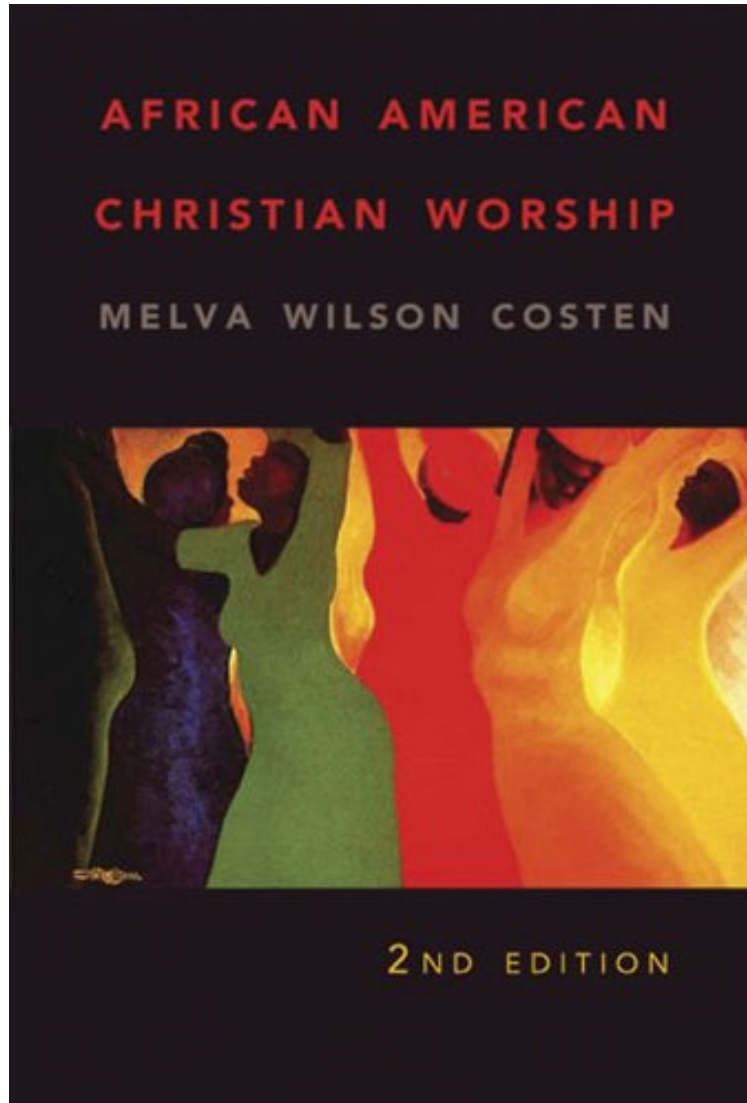


(Download pdf) African American Christian Worship: 2nd Edition

African American Christian Worship: 2nd Edition

Von Melva Wilson Costen

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Produktinformation Veröffentlicht am: 2010-09-01 Erscheinungsdatum: 2010-09-01 File Name: B00AKJYNYU | File size: 78.Mb

Von Melva Wilson Costen : African American Christian Worship: 2nd Edition before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised African American Christian Worship: 2nd Edition:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Rich Expression of True African American Worship Von Rev Bennett It would take me several pages to adequately write a review that expresses the scholarship contained in this book. I am honored to be able to review this text because it is such an outstanding piece of work. I know that this book has been discussed by the academy, clergy, students, and laypersons alike. It is a very scholarly, well researched, and organized writing on African American Christian worship.

I really don't know where to begin because there are just so many great things I could say about this book. It is a must for every library of scholars interested in the area of worship. I used this book as a primary resource for a seminary graduate project in music. But the book has much more to offer and is not limited to any one topic of worship. Costen starts with a discussion of the theology of African American worship and how this relates to our "core belief" system and our "doctrine of God." She notes that African American worship can be characterized in general as "experiential." African people "tend to seek to know God personally rather than to know about God from doctrines and creeds." She presents music, preaching, prayer, ritual, and shouting as a means of communication and empowerment in worship. These acts are also described as "celebrative acts of worship" that engage the community of faith into divine communion with God and with one another. From a historical perspective, Costen begins with worship in the Invisible Institution and discusses how it uniquely shaped the culture of worship for African American people. Later on, she provides a historical summary of the African American denominations and congregations and the history behind their formation. The book has much more than I could ever discuss - from a detailed history of African American music to a contemporary model for worship. This book is very well written, scholarly, and simple to read. It is a must for every library.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An Excellent Resource for African American Christian Worship Von RevBennettIt would take me several pages to adequately write a review that expresses the scholarship contained in this book. I am honored to be able to review this text because it is such an outstanding piece of work. I know that this book has been discussed by the academy, clergy, students, and laypersons alike. It is a very scholarly, well researched, and organized writing on African American Christian worship. I really don't know where to begin because there are just so many great things I could say about this book. It is a must for every library of scholars interested in the area of worship. I used this book as a primary resource for a seminary graduate project in music. But the book has much more to offer and is not limited to any one topic of worship. Costen starts with a discussion of the theology of African American worship and how this relates to our "core belief" system and our "doctrine of God." She notes that African American worship can be characterized in general as "experiential." African people "tend to seek to know God personally rather than to know about God from doctrines and creeds." She presents music, preaching, prayer, ritual, and shouting as a means of communication and empowerment in worship. These acts are also described as "celebrative acts of worship" that engage the community of faith into divine communion with God and with one another. From a historical perspective, Costen begins with worship in the Invisible Institution and discusses how it uniquely shaped the culture of worship for African American people. Later on, she provides a historical summary of the African American denominations and congregations and the history behind their formation. The book has much more than I could ever discuss - from a detailed history of African American music to a contemporary model for worship. This book is very well written, scholarly, and simple to read. It is a must for every library.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A heritage worth exploring Von FrKurt MessickOk, so what can I, a white guy (perhaps, I might emphasise, a VERY white guy), get out of a book on African American Christian worship? More than one might think - read on.Costen, in her book 'African American Christian Worship,' begins with a discussion of core theological beliefs that shape all of such worship. This core seeks to locate and connect the liturgy with the rest of life, such that the practice of worship has meaning that influences the rest of life, and vice versa. These core beliefs are rather interesting, and not at all out of line with what my own basic theology would contain. However, the liturgical practice in my own background does not always realise the larger connection between the shape of the worship liturgy and the larger universe. There is a strong focus on personal experience as a primary spiritual element. Being interested in such spirituality, I was intrigued by her quote: 'Unlike the Western-oriented Christian, whose theology is rooted in Greco-Roman concepts and culture, African peoples tend to seek to know God personally rather than to know about God from doctrines and creeds.' (p. 20) While I am a very creed-based Christian, I still seek those experiences and practices which help me to know God, as well as having respect for those practices and studies which talk about God. There has been a tension between these orientations in the more Euro-centric history as well as the African American history, with each side having a similar suspicion of the other. One of Costen's shortcomings in this book is that she ignores the whole of the Western contemplative tradition. Costen elaborates on the historical aspects of African American worship, particularly as it continues to be informed by its origins as an expression of oppressed peoples. There is, however, no single pattern or form for African American worship; rather, the variety of African American worship that exists today across many denominational lines are all influenced to varying degrees by this background. For instance, 'all African American denominations (Protestant especially) can claim heritage in the Invisible Institution, regardless of when and where they enter denominational history.' (p. 87) However, this is shaped and influenced by a number of factors, including location, leadership, daily life of worshipers, and what Costen describes as the 'denominational ethos' of the worshipers. To think that there is one pattern of African American Christian worship is a mistake. As someone coming out of the Anglican tradition, I was interested in the discussion of the role of the Church of England and British-based movements on the early African American experience. This is not a history of which I am very familiar, and it is not one emphasised in other historical texts I have studied. Certainly, practices such as the Ring Shout are very removed from my experience and tradition. I wonder if the description and discussion in Costen's book does this practice justice, as I did not get a good sense of what exactly takes places and

what feelings and connections to God are manifest in the practice. This is most likely another case of the necessary difference between reading about a practice and actually enacting and participating in the practice. I was very interested in the idea of the Invisible Institution and the improvised architecture and accoutrements dedicated to worship. As one who often has to improvise meeting spaces, etc., I have had to deal with some of the difficulties discussed here, albeit none as difficult to deal with as official societal and legal suppression as was enacted against early African American self-directed worship experiences. Perhaps the most important chapter for me was the concluding one, which discusses worship as empowerment. Costen states, 'In order for corporate worship to be authentic and empowering, it must be psychologically relevant to worshipers and commensurate with their lived experience.' (p. 123) Likewise, she writes, 'The most effective demonstration of true liturgy is what we do in obedience to God in Christ with our lives when we gather and when we scatter as a community in the world.' (p. 127) These quotes sum up for me the importance of worship in life, learning, and the hoped-for relevance of what takes place during our liturgical-worshipful times to our overall lives. This transcends the unique experience of any particular group such as African Americans, and becomes important for all people.

Kurzbeschreibung In this update to her 1993 classic, *African American Christian Worship*, Melva Wilson Costen, again delights her reader with a lively history and theology of the African American worship experience. Drawing upon careful scholarship and engaging stories, Dr. Costen details the global impact on African American worship by media, technology, and new musical styles. She expands her discussion of ritual practices in African communities and clarifies some of the ritual use of music in worship. In keeping with recent congregational practices, Dr. Costen will also provide general orders of worship suitable for a variety of denominational settings.

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ber den Autor und weitere Mitwirkende Melva Wilson Costen, a native of South Carolina, retired as Helmar Emil Nielsen Professor of Worship and Music, choral director, and chair of the church music degree program at Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She subsequently became the Visiting Professor of Liturgical Studies at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut. She remains active in the Civil Rights Movement and as a teacher and consultant in area of church music, liturgy, and curriculum development. (2006)