

Doukhan, Lilianne. *In Tune with God*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2010. 301 pp. Hardcover, \$24.99.

Lilianne Doukhan, Associate Professor of Music at Andrews University, summarizes the goal of her book as a defense of music. In particular, her work focuses on music within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She writes for an Adventist audience and determines to bring light rather than heat to the topic, by using objective criteria to formulate balanced opinions. The sources of objective data for her reside in the Scriptures, the writings of Ellen White (one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, whose writings continue to play a key role in church life), and the lessons of history. She determines to give not only a reasoned discussion of the topic, but also to provide practical lessons for the church.

The book is divided into five parts, which address the musical experience, music in the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen White, the church wrestling with music, the contemporary challenge, and music ministry within the church. Two brief appendices are included: guidelines for worship leaders, and a sample worship survey.

In Part 1, Doukhan sets forth the basic component parts of music—melody, harmony, and rhythm—describing the characteristics of each in turn, with emphasis on the concept of balance. She goes on to describe the purpose of sacred music in terms of conveying theology and communicating by touching the heart and mind. She sees sacred music as defined within particular cultural settings (the human side of the equation), while finding that it is pleasing to God when directed toward him (the divine side of the equation).

Doukhan does not see any style or type of music as inherently right or wrong, good or bad. She supports this premise by describing the Greek concept of *ethos*, which was centered on the idea of balance and average. For the Greeks, “Behavior that did not feature harmony, balance, and measure were [*sic*] considered to be evil” (51). The soul could be changed by music through its affinity to the harmonies and rhythms. Doukhan contrasts this with a biblical concept of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. For her, the Greek idea smacks of idolatry, placing a certain magical quality of transformation within the music itself. Thus where some speak of certain types of music as bad or evil, Doukhan suggests a much more complex means whereby music affects people within a particular cultural setting, based upon associations made between the music and other elements of communication. She purports that music’s power resides in its ability to intensify, beautify, stimulate, and empower communication. Its association with a message makes that message more powerfully present to the human being.

On a practical level, Doukhan goes on to give six practical guidelines for creating a responsible musical experience: we should understand our natural

preferences, recognize that musical styles come with cultural baggage, realize that music can affect our emotional and physical well-being, listen actively to create a “musical conscience,” be honest about our musical expectations, and create musical experiences that intensify high moral standards. She draws from these guidelines a twofold lesson—we should take responsibility for our musical choices and the effect they have on us and others, and we should be tolerant of where other people come from in their musical journey.

In Part 2, Doukhan sets forth her philosophy of music based on her reading of Scripture and the writings of Ellen White. She notes that the Bible does not give direct instruction in a philosophy or theology of music. However, she sees certain principles set forth in events in Scripture that illustrate that music is both for God and for people. One of the central principles she enunciates in this section is beauty. Others include mental, spiritual, and social growth. Music done for the Lord is focused only on him. Doukhan questions whether music in Adventist Churches has become more focused on the performer and performance than on God. She calls for a balanced emphasis on joy and reverence in focusing music on God. The musician is to remember that he or she is playing or singing for God, to please God. Two central character traits of God need equal emphasis: God is the transcendent Creator, and he is the immanent Redeemer. Through focus on these characteristics, she maintains that any musical style can be transformed into worship music.

Doukhan describes music within the ancient temple services of Israel. She notes the similarities and distinctions between Israelite and pagan use of musical instruments, describing how instruments were used in different ways. She concludes that no instruments are sacred or evil by nature. It is the use made of them that associates them with good or evil.

In regard to music being for people, Doukhan notes that music within the church cannot be a simple matter of personal preference because it is a collective experience of the community of faith. Too many times arguments over music occur on the horizontal level—my preferences versus yours. She calls for a reorientation of the discussion to the vertical level—how this or that music can contribute to the glory of God. She has a nuanced discussion of relating to the preferences of others in regard to musical tastes. On the basis of concern for the “weaker brother” (Romans 14), she calls for a balanced approach by not denying one person’s feelings, while not allowing them to hijack the entire congregation.

Part 3 deals with the church’s wrestling with issues regarding appropriate music for worship. Here she reviews the history of music in the church from NT times, but with a major focus on Martin Luther’s use of *contrafacta* in utilizing common secular tunes to express and teach the gospel to church members. Luther’s idea was to make the gospel relevant and memorable to people in their everyday lives. Doukhan describes Luther’s concepts at some length. Surprisingly, she follows this with a brief description of John Calvin’s

and other Reformers' contrasting viewpoints. She sees Calvin's restraint regarding music as reflective of his deep distrust of society, resulting in his theology of the elect.

In a brief concluding chapter in this section, Doukhan describes in rapid-fire style the shifts and changes that have taken place in both society and the church since the time of the Reformation. On the church side, numerous heirs of the Reformation followed in the footsteps of Luther to use *contrafacta* for bringing the gospel to the masses. At the same time, events such as the French Revolution and the rise of Romanticism shifted the focus of society to the individual expression of the true self and a fascination with the mystery and spiritual qualities of the past. Church music divided into two streams: high church, with a focus on the vertical and classical music; and low church, with a focus on the human aspects of worship, popular music, and the horizontal.

In Part 4, Doukhan grapples with the contemporary scene in church music, illustrating the distinctions between Contemporary Christian Music and Contemporary Worship Music. The former is that which is traditionally sung by performing Christian artists and contains more complex instrumentation and arrangements. The later is illustrated more in the praise songs sung by a congregation. Contemporary Worship Music has simpler melodies and arrangements for ease of group singing. She describes both the strengths and challenges of Christian Worship Music. On the positive side, its lyrics often come straight from Scripture; it contains unpredictability, which fosters more attention and participation; and its repetitive lyrics help teach the words easily. On the negative side, it can have shallow lyrics and a focus on sentimentality. Because it is a new genre, many songs are produced, some of which will not pass the test of time, which older styles have already gone through.

Doukhan provides a useful and nuanced discussion of harmony between the message of the text and the music, standards of music performance, and the use of new technologies in musical presentation, including a thoughtful discussion about the use of sound tracks in solo presentations.

At the conclusion of this section, Doukhan discusses rock music in the church. She describes it not simply as a musical style, but as a cultural phenomenon that is characterized by using music and a set of dress and performance patterns to protest against societal norms. She also describes the musical elements of rock as "meter and rhythm characterized by a constant tension relationship, and electronic enhancement and manipulation of instrumental and vocal sounds" (244). She discovers its roots in the turbulent days of the 1960s and 1970s. The goal of rock musicians was to heighten the experience of human emotion and to probe more deeply the human psyche. She notes the sharp contrast between such music in general and Christian lifestyle, pointing to the way that the experience of rock culture and music can take the place of God in the life. However, she proposes that not all rock music goes to these extremes and calls for a balanced approach toward more

subdued forms. She believes that the musical elements still require calling such music “rock,” but maintains that it does not necessarily work against societal values. She sees this type of music fitting “the energy and excitement of youth” (247). It serves as a fitting representation of our fast and aggressive urban culture. Nevertheless, she strongly cautions about using such music for worship. Not only are many of the values of this music quite at odds with the Christian life, but also it requires a very talented musician to bring this type of music appropriately into a worship setting.

In Part 5, Doukhan addresses music ministry within the Adventist Church. From years of experience in church music, she describes the role of the pastor, the church musician, and what she calls the “Worship Commission”—a typical worship committee for a local church. She recommends a proper valuation of music within the church and a committee approach to the use of music within the worship service. This avoids one person being responsible for any missteps that might occur and helps to shield musicians from criticisms that might arise from the use of a variety of music styles.

At the end of this section, she includes a chapter on change in worship and music by utilizing lessons from history to describe the power of tradition and the past. She maintains that the essential nature of the worship of God has remained the same through history, though the form of worship has modified to meet changing cultures and situations. She presents three issues that have created unease with change within the Adventist Church: the purpose of church music, the exclusive status of high-church music, and the relationship between secular and sacred music (292). She seeks to resolve the problem of the purpose of music (Should it elevate thought or express the believer’s experience?) by reminding people on both sides of the issue to remember the tension between being uplifted to God and yet expressing the struggles of experience that exist within authentic worship. Regarding the status of high-church music, she reminds her readers that the split between low-church and high-church styles actually occurred during the nineteenth century as an aspect of the Romantic period’s glorification of the past. She suggests a different way to view this divide—adopt the *spirit* of the past, rather than the products of the past (286). Regarding the use of secular music within a church setting, she refers to the history of *contrafacta* in the Reformation period and recommends embracing the change.

Doukhan writes clearly and her presentation is well organized. She footnotes her statements carefully and illustrates in her writing a depth of understanding of both historical and artistic detail in regard to music and a sense of fairness and wisdom in counseling about how to relate to the thorny issue of music choices within the church. Her presentation moves logically from the experience of music to inspired counsel concerning its application to the church today. Her overarching concept is *balance*, an idea that repeatedly appears in the discussion and which prevents a one-sided presentation.

This is a thoughtful book, carefully written, and worth the time for any church musician or pastor to read. The following critiques are not central to the book's overall value, but point to concepts that might be added in a second edition:

A small erratum can be noted: Diagram A (93) is poorly labeled, which could easily lead to the misidentification of landmarks in Herod's Temple. Diagram B on the following page has appropriate labels, though it lacks reference to the Court of Women and the Court of the Gentiles (which is preferable to "Court of the Heathen" in Diagram A).

I would have liked to have seen a focused discussion of the subject of worship itself. Doukhan comes closest to this in chapter 3 ("The Meaning of Music") and in chapter 5 ("Music for God"). She focuses her attention on the question of *music* in worship, rather than worship itself. Music is her area of expertise, so this is not surprising, but can one discuss the meaning of music in worship without first discussing the definition of worship? The interesting ideas she has on the topic of worship are sprinkled throughout the discussion. However, it seems that a focused presentation of them would strengthen her argument and help explicate the underlying principles from which she works.

Another topic I found presented in laconic form was the theology or teaching of John Calvin on music in the church. Doukhan takes almost forty pages to describe Luther's teaching on congregational singing and the use of *contrafacta*, but then allots a mere four pages to John Calvin and just two pages to the Council of Trent. This seems rather one-sided and suggests an affirmation of Luther's perspective without giving due weight to argument on the other side.

Doukhan writes carefully on the subject of rock music and is cautious about its usage in church settings. One point that surprised me, however, was the omission of discussion of volume/dynamics (this could be added to the first section of the book on elements of music). One of the major problems of rock music with its electronic amplification is how loudly it is often played. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration requires ear protection for employees exposed regularly to decibel levels above 85 dBA ([http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadispl.show\\_document?p\\_table=standards&p\\_id=9735](http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadispl.show_document?p_table=standards&p_id=9735)). Rock concerts can be in the range of 120 dBA, which can cause hearing damage within thirty seconds of exposure (see [http://www.ddca.org/pdf/1\\_ddca/Noise\\_Decibel\\_Levels\\_DDCA\\_OSAA.pdf](http://www.ddca.org/pdf/1_ddca/Noise_Decibel_Levels_DDCA_OSAA.pdf)). While church music does not normally reach this level of intensity, there are settings where the amplification is set too high for hearing health.

Doukhan's careful call for balance in the use of styles and sensitivity to the cultural and congregational setting in which music appears makes one wish that many a pastor and musician would read this book before imposing on their congregation a personally preferred form of worship music that the congregation is not ready to use. This book is a valuable resource and a

thoughtful read for both musicians and clergy involved with the ministry of music.

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Erickson, Millard J. *Who's Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009. 272 pp. Paper, \$19.99.

Millard J. Erickson, one of the most widely published and respected North American evangelical theologians of the late twentieth and early twentieth centuries, has produced helpful history, analysis, and assessment of the so-called "Subordination Debate" in *Who's Tampering with the Trinity?* Erickson is a past president of the Evangelical Theological Society and has written widely on the doctrine of God (*God the Father Almighty: A Contemporary Exploration of the Divine Attributes*, 1998), and more specifically on the Trinity, including a chapter in his *Christian Theology* (1982, 2d ed., 1998), *God in Three Persons: A Contemporary Interpretation of the Trinity* (1995), and *Making Sense of the Trinity: Three Crucial Questions* (2000).

The "Subordination Debate" is a theological initiative that has erupted out of lengthy developments in the more recent history of American evangelicalism, who belong primarily to the Reformed tradition and are leading members of the Evangelical Theological Society. All of the major protagonists in the debate claim to be biblical and orthodox in their views of the Trinity. The key issue, however, that has become controversial is the question of Christ's "subordination" to the Father—was his subordination eternal or was it manifest only during Christ's earthly, incarnate experience? Erickson identified two key views in this debate: "Gradational-Authority" and "Equivalent-Authority."

All participants agree that Christ was subordinate to the Father during the earthly incarnation, but the controversy arises out of the claim of the "Gradationalists" that Christ has been eternally subordinate to the Father and that such eternal subordination sets a pattern for other spheres of authority: familial (husbands have intrinsic authority over wives) and ecclesiastical (only males, not females, should have ruling authority in the church). Key protagonists for the Gradational view include Bruce Ware, Wayne Grudem, and Robert Letham, while the leading advocates for the "Equivalent" view include Paul Jewett, Gilbert Bilezikian, Stanley Grenz (now deceased), and Kevin Giles.

Erickson's treatment reflects a valiant attempt to be both thorough and even-handed. He notes that he struggled to find terms of identification for each party in this debate, which is reflected in his attempts to avoid *ad hominem* attacks. His thoroughness is evident in his identification of the key protagonists and the flow of his chapters. After an informative Introduction, chapters 1 and 2 outline the respective views of each major party. Chapter 3 introduces "The Criteria for Evaluating Alternatives," followed by chapters 4-8, which analyze "The Biblical Evidence," "The Historical Considerations," "The Philosophical Issues," "The Theological Dimensions," and "The Practical Implications." The volume concludes with "*Summary and Conclusions*."