

The influence of Inculturation of Liturgical Music on National Integration and Cohesion Paper presented by Ken Mulwa

The advent of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, that is, Vatican II, with its spirit of *aggiornamento*, an Italian word meaning “bringing up to date”, brought the new concept of inculturation. This is the process of systematically bringing the people’s culture into the Church. Inculturation in this sense encompassed both linguistic liturgy, that is, the language in which holy mass is celebrated, and artistic liturgy, that is, the aspects of liturgy that tap on the arts, be it music, paintings and sculptures, architecture, altar decoration et cetera. The main aim of inculturation was to enhance congregational participation by making the congregation an active part of the liturgy. In the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya, inculturation has entailed, for the most part, incorporation of cultural tunes, instruments, language and idioms in liturgical music. Given the multi-ethnic nature of the country, it is thus possible, and plausible, that a liturgy in a Roman Catholic Church in Kenya will incorporate several cultures, rather than just one. This is particularly evident in the churches in metropolitan parts of the country, where the congregation is composed of multiple ethnic groups. This paper will focus on the musical aspects of this inculturation, and probe its development and extent in the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya. The paper will ask, and attempt to answer, these questions: Does inculturation of liturgical music influence national integration and cohesion in Kenya? That is:

- a. What is the history and development of inculturation of liturgical music in the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya?
- b. What is the current position of/on inculturation of the liturgical music in the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya?
- c. Has inculturation of liturgical music influenced national integration and cohesion in Kenya?
- d. What influence has inculturation of liturgical music had on national integration and cohesion in Kenya?

Keywords

Inculturation, Culture, Roman Catholic Church, Liturgical music, National integration, Social cohesion

Primary author: MULWA, Ken (University of Nairobi)