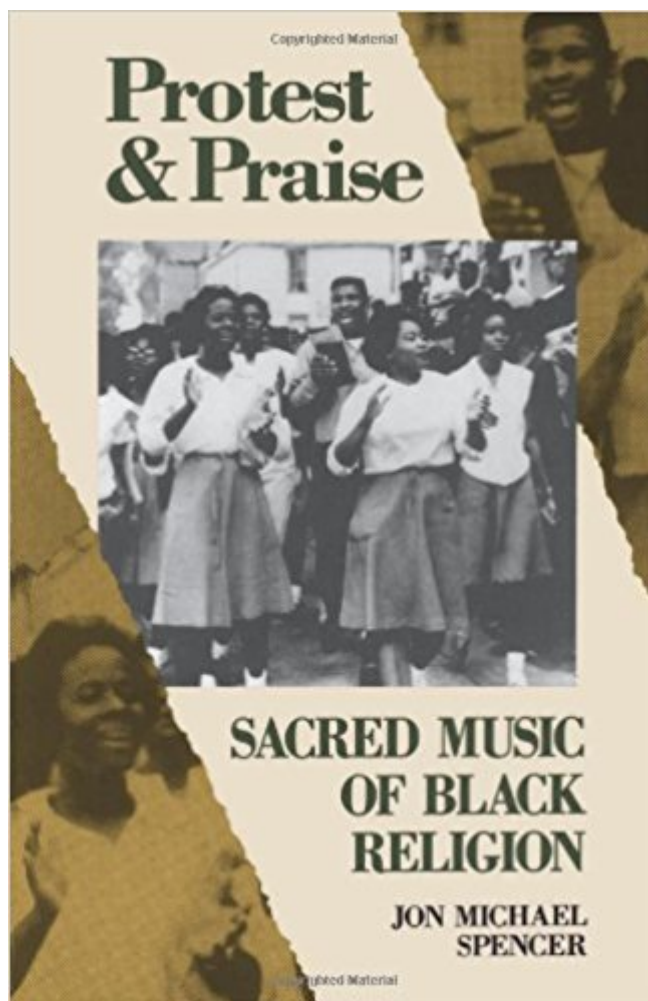


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# PROTEST AND PRAISE



## Synopsis

Here is a skillful tracing of two tracks in the evolution of musical genres that have evolved from black religion Songs of protest developed from the spiritual through social gospel hymnody to culminate in songs of the civil rights movement and the blues Born in rebellion they envision the Kingdom of God Songs of praise by contrast express adoration Beginning with the ring shout Spencer follows the history of intoned declamation through the tongue song Holiness Pentecostal music and the chanted sermon of the black preacher Spencer s approach termed theomusicology unlocks the wealth of African American sacred music with a theological key The result is a fascinating account of a people s struggle with God in history

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Very powerfully researched and articulated book

The ten chapters of this volume are varied in content, style and interest to the nonprofessional. However, the chapter "Bluesman Adam and Blueswoman Eve: A Theology for the Blues" alone make the book worth its cost. Spencer presents an argument for considering blues as unchurched religion, complementary to church music. One need only to love the blues for this chapter to provoke thought. At the other extreme "Isochronisms of Antistructure: Music in the Black Holiness-Pentecostal Testimony Service," places the holiness-pentecostal music in the framework of Bruce Reed (The Dynamics of Religion), Martin Buber (I and Thou), Victor Turner (The Ritual Process) ... Because of the popularity of the Sacred Steel cd's, this essay is worth the effort required to understand Spencer's analysis. Historical essays on the ring-shout, spirituals, and gospel music provide a solid background for the music. In these essays, as in the entire collection, example recordings would enhance the volume.

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