mass Choir ministers predominantly with classical music. Her membership is made up of adults, young people and children. Whilst the classical choir sings and records at various times during the Church year, the highlights for the choir are during our Church Anniversary in August and at Christmas. It ministers with a variety of much loved traditional carols as well as sacred anthems.

It is important to state that Yoruba still features significantly in the diasporic C.A.C. music. For instance, occasional singing in Yoruba was observed when Prof Irvin worshipped at the ‘C.A.C. First in the Americas’, located at Cortelyou road in Brooklyn, USA on May 31, 2009. This probably motivated him to say a word in Yoruba ([www.cacworldwide.net](http://www.cacworldwide.net), retrieved on 12/01/2012).

## **Musical Typologies**

In line with Biblical injunctions, Christ Apostolic Church from inception recognised three categories of music: psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Although apart from the ‘Gloria’, C.A.C. does not chant psalms as some orthodox Churches, it however effectively makes use of psalms through reading and recitation, and in the composition of spiritual songs. Psalms and spiritual songs are realised in native airs, lyric airs and native anthems. The earliest song-types as stated in the old C.A.C. Constitution and Doctrines (n.d, p. 43), *Iwe Ilana ati Eko* (1961, pp. 35-36) and Babajide (1988, p. 57), were hymns, lyric airs and native anthems. Later, over the years, the Church incorporated more forms; including classical and gospel music. Today, there are six broad categories of music genres employed in C.A.C. They include hymns, native airs, lyric airs, native anthems, ‘classical’ and gospel music. The hymns are contained in the Church hymnal that featured different hymns suitable for various spiritual purposes and needs. The hymns are in two categories: The Western-translated ones composed by Western hymn writers like Charles Wesley, Fanny Crosby, Doddridge, William Cowper, etc. and the indigenous ones composed in Nigerian idioms by the Church composers. The latter is scattered in the main hymnal and also listed under ‘Miscellaneous Hymns’<sup>7</sup>.

The first hymn book was published in the late 1930s. It was revised periodically, culminating in the fourth revised edition published in 1967 as *Orin Ihinrere* (Gospel Songs). It contained 818 hymns. It was later that other vernacular editions in Igbo and Urhobo came into existence. The second hymnal (1975) contained 822 hymns (including the Nigerian national Anthem)<sup>8</sup>. Another version of C.A.C. Gospel Hymn Book (Yoruba and English) was

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<sup>7</sup>OludareOladiipo, D.O. Babajide, YinkaOyesanya, C.O. Awolaja, Rev. Ayo Salu, C.B. Odusona, E.N. Neboh were some of the earliest indigenous composers.

<sup>8</sup> The indigenous composers in this edition are David B. Oshun (125), F.O. Oyebadejo (124, 467, 477), Rt. Rev. Supdt. E. Ayo Salu of the African Church Inc. (51), G.O.E. Okafor (138), I.O. Ibiedhe (647), OladipoOludare

published in 1990 and contained 991 Western translated hymns and 12 indigenous ones. The staff notation edition of this Yoruba version which is currently been reviewed and to which the English version is being compiled,<sup>9</sup> was first collated and printed for local consumption in 1999.

### **Performance Practices**

C.A.C. encourages and enjoys Congregational singing. In the liturgy, hymns and lyric airs are predominant. Traditionally, hymns rendered with the organ accompaniment only, were sung four times in those days, apart from processional and recessional ones. The opening hymn to commence the service is mostly that of praise and thanksgiving to God or based on the appreciation of the day of the Lord. The second hymn after the reading of the Scriptures is always from hymns of admonition. The third hymn comes before the message to prepare the hearts of the faithfuls, while the last hymn is to round off the service and to collect another offering known as *ore abe iwaasu* (pulpit offering). It always bothers on obeying the word of God that preceded it.

It is a unique practice in C.A.C. to see revivalists also serving as singers. Due to the inseparable relationship of music with Pentecostal revival activities, C.A.C. revivalists sing a great deal as they lead the congregation in a bid to inspire and encourage them.

### **Functionality**

Music dominates all sacraments and activities of the Church. It is therefore highly functional as there is no known activity in the Church without music. Apart from fully realising the biblical purpose of music as contained in Colossians 3, C.A.C. music performs several functions and plays diverse roles in the Church, and by so doing, has helped in transforming

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(488, 489, 646), F.O. Onagoruwa (127,141, 236, 606), E. N. Neboh (315), C.B. Oduona (235), YinkaOyesanya (55, 738, 763, 764), T.O.S. Egbeyode (737), Sola Okpaise (140) and C.O.W. Awolaja (47, 478).

<sup>9</sup> Pastor S.O. Olukunle and Pastor P.O. Taiye Bankole are respective Chairman and Secretary of the sub-committee.

uncountable number of lives. As already discussed previously (Adedeji, 1999, 2003b), music is used in C.A.C. as part of the liturgy<sup>10</sup>, to praise, thank and worship God, teach, admonish, comfort, entertain, pray, fight spiritual wars, evangelise, preserve history, heal and deliver both the sick and the oppressed, receive Holy Spirit baptism, inspire faithfuls during crusades and for general breakthroughs. The methods employed in the above functions had been discussed in details before now (Adedeji, 1991c, 1999, 2000a).

The above use of music in C.A.C. corroborates the theory of transformative musicology advanced and advocated for by Adedeji (2010), the presence of the diabolic use and destructive effects described as catabolic, notwithstanding. Myriads of testimonies by people; both members and non-members of C.A.C., Christians and non-Christians, attest to the potency of C.A.C. music. According to the testimonies, many of which I had personally witnessed, many people had been saved, healed, comforted, rescued from suicide, delivered from evil spirits, given needed miracle and breakthroughs via music. Music in C.A.C. was essentially functional and transformative in purpose. Some of the relevant literature that discussed various aspects of music ministry in the Church include Robertson (1950), Osbeck (1961), Martin (1964), Marries (1983), Olukunle (1983, 1991), Vidal (1986, 2007), Olukoju (1987), Wilson-Dickson (1992), Rohm (1992) and Miller (1993).

### **Instruments**

The earliest instruments in the Church were the *agogo* (hand bell) and *atewo pipa* (hand clapping). The two were rhythmic instruments that supplied the beat and controlled the tempo of the music. For a *woro* beat, which dominated C.A.C. music then, the bell simply played the African time pattern (*kokonkolo*). The hand clapping was either on crotchet rhythm or two dotted quavers that followed in succession. This differed from the Cherubim and Seraphim Church pattern, which was three crotchet beats separated by rest. For a highlife beat, the bell

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<sup>10</sup>The order of Service contained various liturgies and appropriate hymns.



rhythm was ‘taaa-taaa-taaa- -ta-taaaa’ while the hand clapping followed the two patterns described above.

In revival and Holy Ghost singing, the tempo assumed *presto* which culminated in a hot rhythm of *doppio movimento*. This is one of the main characteristic features of the music of African Indigenous Churches generally. *Bembe*, a cylindrical double membrane drum was introduced later because of its accessibility, portability, durability and versatility. It is also a rhythmic and accompanimental instrument.

*Akuba* drums were local upright tenor and bass drums. The duo were used in Church settings mainly, especially before the advent of the Western congas and trap set. The two were played by two different people or by a single person that was very skilful. Samba was another single rectangular-shaped drum that was introduced later; possibly borrowed from the Cherubim and Seraphim Church where it was used essentially for spirit-invoking music during the prayer and revival services.

The use of other traditional drums like *dundun* and *bata* ensemble members, were later innovations to blend with contemporary fads. The existing taboo on talking drums was reviewed on December 7, 2007 by the then Authorities, based on a new interpretation of the Apostle’s promulgation, thus allowing Churches to make their choice.

In addition, the above instruments were used in different combinations before the introduction of Western Instruments such as the organ, piano, trap set, conga sets and orchestral instruments in the 1940s. Since their introduction, they have been used in different combinations with the existing traditional instruments depending on contextual needs.

It must be stated that while there is no categorical statement on the principles of combining the instruments, each assembly has enjoyed the Holy Spirit-given liberty in choosing their

appropriate combination of instruments. Assemblies dominated by illiterates use the traditional instruments more, while the ones dominated by educated elites make use of pipe organs, pianos and other Western instruments. Assemblies like C.A.C. Faith Tabernacle at Itire rather prefer Western orchestral Instruments in the order of the Apostolic Faith practice.

## **CONCLUSION**

Despite baseless neglect and oversight, there is no controversy on the fact that music has contributed greatly to the operations, success, unique identity and popularity of C.A.C. Bearing this in mind and the Church's leadership roles in Pentecostal circles, the C.A.C. should strive to revive and uphold the legacies that earned her the peculiar musical identity; especially, her musical culture. In this regard, the transformative focus in which Church music is used to save, heal, deliver and positively change lives; should be reinvigorated. Although changes are inevitable in any living organisation, the Church might wish to retain her biblical and Pentecostal foundations, and traditions received by divine revelations, while the changes should be limited to contextual applications.

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## **Appendix**

### **(Some Common Indigenous Lyric airs used in the Revival Era of C.A.C.)**

1. Mo jawe, jawe I sought after herbs  
Mo soogun, soogun I tried several magic and charms  
Josefu lo mu mi ja'ju ona gbangba It was Apostle Joseph that showed me the way
2. Bi e ba n gbo wo, wa If you hear sound of slaps  
Eti aje ni Baba mi gba It is God slapping the witches
3. E fororo satupa oko iyawo nbo o Put oil in the lamp because the bridegroom is coming  
E lo sora, e lo sora Jesu fere de o Be watchful, Jesus will soon return
4. Se layo mi sese bere mo d'oloriire My joy has just commenced since I am now fortunate  
Mo d'oloriire ni'jo Apositeli o Fortunate in Christ Apostolic Church  
Se layo mi sese bere mo d'oloriire My joy has just commenced since I am now fortunate
5. Mo f'aramo Olorun Babalola I have chosen the God of Babalola  
Mo f'aramo Olorun Aposteli I have chosen the God of the Apostle  
Ona igbala yii ye mi o This way of salvation pays me  
Mo f'aramo Olorun Babalola I have chosen the God of Babalola
6. Oluwa wo mi san emi o san Lord, heal me and I will be healed  
Oluwa gba mi la emi o la Lord, save me and I will be saved
7. Ireti wa ni pe, lojo ikehin My expectation on the day of judgement  
Ka le gbohun Baba pe is to hear the voice of God, telling me

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|---|--|
| O seun omo odo rere<br>Bo sinu ayo Baba re  | ‘You are a good servant<br>Enter into the joy of your father’  |
| 8. Adaba orun sokale<br>Wole, wole, wole<br>Mo si okan mi paya o<br>Emi mimo wa ba le mi  | Heavenly dove, descend<br>Enter into my heart<br>I open the door of my heart<br>Holy Spirit come upon me   |
| 9. E ba mi gbe Jesu ga, Baba<br>E ba mi gbe Jesu ga, Omo<br>Eni to gba Jesu lOluwa<br>E ba mi gbe Jesu ga, o                    | Help me lift Jesus up, father<br>Help me lift Jesus up, son<br>You that have accepted Jesus as Lord<br>Help me lift Jesus up                     |
| 10. Ayangasioloogun<br>Ayangasi oloogun<br>B’owo mi ba te Psalmu<br>Ayangasi oloogun  | The magic man would be disgraced<br>The <i>juju</i> man would be disgraced<br>Once I hold the book of Psalms<br>The magic man would be disgraced |
| 11. Iwosan ninu emi<br>Iwosan ninu ara<br>Eyi ni mo n be ‘be<br>Oluwa se fun mi   | Spiritual healing<br>Physical healing<br>This is my plead<br>Lord, please grant me.  |
| 12. Irugbin Esu o jade kuro lara mi<br>Irugbin Ota o jade kuro lara mi<br>Loruko Jesu o, jade kuro lara mi<br>Jade, jade, jade. | Satanic seeds, get out of my body<br>Seeds by the enemies, get out of my body<br>In Jesus’ name get out of my body<br>Get out, get out, get out. |