Centering on **African Practice** in **Musical Arts Education**

Edited by Minette Mans

AFRICAN
MINDS

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Foreword

Minette Mans, editor, Windhoek, Namibia

This collection came about through the involvement of teachers, musicians and scholars in the Pan African Society of Musical Arts Education (PASMAE). Musical arts educators from across the continent submitted proposals and research reports to the PASMAE Maputo Conference, Mozambique, July 2005. Although the practical nature of the conference meant that the papers as such were not presented, all the submissions underwent a strict peer review process, and eventually 19 papers were selected from the original 34.

Writers must often wonder, what are the guiding criteria for selection? The answer is simply engaging, lucid writing that represents different regions and, more importantly, brings out the voices of African musicians and scholars, to speak of musical culture and education in African contexts. In a sense, the idea of collective participation is built into the entire collection, which should be read as coming from different perspectives, age groups, genders and levels of involvement with musical arts. Singly, each sings a different song. Collectively, several ideas and concerns are brought forward in harmony.

Even at an early stage of reading the contributions, I was keen to allow the diverse group of authors' individual voices and ideas to stand for themselves. As the editorial process continued, it became evident that this would not always be easy, and I had to resist the temptation of becoming overly involved

in time-consuming discussion of certain "hot" issues. It seemed important to allow authors to retain their own styles and perspectives. The different paradigms educators work from, and their theoretical perspectives therefore bring a richness and "multiversity" to this collection, and are very likely to stimulate lively discussion and argument amongst the cadre of African music educators and others.

As my insight into the contributions developed, it became clear that this volume speaks for Africa in so many ways – not all of which appear in the actual words of the authors. The covert signs are there to be read as well. The discerning reader might note that the various essays differ markedly in style and level of discourse. Whereas Western academia displays fixed rules on what qualifies as scholarly and what as education, this collection includes articles that emerge from work in progress, personal accounts, ethnographic research, as well as theoretical, literature-driven reflective discourse and philosophical argument. My reasoning as editor was that educational materials based on African experience are sorely needed throughout the continent. While the guidance of mature reflection is required, the direct sharing of inspiring experiences and new material information serve a very practical purpose.

Readers might also note that much of the literature referenced is somewhat "elderly". This reflects a common African situation that scholars in wealthier countries might not be aware of. It is not a case of the African scholar's inability to find the latest sources, but a situation where university libraries do not have adequate budgets for books, particularly in the arts. However, drawing new ideas out of dated, often colonial, literature might be seen as a case of creative intellectual recycling!

In a recent survey of research on informal education in music and dance in Africa, it became clear that there is a trend amongst African scholars to assert their right to pragmatic research, drawing from personal experience and knowledge learnt via the oral traditions of Africa (Mans in Bresler, 2006 forthcoming). That trend is also apparent in this collection, where some of the authors, for example Mindoti, Samuel, Onyeji and Masasabi, report on

education in instruments they play and communities they live(d) in, rather than providing extensive literature references. This is counter-balanced by work that relies entirely on empirical, philosophical and ethnographic methods.

The book is organised broadly into two sections. The first looks into the theoretical perspectives and systems – philosophical, normative, aesthetic and political – that underlie musical practices. It also looks at practical implementations of theories in educational situations. This includes two different interrogations of aesthetics in Africa. Musical meaning is investigated, and educators are warned against the neglect of growing in musical arts in the African ways. Several of these issues are picked up in the articles on educational situations as well as those commenting on cultural practices. The issues of values and meaning emerge time and again throughout the book.

The second section of the book draws from diverse experiences and cultures to bring new, often ethnographic, information on cultural practices, musical instruments and playing, and archiving techniques. The importance of drawing upon musical heritage to strengthen and support contemporary education, is a theme and is stressed time and time again. So too, is the importance of understanding indigenous knowledge systems, organised as meaningful musical arts, demonstrating and maintaining value systems. This becomes clear in the articles that provide organological descriptions of traditional musical instruments, playing techniques, learning techniques and musical examples. Others look into the changing environments in which traditional cultural practices try to survive and retain meaning, while some authors take the opposite perspective and describe "imported" musical influences that have taken seed and blossomed in an African way.

Having worked and worried together at these essays and reports, I think I may speak for all who contributed that we trust this book will help readers in practical and thoughtful ways, bringing a small but worthwhile contribution to the extant African writings on musical arts. After all, as a Namibian saying goes, "One day cannot make an elephant rot", but in Hausa terms, "Small showers fill the stream". May this be a small shower.

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Acknowledgements

Reflections on African theory and educational implementation

CHAPTER **01**

Aesthetics and practices in indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba of Africa

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ABSTRACT

Choral music in Africa could be classified as Western "art", African "art" or indigenous African choral music, which includes traditional "classical", ethnic, religious and folk styles. All over Africa, indigenous choral singing was a strongly established tradition long before colonisation and the subsequent introduction of Western choral music. This music is rich in terms of culture, musical quality and functionality, making use of styles which although diverse, are unique to Africa. As observed among the Yoruba of Africa, indigenous choral music is organised on gender, age, social, hereditary and divine orders. The harmonic textures include unison, homophonic parallelism and polyphony, while the arrangement of scores is completely oral, surviving through oral traditions. Unlike Western practice, the conducting is carried out by the master musician or the lead singer, while the voice arrangements and stylistic techniques are distinct. This paper examines the unique aesthetic principles that underlie the indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba of Africa and the resultant organisational structures, performance contexts and practices, with a view to documenting and reviving the indigenous choral heritage which is almost dying in many ethnic groups as a result of education, modernity and other external influences.

Key words: indigenous African music; choral singing; Yoruba, Nigeria, aesthetics, choral styles; performance

INTRODUCTION

The aesthetics and practices of indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba people of Africa are the focus of this essay, which seeks to demonstrate the uniqueness of Yoruba vocal music traditions by providing a descriptive survey of the styles. The term "indigenous choral" as used here differs from the Western interpretation of the same word. It is not the SATB tradition. What is obtained is "group singing". Also, although choir as an exclusive aesthetic singing group (*egbe akorin*) exists, it is not commonly practised by the Yoruba. A particular singing group is, in most cases, constituted by the participants in an activity or function. This distinction was implied by Nketia (1974) when he categorised the organisation of vocal music among traditional African societies into solo singing and group singing. The word choral is therefore used here to mean group singing. It is indigenous because it originated, belongs and is peculiar to the owners, not influenced by external factors.

The Yoruba from Nigeria are one of the major ethnic groups in Africa, having several ethnic subdivisions. Euba (1992a) described the old Yoruba kingdom as the most powerful coastal state in Nigeria. The traditional religion, culture and arts have influenced the legacies of many other cultures both in and outside Africa. The Yoruba are believed to have the largest variety of musical genres in Nigeria. On this, Euba (1992b) wrote:

Yoruba traditional music is marked by an impressive variety of genres, forms, styles and instruments. While this variety is partly a result of the diverse sub-cultures, much of it is common to Yoruba culture as a whole. (Euba, 1992b: 576)

In his work, *Folk Song Style and Culture*, Lomax (1968) identified Africa as one of the song-style regions of the world and listed Yoruba as one of the distinct cultures in Africa. The word "style" in music has been defined by various scholars (see Adedeji, 2004). Style here, is used to mean different manners, modes and types of expression and presentation of indigenous choral music of the Yoruba. The choral style of a particular people says a lot about their culture. In line with this, Lomax (1968: vii) submitted that "song style symbolises and reinforces certain important aspects of social structure in

all cultures" more especially the "communications systems".

AESTHETICS

The aesthetics of indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba is multifarious, multilateral and cosmological. Firstly, the aesthetic principles are not primarily based on beauty or "music for art's sake" but on functionality and "music for life's sake" (Nketia, 2004). The choral groups are not organised on musical values. Rather, their organisation is based on activities and functions, which are considered primary. Some of these functions, which permeate the entire life of the Yoruba, include religion, social activities, politics, protests and rites of passage. This does not in any way mean that the Yoruba have no concept of artistic beauty. For instance, when they say *orin naa dun*, it means the song is "sweet" or beautiful, and when they say *orin naa ko dun*, it means the opposite. *Mo gbadun orin naa* means "I enjoyed the music", indicating emotive responses.

Also basic among the aesthetic principles of indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba, is the "*K'a rin k'a po*" philosophy. This philosophy, which is rooted in communalism and makes use of joint efforts or involves others, is described in several proverbial and axiomatic Yoruba expressions. Some of these expressions are: *K'a rin k'a po, yi ye ni n ye ni* (moving en masse is befitting); *Ajeje owo kan, k'o gbe eru d'ori* (no bird flies with only one wing); and *A-ni-kan-rin ni n je omo ejo n'iya* (isolation oppresses).[1] As a result of this strong philosophy of life, the Yoruba therefore prefer group or team work in any endeavour. Even in solo or duet arrangements, one could be sure that the performers have the spiritual and moral backings of both the "seen" and the "unseen" community members.

In terms of number, unlike the Western tradition in which selection of the choir members is based on range and skill, the size of a Yoruba indigenous choral group depends on the number of *omo awo* (the worshippers) or the number of people that qualify to participate in the primary activities, in which case the number is not limited. It may also be based on 16, which is the principal number of *Ifa Odus*; on 17, which is the number of days that make

the traditional Ifa month; or 401, which is the number of Yoruba gods. In Yoruba indigenous choral singing, voice range, quality and skill are not prerequisites for would-be singers.

Another aesthetic principle is the supremacy of the text over the music. Generally speaking, African music is text-bound, a major characteristic that distinguishes it from the music of other world cultures. Among the Yoruba, choral music must have something to say, based on the functional usage. The question an average Yoruba man asks when listening to any music is, "What are they saying in the music?" In the light of its importance, the text therefore dictates many things in the indigenous choral practice, among which are compositional techniques, scale, melody, harmony, organisational structure and performance styles.

Instrumentation is another aesthetic element in indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba. Although there are a few instances of unaccompanied group singing performances, in most cases, group singing is accompanied by musical instruments, especially drums and bells. This practice is affirmed by Akpabot (1986: 109): "Unlike western music where it is possible to have a clear dichotomy between vocal and instrumental music, Nigerian vocal and instrumental music are contiguous." The most popular drum ensembles among the Yoruba include *Agere, Aran/Ipese, Igbin, Bata* and *Dundun*. The Yoruba can hardly think of singing without drumming.

One major function of drumming in Yoruba choral music, apart from supplying the beat and enhancing liveliness, is to stimulate the singers to dance. Among the Yoruba and in the rest of Africa, dancing as part of a singing performance, is paramount. To the Yoruba, dancing cannot be removed from singing. The belief in the mutual relationship which exists between singing, drumming and dancing is expressed in the Ifa literary Corpus (Adedeji, 2000).

THE STYLES

There are different levels of categorising the indigenous choral styles of the Yoruba, based on mode of performance, ethnic subdivisions, and on folk or classic traditions.

The first categorisation is based on the mode of performance. At this level, there are two styles – chanting and song styles. The differences between chants and songs have been identified by Euba (1977) and Vidal (1981). The chanting style, which is highly diversified, employs a verbal mode that is in-between speech and song, but closer to song than speech. It does not make direct use of scales as obtained in song style but rather makes use of modes based on indigenous scales. In addition, the chanting mode is also characterised by free rhythm, slow tempo and qualitative meterisation. According to Vidal (1981), the traditional Yoruba chants can be classified as principal and local chants. The principal ones which cover the whole of Yoruba land include *Iwi, Iyere Ifa, Ijala* and *Rara* while the local ones are restricted to ethnic subdivisions. They all share some similarities, but differ on the basis of the tonemic and melodic structures, form and the chanting intonation which features diverse peculiar tone qualities and colours. For instance, *Igbe*, a chant with a fixed set of tones accompanied by hand bells, is associated with the *Awori*, while *Ike* is used by the Gelede guild of the Egbado, Ketu and Lagos people.[2]

One of the major problems in the study of Yoruba chants is that of notation. While definite pitches are easily notated, the indefinite pitches and special tone qualities or colours, which are chief distinguishing characteristics, are not.

Song style on the other hand, engages the singing mode. Different scales of both definite and indefinite pitches are employed. As already identified by Akpabot (1986), scales used in Nigerian traditional music include ditonic, tritonic, tetratonic, pentatonic, hexatonic and heptatonic forms. It is interesting to note that each of them has variations. This is a manifestation of one of the complexities in African music.

The second level of stylistic classification of indigenous Yoruba choral music is based on ethnic subdivisions. Euba (n.d.) classified the Yoruba choral styles into two broad categories, namely the Oyo tradition and non-Oyo tradition. This classification, however, is inadequate. The Yoruba, as a nation in her own right, has several distinct ethnic subgroups scattered all over her land. These include the Ijesha, Ekiti, Akoko, Ijebu, Egba, Oyo, Ondo, Owo, Ife, Igbomina, Kabba, Akure, Ibadan, Ibarapa, Igboho, Isale Eko, Egun, Awori,

Egbado and Ilaje all of which possess distinct styles of group singing with peculiar tonal qualities and colours, which make it possible to differentiate between any two groups.

Lastly, indigenous choral music of the Yoruba can also be categorised as folk and classic traditions (Vidal, 1988). While the folk music is general, the classic tradition is limited to the court of kings.

PRACTICES

As stated earlier, fundamentally, choral music in traditional Yoruba society is unlike Western church choirs where a particular group of people is recruited or set aside as a unit from among the congregation of worshippers. The entire group, whether worshipping, occupational, social, age or sex grouping, makes up the singing group. For instance, Vidal (1989) affirmed that choral singing in the *Oranfe* festival among the Ondo people is performed exclusively by the wives of the Sora family. Nketia (1974: 140–145) highlighted some of the organisational structures of group singing in Africa as including:

 i) two to four people singing antiphonally
 ii) strophic responsorial between lead singer or group of lead singers and the chorus
 iii) call and response
 iv) modified call and response
 v) overlapping between call and response
 vi) lead singer and chorus combining to round up the call and response
 vii) call and response with long sections either ways
 viii) abrupt interrupted by the solo
 ix) lead singer, ostinato and chorus
 x) several parts singing in overlapping manner
 xi) simultaneous elaboration of a basic phrase design by individual singers in the group
 xii) canonic singing.

Euba (1977: 1) in his own explanation; identified "choral singing in unison, choral singing in two or more parts, and singing in which solo and chorus alternate". Akpabot (1986) described the nature of indigenous choral singing in a more detailed form:

Songs by vocal groups are usually in the call-and-response pattern. The cantor improvises his song as he goes along and the chorus answers intermittently with an unvarying chorus line which can be an exact repetition of the solo, derived in part from it, or made up of entirely new material. (ibid. 109)

As observed in the present study, the indigenous choral music of the Yoruba is organised in line with numbers i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii and viii of Nketia's model above. It is important to note that choral performance without lead singing rarely exists among the Yoruba. Indigenous choral music among the Yoruba, both by concept and practice, is basically designed for both lead singer and chorus. Just like the members in the singing group, the lead singer is not chosen because of his/her skill, talent or musical experience. Rather the choice is dependent on his/her position in the basic activity or function that calls for the music, which in some cases may have divine or supernatural considerations.

Activities that necessitate group singing among the Yoruba include religious worship and festivals, ancestral worship, political rallies, anniversaries, installation, rites of passage, cult meetings, praise of Kings, mass protest rallies, wars and various social functions such as naming, weddings and funerals. Traditionally, the religion of the Yoruba can be described as diffused monotheism, in which the Supreme Being, Olodumare, is worshipped through several deities or gods/goddesses including the primordial ones – Obatala, Orunmila, Aje, Esu and Ela – and the apotheosed and localised ones – Ogun, Sango, Oya, Yemoja, Osun, Oranmiyan and Oluorogbo. Each of the gods/goddesses has his/her peculiar music. During the liturgical worship services of these gods, the worshippers sing "chorally". For instance, in Orunmila worship, the worshippers make use of Ifa chanting styles known as *Iyere Ifa, Ifa ibule* and *oferere* and various song styles known as *orin akokun, orin mimo* and *orin mimo* (Adedeji, 1992). Various festivals are held

annually in honour of the Yoruba gods and feature choral singing prominently. An example of these festivals is *Olojo* among the Ife people (Vidal, 1989).

Ancestral worship which features *egungun* (masquerades) take place in all the ethnic subgroups of the Yoruba. The *egungun* otherwise known as *ara orun* (the ancestors) are believed to be the physical presence of the ancestors for the purpose of blessing the people. During the *egungun* festivals, the family of the *egungun* follows the *egungun* in procession and sing as a group. Besides, the *egungun* also intone a chant known as *Iwi* or *Esa*, which is rounded up by the chorus.

Political rallies in support of favoured candidates or to ridicule opponents are accompanied with lyric airs, which are sung in call and response forms. The texts below illustrate the two dimensions:

Call	Ta lo so pa a ni Baba?	*Who says we have no father?*
Resp.	Kai! A ni Baba	*Stop it! We have a father*
Call	Awolowo ni Baba wa	*Awolowo is our father*
Resp.	Kai! A ni Baba	*Stop it! We have a father*
And		
	Awolowo fe e g'esin	*Awolowo wants to ride a horse*
	Awolowo fe e g'esin	*Awolowo wants to ride a horse*
	Bi o ba g'Akinloye, yoo g'Akinjide	*If he does not ride Akinloye, he will ride Akinjide*
	Awolowo fe e g'esin	*Awolowo wants to ride a horse*
		(Olaniyan, 1997: 427)

Anniversaries of clans, towns, or in commemoration of great events are also accompanied by group singing by the celebrants only. Also during installation or coronation of kings or chiefs, the supporters sing songs such as:

Iwo la a fi s'agba	*It is you we have chosen as our head*
Iwo la a fi se	*It is you we have chosen*
A je e je tun je	*We've got this honour*
A je e je tun je	*and we will get more*
Bi a ba je yii tan, a a je mii si	*After this, we will get another one*
A je e je tun je	*We've got this honour*

The female puberty rite among the Ikare Akoko people is a good illustration of group singing during rites of passage. During this rite, female virgins between 12 and 18 years of age march through the town naked wearing only trousers, singing songs for virgins. In this case, the choir is exclusively constituted by the female virgins being initiated.

Cults or secret societies are to be found in different parts of Yoruba land. These cults are simply called *Awo* (cult) or linked with the town or the founder. For instance, there is the *Awo Ife* (the Ife cult). The most pronounced of the Yoruba cults or secret societies is the Ogboni Aborigines. In their meetings, they sing their cult songs. Such sacred songs are exclusively meant for the members and must not be sung outside the cult meetings. At Aramoko Ekiti, a cult song text in call and response is:

Call	Se lo su wo o	*Because you are*
Resp.	Ah, se lo s'omo umole	*Yes, you are a cult child*

Group singing also occurs in honour of kings, during coronation, special days, public outings and celebrations. It is common to see a particular group or all the men, women or youth of a town, troop out and sing in honour of their king. A popular song text of this category is:

Call	Oba o, Oba alase, Oba	*The King is with authority*
	Oba o, Oba alase, Oba	*The King is with authority*
	Ki le n fOba pe?	*What do you think a King is?*
Resp.	Oba o, Oba alase, Oba	*The King is with authority*

Mass protest rallies are carried out to demonstrate dissatisfaction, rebellion or to demand one thing or the other. These rallies are normally carried out with music. The group concerned set their grievances into a tune and echo them round the town. Below is an example of a song text of protest group singing:

Bisoobu o, a o yo e o	*Bishop, we will remove you*
Bisoobu o, a o yo e o	*Bishop, we will remove you*
A f'omo ti o, o tun ba a sun	*You had sex with your ward*
A f'omo ti o, o tun ba a sun	*You had sex with your ward*
Bisoobu o, eeh,	*Oh, you Bishop*
Bisoobu o, a o yo e o	*Bishop, we will remove you*

War songs range from warning, to signal, encouragement and celebration of victory. War songs are led by *olori ogun* or *akogun* or his delegate and the songs are chorused by the *omo ogun* (soldiers). A war song goes as follows:

Call	Gidigbo, gidigbo	*Get ready to fight*
Call	eeh!	*That's right*
Call	Gidigbo, gidigbo	*Get ready to fight*
Call	eeh!	*That's right*

Call	K'olomo kilo f'omo re	*Warn your relatives*
Call	Oni a ro	*We are going to fight*

Events such as naming, weddings and funerals among Yoruba cannot be successfully organised without music. As a result, both the celebrants and well-wishers engage in choral singing for felicitation purposes. For instance, during wedding ceremonies, the bride and her colleagues perform a solo and chorus chant known as *Ekun Iyawo*. Also, during funeral ceremonies, the family and relatives of the deceased organise street parades, which feature mainly singing. Other activities which feature group singing among the Yoruba include a wrestling game and moonlight play, where folktales and songs are rendered.

As stated earlier, choral singing is also arranged on gender and age bases. For instance, the singing group may consist of all male, all female or mixed voices in some cases. Also, there are children's groups who gather themselves to entertain one another with different games which make use of a lot of singing (Vidal, 1996). Besides the adolescent youths who were mentioned earlier, there are age grade societies or associations all of which engage in corporate singing in their meetings and anniversary celebrations.

We shall now examine other characteristic features of Yoruba choral performance practices. Firstly, as confirmed by scholars, the performances are largely audience-participatory. Secondly, the arrangement is completely oral and flexible, depending on a number of factors such as time, weather or the audience. As a result, performances of the same repertoire in two different places may not be identical.

In general, various vocal styles and qualities are found in indigenous Yoruba choral music; some of which are ululation, gravelling, grating, guttural, grunting, vocal segregates, laughter, moans, sobbing and generally raspy. The harmonic texture varies, but unison is the most common. Other harmonic styles include heterophony, homophonic parallelism, cadential homophony and polyphonic arrangements.

Vocal arrangements are largely based on "ear factor" (whatever sounds good to the ear), a "leader-followers" basis, individual talents and whatever the community considers good. The additional part(s) in most cases are above the melody. Melodic phrases, especially in songs, are usually short.

The directing and conducting of indigenous choral performances among Yoruba are the responsibilities of the song leaders. During performance, the leader uses the speech or song mode in very short phrases to communicate to the singers. For instance, expressions such as those that follow are commonly heard during performances: "O to, eyin elegbe mi" (Enough, my fellow singers); "Die die o, eyin elegbe mi" (Little by little, my fellow singers); "Ohun oke"(More volume).

NEW TRENDS

In recent times, Christianity seems to have had an acculturative effect on traditional socio-religious practices of the Yoruba. The Orunmila or Ifa worship is a good illustration, where many Christian practices have already been adopted. This becomes necessary as a strategy to discourage the continuous conversion of youths from traditional Orunmila worship to Christianity. The acculturative effect becomes obvious in the music, which features a departure from the traditions of indigenous choral styles. For instance in the new setting, church-like buildings (*Ile-Ijuba*) are constructed for worship and a special set of people are recruited as the worship choir, seated separately in uniform and led by a choirmaster. This new style features the new hybrid Ifa sacred hymns composed and sung in Christian hymnic style. The harmonic texture, however, remains the same.

Another area of departure concerns new performance contexts, which necessitate changes in the organisational structures of the indigenous choral styles. The recontextualisation has given rise to a neo-traditional choral style, where traditional Yoruba music for contemporary concerts, cultural revival, entertainment of foreigners, and so on, is taken out of original context. Selected people in a particular tradition are organised into a singing group, under a leader, wearing their uniform. Their music is restructured into a more formalised setting.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that the organisational structures, performance practices and contexts, and compositional elements of indigenous Yoruba choral styles differ sharply from Western practices, as they are built on the socio-religious activities of the people. I have shown that the styles are multilevelled, multifarious and loosely organised. Although there are departures from the original settings, the indigenous choral styles in their undiluted forms are still to be found in villages and remote areas, where Christianity, Islam, Western civilisation and modernity are not firmly established.

Judging from the findings in this study, further research is inevitable. A specific study of each of the stylistic varieties should be carried out and their vocal nuances, forms and structures documented. The task may be enormous and will require sponsorship. Special funding should be provided by the Nigerian government and interested foreign bodies for such a project.

ENDNOTES

1. Further examples include: *E je ka jo se e* (Let's do it together); *Ikan para po, ikan mo'le* (With joint efforts, the termites build their home); *Osusu owo nii gba'le* (Only a bundle of broom sticks can sweep) and *Agidimolaja, awo Ile-Ife, Awo nii gbe awo ni igbonwo, Bi awo ko ba gbe awo ni igbonwo, awo a te* (The way the cult of Ife operates, necessitates that cult members give support to one another).

2. In addition, *Igbe-Olori* belongs to the palace queens. *Ege*, a wailing vibrato vocal style, is found among the Egba. *Igbala* is also used by the Egba. *Agbe* is another chant used by the Egbado. *Ekun-iyawo* is associated with the Oyo while *Ooro, Ajagbo* and *Eka* are used by the Igbomina. Ondo is noted for *Adan, Ogbere* and *Asiko* chants. *Alamo, Osirigi* and *Ayuu* belong to the Ekiti, while *Olele* is popular with the Ijesa. *Osare* is peculiar to the Ife people. *Reso*, a recitative style, is the chant of the Owo people.

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CHAPTER 02

The philosophy of art reflected in African music: A comparative analysis of Western and African aesthetic perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Music is one of the oldest and popular forms of art that mankind has had a close association with. This paper illuminates the fact that many people, be they pop musicians, music educators and other artists, have often failed to appreciate or understand the nature of African art and by extension African music and dance due to their understanding based on Western perspectives of theories and paradigms. More often, lack of understanding of the African musical idiom and structure has led to inadequate utilisation and explanation of African music.

PREAMBLE

When comparing traditional African standards of aesthetic evaluation with traditional Western standards, Onyewuenyi (1999) not only identifies the differences between criteria of "good" and "bad", or "successful" and "unsuccessful" art in European/American and African cultural contexts but also offers a critique of the traditional Western treatment of African art. In his analysis, he points to a strong ethnocentric tendency among Western artists, art critics and art collectors to interpret and evaluate traditional African artworks according to Western standards, and to fail thereby in their attempt to understand those works. Onyewuenyi thus affirms a qualified relativism concerning aesthetic judgement, based on differences in cultural worldviews rather than differences in cultural in "taste" among individual persons. But he also implies that once culturally specific standards of art evaluation or criticism are recognised, works of art produced within that cultural frame of reference and intended to satisfy those standards, can be objectively evaluated in terms of whether they do so or not.

Ancient Greece supplies us with important contributions to aesthetic theory. Socrates regarded the beautiful as coincident with the good. Every beautiful object is so called because it serves some rational end. Plato in his scheme for an ideal republic provided for the most inexorable censorship of poets and artists in general, so as to make art, as far as possible, an instrument of moral and political training.

Except for the very few dedicated aestheticians who have studied the history of aesthetics as it developed and progressed from Plato through to medieval times, and then via Kant and Hegel to its ramifications in the works of Benedetto Croce, Vico and Dewey, most aestheticians conceive of the artist as a free agent bound by no societal conventions, at liberty and "condemned" to experimentation, whose productions must be judged in their individuality and uniqueness. "It has been argued by some people, that each work of art is unique and individual; that it is the essence of it. If you seek the value of any work of art in terms of some general principles then you are that value." (Chatterji, 1968: 13)

This paper is an attempt to show that African aesthetic standards are different from the "accepted" standards of uniqueness and individuality; that African works of art, be they visual, musical, kinetic or poetic, are created as an answer to a problem and serve some practical end. It will also delineate the philosophical foundation for such differences, and finally propose a theory of African works of art as Africans see it.

African aesthetics?

Aesthetics, as a discipline, has been defined by several scholars as that branch of philosophy which has tried to answer such questions as: "What is art?" or "What is beauty?" Dagobert Runes defines aesthetics traditionally as the branch of philosophy dealing with beauty or the beautiful, especially in art, and with taste and standards of value in judging art (1966: 6).

Accepting the above definition of aesthetics as universal, there is an intellectual temptation to take the position that it is unnecessary and even futile to ask such questions about art. If aesthetics is universal, it is as ridiculous to talk of African aesthetics, as it is to talk of African physics or African chemistry. The question may even be regarded as racially and nationally loaded, indicating an attempt to narrow the discipline of aesthetics in order to satisfy some racial or national whim.

One function of the arts is making explicit the images by which a society recognises its own values and thus offering a means by which the members of a community may express and evaluate new elements in their lives. Furthermore, the arts afford a perspective on human experience as they are created to channel or express the powers of the super-human world, on which men recognise their dependence. The Europeans/Americans and Africans evidently have different conceptions of the powers of the super-human world to which they owe their existence, different ethical and moral values, different social institutions and forms of government – in short, different ideas of reality. Since works of art, be they visual, musical, kinetic or poetic, are used "to convey the unfamiliar in the familiar, the abstract in the concrete, the discursive in the intuitive and the spiritual in the physical; in general to

communicate the nonsensory through the sensory" (Berndtson, 1969: 36), it follows that the symbols must be culturally invested with the contents of their referents. Victor Uchendu may be quoted to round off these arguments in support of the issue of aesthetic relativity:

> *To know how a people view the world around them is to understand how they evaluate life, and a people's evaluation of life, both temporal and non-temporal, provides them with a "charter" of action, a guide to behavior. (Uchendu, 1965: 12)*

Metaphysics as the foundation of aesthetic interpretation

The ultimate basis for cultural differences in interpreting and appreciating art rests principally on differences in metaphysics, which is an integral part of reality as such. Henry Alpern in his *March of Philosophy* (1934) highlighted the importance of metaphysics as the groundwork, the basis, the explanation of human behaviour:

> *Metaphysics by the very definition that it is the study of reality, of that which does not appear to our senses, of truth in the absolute sense, is the ground work of any theory concerning all phases of human behavior. David Hume, whom no one can charge of shutting his eyes to experience, said that metaphysics is necessary for art, morality, religion, economics, and sociology; for the abstract sciences, as well as for every branch of human endeavor considered from the practical angle. It is the foundation upon which one builds one's career consciously and unconsciously; it is the guide; the author of human interests; upon its truth or falsity depends what type of man you develop into. (ibid. 1934: 99)*

Researchers in African philosophy have amply shown that there is a difference between Western and African metaphysics and consequently a difference between the two cultures' "groundwork of any theory concerning all phases" of their behaviour vis-à-vis their art, morality and religion. Placide Tempels (1969) clearly expressed the specific differences between the two:

> *Christian thought in the West having adopted the terminology of Greek philosophy and perhaps under its influence, has defined the reality of all beings,*

or, as one should say, being as such: "the reality that is", "what is". Its metaphysics has most generally been based upon a fundamentally static conception of being. (ibid. 1969: 19).

He goes on to add a crucial point: "Herein is to be seen the fundamental difference between Western thought and that of Bantu and other primitive peoples …we hold a static conception of 'being', they, a *dynamic*". (ibid. 1969: 11).

If we accept what Henry Alpern and David Hume (op cit.) said about the importance of metaphysics as "the ground work concerning all phases of human behavior and necessary for art … as well as for every branch of human endeavour" on the one hand, and the fundamental differences between the Western and African ontology as suggested by Tempels on the other, it would follow that the aesthetic interpretation and appreciation of the works of art in the two cultures must necessarily be different. And indeed they are! "For philosophies of art and beauty are as various as the philosophies of human conduct, politics, science, history and ultimate reality" (Hofstadter & Kuhns, 1964: xiii). They emphasise further the metaphysical dependence of all standards of value in judging art:

In a philosophy of art or in philosophical aesthetics, more generally speaking, beauty and art are understood in terms of essential philosophical ideas … Thus the great philosophies of art have interpreted beauty and art in metaphysical terms … (ibid. 1964: xiv)

Influences of metaphysics on Western aesthetics

The concept of *staticity* which connotes the idea of separate beings, or substances, to use the scholastic term, which exist side by side, independent one of another, is a peculiarity of Western ontology and explains the emphasis on individuality and uniqueness in the interpretation of works of art. This is what Mundy-Castle calls "out-of-context" or "modern art which is frequently without any specific social function. Its primary aim is to communicate personal experience and individualised intuition" (1981: 8). The work of art is often identified with the building, book, painting or status in its existence

apart from human experience. Onyewuenyi in Christensen (1999: 598) suggests that the dictatorship of the spectator, of the collector, even of the dealer, over works of art in recent centuries in Europe and America is a function of individuality of interpretation and subjectivity of tastes and meaning. One can even go so far as to claim that the idea of the museums that Nigeria's Okeke describes as "a graveyard of human achievements" (1981: 64) in the great cities of Europe and other Western countries, is metaphysically influenced by the theory of individuality and uniqueness in aesthetics.

Much emphasis is placed on the "perfection" of art works, the prestige they possess because of a long history of unquestioned admiration. Descriptive terms such as "lively expression", "naturalistic", "disinterested gratification", "ugly", or "beautiful" characterise European/American evaluation of designs and motifs of art works. Thus they are separated from conditions, history and origin, and operation in experience. There is no interpenetration of one art work with another, not to mention their supposed function of making explicit the images by which a society recognises its own values, of offering a means by which the members of a community may express and evaluate new elements in their lives, of affording a perspective of human experience as they are created to channel or express the powers of the super-human world on which human beings recognise their independence.

Quoted in Onyewuenyi (1999), John Dewey criticises the theory of individuality and uniqueness as standards of evaluation by citing the example of the Parthenon, the great Athenian work of art that enjoys worldwide prestige because of a long history of unquestioned admiration. He agrees with Hofstadter and Kuhns (1964) who maintain that the aesthetic standing is achieved only when one:

> [g]oes beyond personal enjoyment into the formation of a theory about the large republic of art of which the building is one member, and is willing at some point in his reflections to turn from it to the bustling, arguing, acutely sensitive Athenian citizens, with civic sense identified with civic religion, of whose experience the temple was an expression and who built it not as a work of art but a civic commemoration. (ibid. 1964: 580)

Dewey seems to be saying that until the function of an art work in relation to the members of a community is discovered and appreciated, the full aesthetic dimension cannot be achieved.

A brief survey of African ontology

An adequate understanding of African ontology, especially in its conception of "reality" or "being" as dynamic, is fundamentally important to our discussion of African art appreciation. The essence of anything is conceived by the African as force.

There is no idea among the Bantu of "being" divorced from the idea of "force". Without the element of "force", "being" cannot be conceived. Force is the nature of being; force is being; being is force (Tempels, 1969: 37).

The concept of force or dynamism cancels out the idea of separate beings or substances which exist side by side independent one of another and which we have shown in our discussion of Western ontology to be responsible for individuality and uniqueness as standards or essence of art. Existence-in-relation, communalism, being-for-self-and-others, sum up the African concept of life and reality. As observed by Tempels:

> [t]he African thought holds that created beings preserve a bond one with another, an intimate ontological relationship. There is an interaction of being with being… This is more so among rational beings, known as Muntu which includes the living and the dead, Orishas and God. (Tempels, 1969: 37).

Because of this ontological relationship among beings, the African knows and feels himself to be in intimate and personal relationship with other forces acting above and below him in the hierarchy of forces. A corollary to this relationship is the traditional African view of the world as one extraordinary harmony, which Adesanyi (in Jahn, 1961: 96) explains as:

> not simply a coherence of fact and faith, nor of reason and traditional beliefs, nor of reason and contingent facts, but a coherence of compatibility among all disciplines. A medical theory, e.g., which contradicted a theological conclusion was rejected as absurd and vice-versa … Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, landlaw, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves

logically concatenated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyse the structure of the whole.

Therefore African art is functional, community oriented, depersonalised, contextualised and embedded. By functional and community oriented we mean that African arts – visual, musical, kinetic or poetic – are designed to serve practical, meaningful purpose, beauty of appearance being secondary. All the same, "functional beauty is also beauty" (Jahn, 1961: 20). A carving, for example, is aesthetically beautiful in the African standard if it functions well as stimulus in the worship of the deity, the community of worshippers being the judges. A mask, despite its "ugly" appearance, is judged beautiful and good if used correctly in the movement of the dance to depict the divine power with which it is imbued through the rhythmic incantations and sacrificial rites of the communal ceremonies. When we say that African art is depersonalised we mean that the artist's concern is not to depict his own individual whims and feelings. He performs rather in such a way as to fulfil the ritual and social purposes of his community, for whom the arts are meant to regulate the spiritual, political and social forces within the community. Speaking about African poets, Jahn (1961) testifies that "[a]s a poet he is the representative of all, and as a representative he is a poet" (ibid. 1961: 25). Whether it is music, dancing or poetry, he cannot draw his own motifs, his themes, his obsessions from the very essence of his arts. The needs of the community determine the artist's production. His art is never "art for art's sake".

ANALYSIS OF AESTHETICS IN AFRICAN AND WESTERN MUSIC

Music is important to any society. It offers a way of identity and a channel through which to express a group's unique values. The message may come through word primarily, supported by music. This is just one example of how in Africa, messages inappropriate to speech alone can be expressed and heard through song, which thus becomes a unique vehicle for honest communication. The message is heard, but no one loses face in the process.

The message may come in a mode beyond words or in addition to them. Music grows so directly out of the environment that produces it. We can learn

to know a given people and culture through their music, if we can read the signs it provides.

Oyer (1987) explains that Small, a New Zealand ethnomusicologist, proposes that the two most telling characteristics of Western classical music are the concert hall and the perfect cadence. The concert hall provides an enclosure in which an audience can see the performers on a stage and in which sound carries well. Certain manners belong to such a place. Silence is observed not only during the performance but also for a short time before and after. The audience does not move until the music is completed, one person usually leads the others, exerting a kind of absolute power. Special types of dress may be prescribed for a performance.

The second characteristic, the perfect cadence, refers to the way sections of music come to a close. A work will end decisively, after building up "tension", and at a number of points along the way definite halts or breathing places will appear. Chords of the sort that many people play on a guitar, several notes sounded at one time, create these clear breaks. Some of the chords are clashing in sound and create tension; others, especially the perfect cadence, are relaxed and give a sense of calm and peace. Whether they are conscious of the fact or not, people who like Western classical music are enjoying the tension and resolution that the chords create.

These two characteristics – the concert hall and the perfect cadence – are not significant values in most societies of the world. They are certainly not important aspects of traditional African music. The concert hall must seem quite artificial to musicians in a Kenyan village, who for a given occasion may gather in a circle to sing and dance, welcoming anyone who wishes to join them. The experience is far more communal than that normally provided by Western classical music. Everyone may participate. Concerning criticism of African music, p'Bitek comments:

> [n]ow, who can, then, judge such creative works? Who can meaningfully, announce the phrases myel ma ber; *good dance*, wer ma mit, *sweet song;* ot ma ber, *good house? Who is the critic of the expressive works of the man of tradition? Certainly not some African philosopher versed in metaphysics; not*

the professor of fine art nor some senior lecturer in the department of music, dance and drama, busy preparing their untalented students for the final examination… It is only the participants in a culture who can pass judgment on it. It is only they who can evaluate how effective the song or dance is; how the decoration, the architecture, the plan of the village has contributed to the feast of life; how these have made life meaningful! (p'Bitek, 1986: 37)

On performance of African folk music, Oyer (1987) posits that African music is often an outdoor activity. The sound would be quite different if it were enclosed. She explains that several years ago an ethnomusicologist collected on tape all the songs a particular Pokot lyre player knew. He then brought the musician to Nairobi to play for audiences in enclosed spaces rather than in the open air. The lyre player was so surprised by the new resonance of his sound, caught between four walls and a ceiling, that he actually changed his music. The new sound led him to invent long introductions before he sang, while he listened to the indoor effect.

Oyer further notes that to sit quietly during a musical performance is not an attractive form of participation for many Africans. Music needs the whole body, not just the head. She concedes:

I once offered a Kenyan musician a tape of traditional music to listen to, but she refused it because she "could not see the steps"; hearing alone was incomplete and unsatisfactory. In a similar vein, a teacher of the mbira, *the African hand instrument whose keys are played with the thumbs, once told me how to get through a difficult stage of learning: "Let your fingers find the music." He did not advise, as I might have my students: "Use your head; let it tell your hands what to do." I believe that African musicians draw on the senses more fully than do Western musicians. They use the whole body in music-making. (ibid. 1987: 6–7)*

According to Oyer (ibid.), it is often difficult for an outsider to tell who is leading a group of traditional African musicians. The Western conductor is an obvious, visible reality. But a group of African drummers and dancers stay together through seemingly mysterious means! They know, of course, what is going on, but the subtleties of the ensemble point once again to the communal

relationship of persons in music-making. In the same vein she remarks:

> When I observe African church choirs I marvel at the quality of their singing together. I would guess that their freedom to move with the music keeps them unified. Or perhaps it is their standing close together and feeling each other's breathing; Westerners stand apart, isolated by the private space they have learned to need. Often an African conductor stands in front of a group and leads, sometimes even with a stick or baton. But his conductor's role appears to me rather that of a lively dancer than that of a director guiding and controlling performers. (Oyer, 1987: 6)

Thus Africans and Westerners view music-making, inside and outside of a concert hall, quite differently. The perfect cadence, as mentioned earlier in Oyer's discussion of Small, elicits quite different responses as well.

One can hear perfect cadences often in Kenya – almost always when church choirs sing in parts. But a system of tension and resolution through chords requires precise pitches – measurable and identifiable in scales. According to Oyer (1987), African traditional music seems freer by comparison. Sounds "in the cracks between piano keys" are welcomed in the wide variety of types of music, each of which has its own standard for what is "good".

Tension appears in Kenyan music as well as in Western, but its source is rhythm – rhythm so complex that it does not often submit easily to the Western system of notation. It is best caught by the ear rather than the eye, or by body in dance, and it is probably the most difficult aspect for an outsider to master. Characteristically, several lines of rhythm, each distinctive, proceed simultaneously to create a complex and energetic fabric. About five centuries ago, Western music moved toward emphasising chords and away from this kind of rhythmic complexity. Compared to African music its rhythm has remained very simple.

The perfect cadence creates a decisive effect. Endings are predetermined and final. The resulting form or structure fits into a Western pattern (articulated by Aristotle in his *Poetics*) that calls for a beginning, middle and ending in an art work for which time is an ingredient. Those who make music or listen to it

can know where they are at any time. A hymn like "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" (Schubert, 1826), for example, has four phrases or breathing places, ending with a decisive perfect cadence. We know when we have come to the end of a stanza. The ending is fixed, predetermined.

The structure of African music on the other hand is far more open-ended. Its length may vary considerably from one performance to the next. A given piece often consists of a pattern that is repeated with variations as long as the leader or group wishes. Perhaps such a procedure derives from work songs; the job goes on and on, aided by the repetition, which supports it. Or perhaps the cyclical repetition expresses an acceptance of the flow of time, of nature and its seasons, of life – the child to the ancestor and around again and again.

Which music is better? Neither! Both are good. Both have emerged gradually and naturally from particular histories and traditions. In this regard Oyer (1987) observes:

> In the years I have visited and lived in this country [Kenya], I have often lamented what seemed to me a valuing of Western music at the expense of that of Kenyans and of other Africans. I have watched with astonishment the acceptance of foreign, visiting musicians as authorities on music for Kenyans, in spite of the gifted, well-trained Kenyan musicians I know. Fine traditional musicians, whose expertise has been acquired through informal education, often are unable to achieve positions of respect and economic security. [Comparatively], formal training in Western classical music seems to be valued more highly. Frequently, Kenyans tell me that they "don't know music", or that their particular ethnic group "has no music". I usually discover that to "know music" means to them "to read" Western notation, and that rich oral traditions seem not to count as music. What a pity! (ibid. 1987: 7)

With regard to Oyer's observation and as a way forward for Kenya, there is a dire need for the ministry of education and institutions of higher learning to embrace and enforce policies which emphasise cultural studies. Music education and performance should embody African music, and to some extent, other world musical cultures. Inasmuch as we endeavour to expose our students to world music, emphasis should be put on using models of

indigenous Kenyan music in contemporary musical creative works. This may, for instance, be realised through arrangements and adaptations of African tunes. In so doing, aspects of Western music (such as harmonic styles) and African music (such as spontaneity in performance) are intertwined. However, when arranging such melodies, authenticity should be maintained by retaining their African identity in rhythmic and melodic structures.

In the annual Kenya music festival, students are encouraged to create ensembles in three categories: Western instruments, African instruments and a mixture of both. Students also participate in folk music and dance and music from the Western world. This is one way of letting them understand the differences between the musical cultures. Currently, in Kenya, music is not taught or examined in the primary school curriculum. Perhaps if it was, the understanding and practice of these differences would be enhanced and the value of African music realised.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to show the philosophical foundation of traditional African aesthetics vis-à-vis Western aesthetics and thereby the culturally relative interpretation of works of art. It has been shown that uniqueness and individuality are not, and need not be, the basis for theories of aesthetics; that African works of art are functional and depersonalised. They are unlike Western art which is arbitrary and representative of the values of and emotions of the artist, without referring to the cultural environment and the historical reality of the people. Consequently, the interpretation and appreciation of African works of art should not merely consider cultural differences, but also wider shared value systems, educational systems and world views.

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CHAPTER **03**

Meanings and messages in musical arts

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ABSTRACT

This essay presents a reflection upon results of ongoing research into the underlying values and meanings of musical arts in an African context. A literature survey, including postcolonial discourse, has led to this enquiry into the assignation of meaning in the arts. Why and how do certain sounds and movements combine to create meaning, how does meaning relate to society, and how are these messages conveyed to the younger generation in traditional settings? As the task of musical arts education in contemporary societies falls to schools, the question is raised whether meanings are understood or remain pertinent. To provide a contextualised perspective, this chapter provides illustrative examples from contemporary and traditional music-dance practices in Namibia.

What is it in music that we listen to?
What messages do we send or receive when we dance –
the look, the gesture, the posture?
What does it mean and why is it important for educators?

Key words: musical meaning, social meaning, messages, dance, tradition, Namibia

INTRODUCTION AND THEORY

That music and dance have encoded social meanings is no longer in dispute. These meanings form part of our musical landscape, and knowing music involves understanding (at least at a "gut level") what the music, dance and text means. Music has the power to convey and create feelings, thoughts, attitudes and ideologies. The social meanings of musical arts lie deeply embedded in sound and gestural patterns, and the subtleties of this encoding continue to fascinate musicologists. What a pity then, that educators often ignore this exciting facet of performance! Because this is where our "liking" or "disliking" begins, this is where we either manage to capture the interest of our learners, or as so often happens – not.

Scholars and philosophers have questioned whether meaning lies within the structure of sounds, or whether meaning is assigned in society. Green (1988) argues that to understand musical meaning we must talk about two types of meaning. On the one hand, "inherent meaning" lies within the configurations of musical materials, such as tonal sequences, chords, harmonic series or cadences, and their interrelationships, as experienced by the individual. On the other hand, the "delineated" meanings are defined by the associations that a culture ascribes to them wherever music is produced, distributed or received. The processes related to music reception, for example, include the places where we listen to different types of music, the composer's and audience's social class, gender or ethnicity. Green (ibid.) explains that in our experiences with music we respond to the musical materials, but also assimilate them into a system of social meanings. Therefore, these meanings are mutually dependent and interactive, and the music style represents the union between the inherent and the delineated meanings. Digon (2004) believes that our experiences of music are stylistically determined. Only if we are familiar with the musical style can we experience and understand the "inherent" meanings of music.[1]

The complex, interrelated and ephemeral character of musical arts demand a holistic approach. Looking only at the movements, actions and style of a dance convey an impoverished message, as the environment and purpose, in

combination with the actions and reactions of dancers and onlookers, tells us what is important and gives us an inkling why. We need to question the status of the social meanings encoded in music, according to Garnett (1998: 1): "Are they an inherent and unavoidable part of the musical fabric, for example, or products of cultural listening habits shaped by ideologically informed critical metalanguages?" She criticises seeing socio-cultural meaning as an outer layer that can be removed to get to "the music itself", because music is formed by experience and by the behaviour and language that surrounds it.

> [W]hile musical meanings are entirely a function of the culture in which they are embedded, this does not therefore accord them the status of a surface, removable gloss which can be peeled away from "the music itself". Rather, "the music" is itself built by and within its parent culture. It can be transplanted from one culture to another, certainly, in terms of both distance and time, and that new culture will attribute different meanings to it as it is differently constituted by history and geography. There is, however, no extra-cultural locus from which to observe music, nor extra-cultural meaning to observe. (Garnett, 1998: 5)

What then, is meaning? For the purpose of this essay, meaning has to do with the way in which a musical performance reveals and maintains social structures and values, for example: gender, age and class levels; religious, moral and interpersonal values; affect and intellectual content (knowledge); political significance and ideology; and the transmission of language and culture. These meanings are *in* the performance, asserting and projecting identity. Dance in particular, is filled with meaning. It is embodied meaning. For instance, dances might be the public face of rituals or activities that are otherwise private or secret, such as circumcision, initiation, healing or transformation ceremonies. Given the integral relationship between dance and music in Africa, it stands to reason that matters only become more complex when considering the abstract, ephemeral nature of ensounded meaning.

The messages in musical performances are the actual modes or carriers of the meaning. A gesture of political resistance (raised fist) has both meaning (power, resistance, anger, aggression, solidarity) and carries a message (*A luta*

Continua). Sometimes meanings are clear and messages direct. Sometimes they are layered and open only to those initiated into them.

The encoding of meaning and messages in musical arts is, phylogenetically, a human activity originating in the need for survival and over time formalised in rituals.[2] It works because of the subtle, yet lasting, impact of performance, the diverse possibilities and forms of encoding in sound and movement, and the ease of transmission from generation to generation. Even when messages change, they remain within a familiar performance framework.

Because music and dance in Africa have purpose and meaning, they are social activities performed in a specific environment. Traditionally, musical performances grow out of societal needs, making them purpose-related and efficacious, with overt and covert meanings, containing messages that are conveyed and confirmed in performance and listening. Within the immense diversity of musical Africa, detailed meaning is often regionally determined, while certain broader meanings tend to be continental.[3]

The great masked dances, laden with meaning and symbolism, were previously common in many parts of Africa. For example, the spectacular Dogon Great Masks (Mali), the body concealing masks of Senufo (Cote D'Ivoire), Nkongela (Zambia) or Mgbula (Nigeria). Masks such the Mande bird masquerade in Mali (Wilkerson, 1999), the *egungun* of Yoruba in Nigeria, or the *ngady mwaash* of Kuba people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Binkley, 2004) are saturated with representational meaning embedded within the masks, costume, movement, characterisation and paraphernalia. These masks provide effective opportunity to show how significant and influential art and aesthetics can be in African experience, as they evoke and invoke the supernatural world.

The performances discussed here focus mainly on dance traditions that form part of the African heritage, but are contemporary in that they are constantly evolving and adapting to changing circumstances. Messages about the meaning of a performance may emerge from the audience. As Askew (1997) explains, at a *taarab* performance a great deal of political and social significance attends how and when an audience member chooses to stand up,

approach the stage and tip the band.[5] *Taarab* performances can include songs about the human quest for control over the earth, songs about the beauty of Swahili women, songs about a changed political economy or about the pain of losing a loved one (Ntarangwi, 2001: 2). Audience reaction to *taarab* lyrics might involve elaborate gestures, or large and frequent tips for performers, indicating their individual responses to meanings in songs.

Dances are known to reflect and respond to societal structures of status, gender, age, clan and class. Within the dance, individuals negotiate their social place through a bodily statement of performance quality, applying the societal rules for the dance. Hence, the order in which people may perform, and exclusions from the dance, are two of the indications of societal structure. The understanding of meaning in certain dances is limited to initiates of secret or limited societies, such as *ekofo* dances in the Congo.

Of course, it must be remembered that changes to society are reflected in changes in musical meaning. When rituals such as circumcision or initiation ceremonies are discarded, the music and dance might remain but undergo a change of meaning. The earlier symbolisms in the dance might be replaced by mere entertainment motifs.

One finds layers of both meaning and messages in the musical sound, the movements and the song texts. The kinds of textual messages one finds in Namibian songs and dances include familial love and caring, social mores and warnings. Performance modes involve meaning such as principles of communality through participation, specialisation, hocket and ensembles. Dance might convey direct messages through use of gestures or paraphernalia.

While there are many levels on which meaning in music and dance might be analysed, I am going to focus on the socio-cultural facets of meaning and messages.

NAMIBIAN MUSIC AND DANCE AS EXAMPLE

Namibia is a large, arid and lightly populated country. It has seen German, British and later South African occupiers. It has experienced internecine tribal wars and a long armed liberation struggle. It remains a country of diverse

cultural expression. The arid physical landscape means that drums are not ubiquitous. With an economy rooted in agriculture, animal farming is the main activity. Because music and dance have traditionally revolved around these circumstances, they should be observable in performance.

Economic activities and lifestyle

When fields are tilled or the harvest is winnowed, there are songs and synchronised rhythmic movements that ease the task. This is also the case with the shaking of the milk calabash, the pounding of millet in the mortar, or the grinding of ochre or maize on a rock. Movements are always repetitive and functional. Musically, working songs are also repetitious, even plaintive, and seldom expend too much energy. Songs have encouraging texts saying, "Let's work together and finish this task," or they might reflect on family or cattle.

Because of the prevalence of pastoral cultures in Namibia, it is not surprising to find that this occupation is so prominently displayed in dances. Dance-play such as *ondjongo* (Otjihimba), *omutjopa* and *onkankula* (Oluzimba), and *outjina* (Otjiherero), celebrate ownership of cattle. The songs praise not only family lineage, but also the ancestral cattle and places where cattle grow fat. This is concretised in dance movements. Arms are raised to resemble large-horned animals. Or, a man may crouch on all fours, stamping his feet to raise dust, while the woman dances around him to "control" him. In *onkankula*, a sitting dance for men, the main aim is cattle praise, but actually each man also boasts in song about himself, his cattle and characteristics that only his animals have! Hence, individual male animals are danced in the owner's arm movements. Its characteristics – herd leadership, a limp or strangely shaped horns – are imitated in the arm and torso movements, while the feet of the performer stamp and lift high to the rhythmic pattern.

In other dances, texts might not refer directly to cattle, but implicit messages remain. Cattle symbolise wealth, security, fertility, and either virility (bulls) or feminine capacities (cows). This is the case in *ekoteko*, a Ngandjera dance for mothers of girls entering the "traditional wedding" (*ohango*). In days past,

Figure 1: Arms raised in onkankula

(Photo: M. Mans)

several hundred girls of marriageable age sometimes participated in this week-long event. The girls completed preliminary rituals, being presented to the king, and anointment at their daytime place of isolation under supervision of the "master of ceremonies". At night, however, there were gatherings in front of their living area and here dancing took place in the company of relatives, friends and prospective husbands. It was here that mothers would perform *ekoteko*, while initiates performed other dances. Nowadays in *ekoteko*, two women take turns to dance a sequence, while others surround them in a circle, singing and clapping their hands. Dancers' arms are raised in two horns, and they move around one another in small circles while performing rapid stamping patterns with their feet. Women still play this dance, but now the arm might end in a fist, to gesture political activism – a result of the liberation war.

By contrast, in *epera* (Vakwangali) it is the male dancer's arms that are raised in a metaphor of the bull, symbolising virility and protection of the women with whom he is dancing. Interestingly, I have not encountered these

horn-shaped arm positions in the dances of goat farmers.

Customary ways of living emerge in different ways. Animals and their spirits form an important part of the Ju/'hoan cosmology, each having a different spirit and power. The eland, in particular, is imbued with spiritual meaning, hence the dance *djxàní tcxáí* (the eland dance) has exceptional meaning. It is not surprising that Ju/'hoan dances and their musical repertoires are assigned animal names, with a few exceptions. These repertoires may only be performed in certain combinations, and custom prescribes the repertoires to be performed to ensure good hunting, or to celebrate a successful hunt (see Olivier, 1998).

Evocative and strangely disturbing in a Damara performance, is the enactment of a leopard hunt in the /*gais* dance. The dancer leaves the line of dancing men and turns into a leopard, moving with stealth on all fours amongst the singers. The "hunters" stalk and eventually corner the leopard, sending in a dog (dancer) and men with sticks and spears. The killing and wounded dog are all powerfully portrayed, yet the rhythm and flow of the music and dance are never disturbed.

Spirituality and communication

Healing, trance and possession dances are an important part of Africa's heritage. In Namibia's Bantu-speaking cultures, healings are conducted by specialist healers who are also known for their dancing skills. In the Caprivi region, such healing dances (*nyakasanga* and *kayowe*) involve the healer as well as the community. The healer performs in mask and clearly demands the respect owed to the most powerful person there. The healer's movements indicate physical as well as sexual power through demanding shoulder, leg and pelvic movements. He dances intricate choreographies (complexities of healing knowledge), but also performs prodigious leaps (energy, power), shudders (pain and illness) and rolls on the ground (destroying the sickness), revealing his communication with the spirits. The drums speak powerfully, increasing when dancers get tired in the night, always streaming energy into the dance.

Figure 2: Ekoteko. *Note "horns" in arms and traditional headdress for married women.*

(Photo: M. Mans)

Figure 3: *The /gais leopard dancer – stalking*

(Photo: M. Mans)

Figure 4: *The /*gais *leopard dancer – under attack*

(Photo: M. Mans)

Further south, the Khoesan-speaking Ju/'hoansi, !Kung and Kxoe people dance their communal healings almost fortnightly as a preventive measure in this, their most important music. The shivery movements of the shaman display the heat and pain caused by the rising and boiling of the *n/om*. For this reason (and the potential danger of the shamanic journey) they are carefully observed by the singers and assisted where necessary, as they commonly suffer nosebleeds.

Continuity and reproduction

Continuity is given form in many ways. In most African dances circles are preferred to straight lines. Circles symbolise continuity – the circularity of life. Thus, the modalities of dance organisation also involve circles, even circles within circles. This is confirmed by Tiérou (1992). However, lines are not unknown and are seen, for example, in Herero "military" performances, Kavango *epera*, also Tanzanian *mganda* military dances.

Continuity of life through reproduction is also celebrated. Courtship dances that show a sexual orientation are found in many parts of Africa – sometimes satirical, sometimes celebrative (see Bakare & Mans, 2003). Apart from being a medium for youth to explore heterosexual relationships without actually having intercourse, many of these dances have to do with the celebration of life and continuity. In *simbayoka* (Valozi)[5] a marriageable girl was previously introduced to the community and prospective husbands following her period of isolation and instruction. She performed a solo dance in which she was expected to demonstrate desirable feminine qualities – shyness with invitation, modesty, subtle but clear pelvic movements indicating she would be able to perform in the marriage bed, and showing off her feminine beauty. Similarly, *okuzana pokati* (literally to play between upper and lower torso), is satirically performed by Ovazimba mothers during girls' first menstruation ceremony, during times when no men attend.

Socialisation as education

Music has always been an important means of educating and socialising people. Songs that accompanied transitions or initiations were meaningful vehicles through which this happened, and the moral teaching of girls and boys at first menstruation or circumcision was very important. Through these songs the importance of kinship and community were taught. Examples of these kinds of songs abound in Namibia – including *onyando, efundula, siyamboka, khae-oms* and *epito (epitifo)*.

Social class and status are embedded and encoded in dances. Often, for example, the order in which players enter the circle, play instruments or take the solo part in songs, is a meaningful indication of their position in society. Children's *uudhano* is usually played from smallest or least experienced, to eldest, hopefully most experienced. It is also gendered, in that it is for girls, women and young boys only. When women play, the order of performance acknowledges skill, but social status plays an additional role, so that upper class – a chief or king's wife and relatives – perform first, followed by their friends, close servants and then others.

Elsewhere, the order is passed along by personal choice – touching or "giving" the turn – which may be good or bad! Good, when the previous player selects you because you are in favour, bad when they select you for the opposite reason. In the latter case, the improvised text and movements of the dancer indicate disfavour, giving the next person a "name" which might be humiliating. Again, there is more to the dance than mere entertainment!

Proud warriors – messages of masculinity

In the past, raids, hunts and battles were important means of confirming masculinity and strength. Sometimes they were not considered real men until such tasks had been completed. Killing a lion, or the arduous task of fetching the salt from the northern pans by Owambo youths (*ekango lyomongwa*) are examples. Today these songs in which men like to "raise their energy and spirit" continue to be performed on special occasions, such as important calendrical days or funerals of brave men.

Men's songs are often solo or in unison, indicating a sense of individuality. Even in chorus, there are often as many parts as there are men, creating a heterophony.[6] Songs typically contain texts about "capturing" the neighbour's cattle, killing a lion or heroic lineage at the birth of a son. So, when a boy or twins are born, a brave deed has been done, or a daughter has undergone ritual transformation, men might perform high, stylised leaps, dodges, and poses, waving or throwing a spear. This generates much excitement, echoed in women's ululation. In other cases, men perform movements with a military quality (*ombimbi*). They follow the ritualised instructions and movements of a leader, moving and responding to his shouts with loud, concerted shouts of "Iyo".

Men's performances generally contain more exuberant shows of energy than those of women, such as huge leaps and bounds – even over the heads of other players in *omupembe*! In my experience, movements tend to be individualised (rather than synchronised).

Figure 5: *One of the "joker" characters leaps and tumbles at a wedding.*

(Photo: M. Mans)

Caring, peace and reconciliation – messages of femininity and nurture

In Namibia there are many songs of goodwill and peaceful intentions. However, in present times most of these are women's categories. The textual meaning is overt. A welcoming and thanking song offers inclusion in the greater communal family:

Vetu, vetu, vetu omwaninga nawa	*Welcome, you are (one of) us, you have done well*
Mwa ptutula ndjila ya Venduka.	*You have opened Windhoek's road (to come here).*

More covertly, collectiveness is encoded in women's songs and dances through parallel part singing, and mirrored and synchronised movements involving eye contact and touch. Emphasis in these dance-plays is often on supporting weaker performers.

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Loneliness and laments

In the past, when men were conscripted into forced labour, they were separated from their families for extended periods of time. While travelling on foot or in buses, they often sang songs about their loneliness. In these songs they communicated their fears of hardship, worry about their partner's fidelity, money, and the dangers of travel (many were eaten by lions while moving through Etosha). The meaning is expressed in melody and tone (wailing, sliding, descending passages). Similar songs were sung when fetching salt from the pans (*ekango* or *uuxwe*), when they walked several hundred kilometres in a long line, carrying heavy loads of salt home. But songs of loneliness are most commonly sung solo for self-entertainment and reflection, often accompanied by musical bows.

Figure 6: Singing songs of loneliness

(Photo: M. Mans)

Funeral laments are to express feelings of loss at the death of a loved one, but my research has not discovered many in Namibia. More often, death is greeted by wailing and ululation. Again vocal tone is used expressively. Men

might perform praise shouts and songs if the deceased was known as a brave man. The emphasis is on conveying the message of his (and their) strength and bravery.

Responsibility and morality

Music is an important encoder of morals and values. For example, along the northwestern edge of the Namib Desert, there is an isolated area with several good fountains. Here the Nama people have a hocket flute ensemble with dance. In one of the songs the story of a goat thief in the community is performed. In lurid detail, the dancers "capture" him and demonstrate with a scarf around his neck how the thief is hanged. There is no doubt about the warning in this portrayal!

Power, political empowerment, praise and honour

Power can be conveyed in different manners, such as using great musical ensembles in the days of the royal musicians of Kavango. These ensembles recalled royal lineages and their power and status. Royalty demonstrated wealth and power by actually having such ensembles at their disposal, but were also effusively praised (and often warned) in the words of the songs.

Historical events, heroes and other historic figures are remembered in songs of different kinds. Sometimes the remembrance is of pain, war, repression and conflict. Such *outjina* songs recall the Herero genocide under German rule. A poignant example sings of how brave the cattle were, facing the German troops without sound before being exterminated. Through these songs or chants, singers often hope to make contact with, or send a message to the deceased. Leaders of the liberation, kings, warriors and ancestors are praised and thanked in a multitude of songs. Literally hundreds of songs thank the founding president – for the Peoples' Liberation Army – for good parents, cattle, rain and crops. During Namibia's liberation war, many songs and dances that had previously been associated with other events, such as play, initiation or church, were reinvented as liberation songs (Löytty, 2005), with new words but the same musical structures. Hence one finds that

traditional *uudhano wopankondjelo* always contains liberation texts, and that *uukorasa* which originated at church services, became liberation songs. In this case the verbal meaning overrides the musical meaning.

Hope and good wishes

Messages of hope are generally expressed via faith, through musical worship at church or elsewhere. The intention is usually to provide community support. Songs are sung in good times and bad – especially bad! The example below was sung for me at the end of a long day of recording and interviewing in intense heat but can, of course, be directed at anyone.

> (Menethe) inokala nande uhena eitavelo ohandi kuu indi lile
>
> *(Minette) have faith, don't lose (it) (we are) going to pray for you*

In modern day weddings in the central north, two forms of good wishes combine in song. The men walk sedately with hymn books behind the couple and sing religious songs, thereby gaining God's blessing, while women sing and dance joyously in front of the couple, blowing whistles, thereby smoothing their future path together and possibly also gaining Kalunga's blessing for the richness of the union. Naturally, the number of people performing also signals the relative wealth and status of the couple's families.

INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR MEANING

Musical instruments in and of themselves are infused with meaning. We know that drums are the life and birth of African music. Inherent in its meaning is the hollow vessel shape (female) that receives the (male) pounding on the membrane. Together a greater energy and the Sound is awakened, symbolising life on earth.

Bows, so prevalent in Namibian traditions, are to me the symbol of the sage and traveller. In the arid landscape where people have to move lightly in search of water and grazing for their animals, the bow calls forth images of loneliness, of deeper thought, spirituality and sagacity. These are not

instruments for large gatherings and outpourings of great energy, but rather conservancy, reflection, subtlety, suffering and humour.

Horns are rare nowadays, but were used for general communication – to warn or call people to war or great gatherings. Certain rattles, on the other hand, are often secret, used in spiritual healings only by the shaman. Flutes were social instruments, played in large hocket ensembles[7] for entertainment, initiations and inaugurations.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The embedded meanings in musical arts were learnt through enculturation in traditional societies. Nowadays, even though the songs might still be sung, the contexts have often changed. The youth are seldom fully aware of meaning. They know *when* a performance used to take place, but not *why*. I strongly suspect that this is the case in large parts of the continent. What are we doing in arts education to combat this loss of meaning? Teaching music is not enough, unless we understand that the art of musical arts lies fundamentally in the value and meaning it has.

ENDNOTES

1. I shall not go into denotative and connotative meanings in this essay. However, readers should keep these in mind.
2. See Dissanayake in Bresler (2007 forthcoming) for an extended discussion on the role of arts in infant-mother relations.
3. This is not to deny the impact of global contemporary styles.
4. *Taarab* is particularly popular in Tanzania. "As used among the Swahili, *taarab* denotes the performance and singing of *mashairi* (poems) with instrumental accompaniment (Campbell 1983; Knappert 1979) and also carries the connotations of entertainment and expression of emotions." (Ntarangwi, 2001: 1).
5. This is seldom performed these days.
6. The singing of hymns is an obvious, acculturated exception.
7. Hoernle and other early anthropologist-adventurers wrote about Nama flute ensembles that involved hundreds of people.

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CHAPTER **04**

Growing in musical arts knowledge versus the role of the ignorant expert

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ABSTRACT

The dilemma facing humanly sensible musical arts education in Africa:

- *Curricular designs and content are based on available texts, which are adaptations of knowledge theories and methods, as well as cultural contents that are culturally exogenous to indigenous African musical arts consciousness and practice.*

- *Publishers in Africa, foreign or indigenous, are not interested in knowledge development in Africa. They are rather primarily concerned with what makes immediate sales and maximum commercial profit – texts that merely interpret curriculum with some flippant indigenous overtones. As such, publishers do not consider learning and supportive texts that do not derive from the culturally exogenous curricular stipulations.*

This chapter will discuss ongoing research initiatives that will give musical arts education in Africa a cultural continuum. It investigates initiatives to provide necessary texts and learning support materials as well as classroom practices that will form the basis for drastic curricular review, given the will of curriculum development authorities for change.

ARGUMENTATION

Growing in the musical arts implies the empowerment of a future audience that will cognitively identify with the indigenous creative philosophy, structural-aesthetic theory and logic as well as the human and cultural meanings of the African indigenous musical arts system of any genre. Such a cognitive audience in the contemporary modes of performance arts experiencing does not necessarily need to be a performer or any other form of musical arts specialist. Growing up in musical arts knowledge then, implies progressive induction into the philosophical and theoretical principles as well as human values and virtues informing a person's indigenous musical arts practices. Such systematic education will also inculcate a cognitive foundation for intellectually secure encounters with other musical arts cultures.

Ignorant expert defines any person, particularly scholars and consultants, who represents, analyses or advises on issues about which s/he has limited cognitive or experiential knowledge. Reliance on ignorant experts, local or imported, has constituted mental and humanning[1] detriment to growing in the type of musical arts knowledge that will accord pride of cultural and human identity to African learners at any level of modern education design, content and practice.

A person cannot enlighten others about what s/he lacks in cognitive experience. The arguments above have implications for musical arts nurture in the African classroom. Music is a common human practice manifesting varied and valid fields of encultured sonic references (template for rationalising idiomatic and utilitarian expressions categorised as culturally musical) as well as culture-suggested boundaries of psychical tolerance (cognitive indices for evaluation and aesthetic as well as utilitarian approval). The indigenous African fields of sonic resources, aesthetics and utility have been compromised or outrightly negated in the humanning vision and cultural content of classroom musical arts education in African countries. The infliction on African learners, of learning texts that are foreign in content and methodology because they derive from received, colonist curricula needs, must be contained. It is a mental-cultural injury that needs urgent corrective action. The foreign

as well as locally owned publishers are driven by an obvious capitalist and mental-enslavement agenda to impose mental-cultural learning texts that misrepresent African mental culture or totally deny profound philosophical, theoretical and therapeutic lore in African knowledge systems. Available literature thus prevents African learners and teachers from growth in the profound intellectual and methodological resources of their local musical arts heritage.[2]

Educational authorities in Africa distance themselves from what transpires in classroom musical arts education because they are too mentally ill-equipped, culturally indisposed, ignorant or job-ensconced to be concerned about the impact of their official misdirection in human life as well as overall national aspirations. At other times, the education bureaucrats as much as administrators at learning sites, are complacent to be misled by the advice of ignorant experts. These consultants are either scholars who agree to be imported by African policy-makers/implementers to propound culturally extraneous, and thereby, humanly disastrous educational systems and contents. Or they are local scholars who lack cognitive contact with viable indigenous knowledge paradigms at national human and cultural levels, but are adept at parroting borrowed knowledge theories and practices.

The philosophical, theoretical, humanning and methodological principles of indigenous knowledge practice made virtually every African person a knowledgeable, critical and competent musical arts participant/discussant. This was prior to foreign derogation of African indigenous knowledge genius by the jaundiced interpreters of African indigenous human and cultural systems. Our corrective measures, therefore, argue such latent competence in the indigenous musical arts for any learner with an African cultural upbringing. We argue that many classroom teachers who boast modern musical arts education lack the theoretical or practical competence, oral or literary, that is prerequisite for effective classroom musical arts education, whether it is imported or culturally oriented. An imperative, therefore, exists for rescuing African posterity from the abnormality of the system that erases the cultural-mind of its citizenry through the perpetration of an alienating world view, a

culturally estranging curricula, wrongfully guided learners and incompetent as much as mentally insecure music educators. This discussion will present some current initiatives that aim to tackle the concerns argued above in concrete, culturally realistic terms.

LITERACY AND MUSIC EDUCATION

Literacy in any knowledge creation, dissemination and acquisition, enables a documented content and format. The limitations include passive and virtual knowing in terms that disadvantage enlightenment and spontaneity through creative originality. Literacy does not automatically endow musicality. It is a tool that globalises the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge of any cultural locale or orientation. As such, it is an ideal crutch without being superior to, or more effective than, oral knowledge acquisition and transaction. The latter is in any case a popular mode of knowledge interaction in schools, buttressed by the literary dispensation. Orality, which emphasises growing in knowledge through practical experiencing, coerces the re-creation of a standard frame of reference as per individual ingenuity, capability and situation. It therefore has the advantage of continual revision and advancement of a significant framework of knowledge. Orality inculcates creative spontaneity. The learner is involved as a producer as well as consumer of knowledge in the context of cultural norms and interpersonal stimulation. In the musical arts field of knowledge in particular, orality, which compels practical-intellectual participation, is of essence in the classroom in Africa. Literacy will then give learning a non-parochial vision. The advantage of the oral process in Africa, anchored by literacy imperatives, must be respected and cherished.

Equal opportunity in musical arts experiencing

It is a grave injury to the mind and self-worth of a young person when we play "God" by such abusive and condemnatory judgements as: "You do not have a good voice" or "You are not musical" or "You are not a dancer" (for a person who walks). It is inhumane to privilege or withhold privilege from children who as of right belong to the same classroom or school group, unless

anybody wishes to be superior by arguing that God made a mistake in creation. Louis Armstrong, the African-American jazz music trumpeter and singer, would never have emerged as an internationally emulated singer if he attempted the fancies of modern music education and performance system propagated in classroom music. Every learner with sufficient enthusiasm has a right to experience self-worth through contributing in a performing group in any capacity. An African adage instructs: "All fingers are not of equal size; but each finger has its special capacity in performing life functions." If one person has a voice that is more enthralling as per cultural vocal aesthetic, another person could be a more expressive dancer, capable instrumentalist, mime artist, dramatic actor or organiser. All such capabilities belong to the same classroom performance group that has an indigenous African musical arts philosophy.

In indigenous African concept and practice, play transpires as knowledge growth in the context of recreation (Mans, 2002). Further, the concept of recreation is knowledge growth in the context of psychotherapeutic wellness. The key problem with modern visions, theories and methodologies of education in the musical arts, in particular, is that they are often egotistic and, as such, abstract, fanciful or remote from African genetic memory and environmental realities. The vision and methods of indigenous education practice coerced every member of society to partake without the handicaps of school fees or fanciful school uniforms that camouflage the paucity of knowledge offered. School musical arts productions in modern African classrooms must coerce every child to realise her/his creative, artistic and management potentials through practical engagement.

Africans should re-discover the virtues of comparative performance meetings, and eschew the dubious incentives of competition. The global cancer of competition, which has replaced the African principle of comparative staging and sharing of creativity and skill, injures as well as depraves the mind. Competition humiliates, generates false glory, breeds hostility, and the obsession to win instigates devilish practices. On the other hand, the indigenous African spirit and practice of comparison – not prize money –

stages capabilities for mutual critical appraisal and knowledge enrichment. Hence festivals are rich learning and knowledge enlightenment sites. Every performer or group offers something peculiar that other participants gain to improve own competencies and performances. Nobody loses and feels inadequate; nobody wins and feels superior, only to become psychically devastated on another occasion if s/he fails to win. Africa knowledge practice did not invent "perfect" human gods who claimed the elusive excellence to subjectively prescribe items for competition fair to all concerned, and contrive judgement on the interpretative idiosyncrasy of every differently endowed competitor.

The indigenous African audience gained aesthetic enrichment from applauding and laughing without derogating, bearing in mind that in the African indigenous expressions of appreciation, a superb performance can elicit a superlatively negative term, expletive or statement of approval. Any performance that evokes a spontaneous outburst of laughter for any reason has great health value, for it relieves depressive or stressful states of being except when the serious nature is intended to generate special contextual effect or affect. Hence joker-spirit manifestations feature in African performance as cathartic actors in momentous indigenous ceremonies, and the devil's advocate actor engineers best-reasoned resolutions in tenuous debates or conflict situations.

Orality-driven growing in indigenous musical arts at school sites

 In 2003 we engaged in a research project, Mother's Milk, Mother's Muse[3] that aimed to foster the staging of occasional mini-festivals of musical arts in school sites in South Africa. Festival items included any form and style of children's indigenous creative-artistic legacy as well as growing in knowledge through playing adult – a methodical forte in indigenous culture education. The response from the children as much as the involvement of parents in school communities has been outstanding. The children have performed without social or psychological inhibition, and the various groups/artistes mutually appreciated one another's presentations. In the mini-festival sites

that have produced the mini-festivals, the occasions were celebrated as a full festive day of creative-artistic communion. Children from all school classes collaborated as artistes as well as empathic audience under the guidance of committed teachers who belong to the Musical Arts Action Team (MAT) cells advocated for interactive and research-driven musical arts learning in Africa. Participating groups from contiguous school locations often staged comparative versions of the same musical arts type without any tensions of competing or battling to win and lose elusive honours or prizes. The events generated mutual admiration between artistes, which is rare in the current artistic, sporting and games competitions being advised by ignorant experts, and promoted by misdirected and spuriously intentioned industries, governments and school systems.

The enduring human value of the Mother's Milk project is the atmosphere of love and mutuality, which the mini-festivals evoked. An objective of the project is to inspire and record the re-creation of indigenous materials that will inform the study and production of culture-sensitive learning materials. An encyclopedia as well as scholarly articles on the children's indigenous musical arts legacy of all South African culture groups is envisioned. Relevant government departments and well-intentioned industries/sponsoring organisations should promote such school and community cultural events in the annual calendar of schools in Africa. The potential is immense for affording spiritual and cultural enrichment to learners, and at the same time stimulating growth in own culture-cognition, thereby nurturing a proud cultural self in every African child. Learners can thereby acquire the mental pedestal for appreciating the products of other cultural persons without mortgaging the psychological security of cultural self in experiencing the current global multi-culturalism and the technological intimidation.

Prescriptions abound about how to achieve humanly as well as culturally sensible growth in the musical arts in the classroom education. World and regional bodies as well as national governments recognise, no matter how flippantly, that a rescue mission is imperative. The imperative of practical solutions that will instil and sustain the cultural self of learners and teachers

compel re-instituting home grown knowledge theories and practices that combine viable combinations of the orality-literacy modes in modern learning sites. Teachers and learners need to be equipped with the right theoretical and practical competencies through the provision of culture-derived literary and practical resources. International agencies and the national establishments/ agencies have so far abnegated the moral responsibility to effect a change of direction that will enhance the cultural self of the learners and teachers, thereby betraying the advancement of collective African creative genius.

Literacy-driven growing in musical arts knowledge at school sites

We have argued Africa-generic learning texts for primary classroom musical arts education, and that such texts must demonstrate sustained research into African indigenous musical arts knowledge system. "The materials for essential theoretical as well as practical foundation in music thinking, creativity, expression and appreciation are available in any human environment that has engendered autochthonous music practice" (Nzewi, 1998: 470). This is the philosophy that informed the research and writing of six series of theory cum practice learning texts for primary musical arts education, and five series for tertiary education (the training of teachers of musical arts at primary and secondary levels of education) in Africa.[4] The learning text series rationalised the original African philosophical, theoretical and practical principles that will incubate as well as advance a secure cultural self in Africans who are becoming increasingly enslaved, mentally and otherwise, by invasive global schemes. The content and methodology of the two series of "Culture-environmental sensitive modules" (458) for musical arts education already written, thus accentuate the imperatives of cultural knowledge acquisition that enriches and enlightens an African cultural self.[5]

The Nigerian Education Research Council as well as the Ministry of Education would not be impressed by an indigenous knowledge informed music learning series because they do not paraphrase the approved Nigerian curricula, albeit Eurocentric in philosophy, methodology and content. We did argue that a foreign oriented curricula would inevitably accrue the writing of

mal-educating literature, whereas texts guided by indigenous knowledge lore would ensure endogenous curricula. In 1996 we submitted the critical Primary series for appraisal to the International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMAD), which is internationally funded to engage with Africa-centered initiatives on music and dance education in the African continent. The Centre leadership declined to show any interest, being more committed to copying the conventional practice of conferencing suited to Western scholarship status rather than addressing crucial African problems of inappropriate literature and material support for culture-value enriched musical arts education in the African continent. The learning texts series informed the article "Strategies for music education in Africa: Towards a meaningful progression from tradition to modern" (Nzewi: 1998) presented at the 1998 conference of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) in Pretoria, South Africa.

Three years after the publication of the philosophical and theoretical framework that guided the production of the learning texts series, the Unesco office in Africa organised a "Regional conference on Arts Education in Africa" in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The considerably funded conference resulted in a prescriptive document preaching "Cultural heritage, creativity and education for all in Africa" (Unesco, 2001). The Unesco document laments a "vast and complex handicap – the fact that education is unsuited to our contemporary (African) world" (ibid: 6) without bothering about remedial actions that would, in concrete terms, rescue the ongoing systematic emasculation of the human-cultural mentality of the African posterity through insidious literature as well as other diversionary educational theories and resources. The most urgent education imperative in Africa is to embark on the research, production and effective application of appropriate learning materials that would make factual sense in human lives, instead of Unesco's crocodile tears about "lack of school books adapted to the learner's socio-cultural environment and the adequate training of teaching staff", and "with a goal to liberate us from psychological, economic and technical dependency" (ibid: 6). Africa urgently needs practical measures, not flippant advocacy. The Unesco document then contradicts its advocacy for applying Africa's

indigenous intellectual perspectives by providing an Annex II (43) that classifies African musical instruments using culturally misrepresenting European categories.

Unesco had funded an earlier conference jamboree "Unesco 2000 – The Dakar Framework for action – Education for all: Meeting on collective commitments, Dakar, April 2000", which preceded the 2001 conference in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Dakar 2000 propounded "the necessity for curriculum transformation to give children, youth and adults the type of quality education that promotes appreciation of diversity, richness and dynamism of our (African) cultures". The Unesco conferencing and sermonising formulae illustrate how Africa remains deviously sedated with fanciful conferences about her problems. Such conferences waste financial allocations that should be deployed to produce concrete remedies that will solve the needs in humanly beneficial and redeeming actions. At continental level the countries in Africa practise similar deception and mental deviation of African masses and posterity by recruiting ignorant experts who theorise flippant policies and copy exogenous curricula – smokescreens about cultural knowledge empowerment but pitiable evidence of the fire of action.

The Centre for Indigenous African Instrumental Music and Dance Practices (CIIMDA) for the Southern African Development Countries became operational in August 2004 with five years funding from the Foreign Ministry of Norway through the initiative of the Rikskonsertine (Norwegian Concert Institute). The CIIMDA is an African culturally sensitive musical arts education vision that has come true. The practical initiative that CIIMDA represents offers systematic remedial courses on the teaching of indigenous philosophy, theory, methodology and practice of the musical arts in Africa to music teachers and educators. CIIMDA is also committed in practical terms to remedy some inadequacies that militate against culturally sensitive musical arts education in contemporary Africa. The courses at the Centre target all levels of teachers while the outreach programmes and concert activities sensitise teachers, learners and local experts in their home countries. It has embarked on publishing researched materials for enlightened growing in the

indigenous music and dance knowledge systems of Africa, which will be accessible to all learners and teachers in the continent. Governmental as much as non-governmental initiatives committed to enabling the mental emancipation of African posterity should focus on solving African problems, in education and otherwise, from original African perspectives. The dream could become a reality when we apply research and creative energies to advancing instead of negating profound African indigenous knowledge lore.

ENDNOTES

1. The process of stimulating humane disposition and actions.
2. See Agawu 2002, 2003, Mans 2001, Nixon & Uzoigwe 2003, Nzewi 2003, Bakare & Mans 2003 for Africa-sensed discussions of the creative richness, humanning values, virtues, and intentions, as well as philosophical-theoretical underpinnings of African indigenous musical arts knowledge system.
3. Mother's Milk, Mother's Muse: comprehensive research of indigenous children's musical arts in South African culture groups was funded by the Indigenous Knowledge System Focus Area of the National Research Foundation of South Africa (NRF) in 2003 and 2004.
4. Nzewi, M. (2005). *Learning the musical arts in contemporary Africa informed by indigenous knowledge systems, Volumes 1 & 2*. (CIIMDA Series) Cape Town: African Minds. The full series: *Contemporary study of musical arts informed by indigenous knowledge systems, Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5* will be published in 2006.
5. The research and writing of the two series of texts were undertaken in the Ama Dialog Foundation for African Arts, Nsugbe, Nigeria in 1986.

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Is there a Swahili way of teaching music?

Describing a series of teachers' workshops on teaching music to children in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

The authors carried out a pilot training programme at the Dhow Countries Music Academy (DCMA), Zanzibar, for educators in Music Education for Children. The programme was conducted in conjunction with the Agder University College (AUC) in Kristiansand, Norway, and used instructors from Norway, Tanzania and South Africa. The aims of the workshops were to qualify teachers to teach music to children in schools and elsewhere, and to find an approach to teaching music that may apply to local cultures.

This chapter presents the basic ideas behind the programme, course modules are explained, and strengths and weaknesses are discussed with reference to how such programmes can be developed and run in an African context. The workshop programme has also led to the production of a Swahili children's songbook, which will be published towards the end of 2006.

Key words: Swahili culture, music education, children, Zanzibar, Tanzania, oral tradition

INTRODUCTION: THE INHERENT METHOD

We believe that every musical practice and musical culture contains a way to teach music. They would not be here if there was no way for the elders to convey their music to the young, or for musical peers to share their skills and practice. Furthermore, the fact that these musics have survived or emerged, not only reveals that there is a teaching method inherent in the culture itself, but also that it has proved to be successful.

When teaching music within a cultural context it should be borne in mind that the culture itself is probably the best guide to how we should teach. Although new impulses are essential to any culture, we should start by recognising the existing educational system.

When the teachers of AUC, Norway, were challenged to engage in developing a course for teachers in "teaching music to children" as part of the cooperation with DCMA, Zanzibar, we at first thought it was not a good idea. We respected the fact that Swahili culture itself – in all its varieties, with musical impulses from Africa, the Arab world and the different corners of the Indian Ocean – knew best how to do that. The next step was to say, "OK, but we don't know if our way is very relevant to you, so we don't want to be the ones who know and you don't." Thirdly, when we realised that in many cases (but not all!) music teaching in schools in Tanzania meant repeating old colonial habits of learning European songs, and formal music education was expected to start with staff notation and going through western "classical" music, we started thinking that maybe we could act as a mirror. Not a mirror that blocks the way to knowledge about European music (please, feel free!) but simply trying to point out that even Norwegians look to Africa to find better ways of teaching music, and that these options could be explored as a starting point.

CONTENT AND METHODS

Our starting point was: *What would qualify as a Zanzibari or Tanzanian or Swahili way of teaching music to children?*

First, we needed to ask ourselves *what* we should teach. This is a question that goes further than a syllabus or curriculum (or the lack of one), and to the roots of our identity. Therefore, we suggested that rather than picking up Western nursery rhymes and children's songs, and instruments like piano and guitar, the children should learn songs from their own culture(s), and use local instruments. After they know their own basic musical culture, they can move on to other instruments and musical styles, if they wish. This may sound a bit purist, but the tendency in Tanzania has been the opposite – music education in general is about Western music and a Western approach to music. But there is nothing more universal, or better, about music in the West than in Africa, or anywhere else in the world, for that matter. Secondly, we need to investigate *how* we can learn to teach music from the musical tradition itself. We needed a *method*. What methods are used when the music is passed from one generation to the other? These are questions that all music educators should ask themselves before they start teaching. This would lead to some kind of musical research on their own culture and context.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

In the following section we describe the contents of the workshops and the evolution of the initial questions. This is not a gold-plated success story, since we admit that the very concept of having short 1–2 week workshops with Norwegians travelling to Zanzibar is not a sustainable way of education. But, this was a starting point, and we have gained some experience and laid some groundwork. Our aim is that these experiences will help us build a teaching programme that can be run with local efforts in future.[1]

In the programme, five training modules took place, described below.

Workshop 1, December 2003: Music education for children – introduction

The instructors were Tormod Wallem Anundsen and Torstein Andersen. During this first visit, two teachers and one student from Agder University College conducted the first of a series of workshops on Music Education for Children for 20 participants from the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM),

Bagamoyo College of Arts (BCA), various schools and teacher training colleges in Zanzibar.

Theme 1: How do we teach music to children?

Assembling in the facilities of DCMA in Stone Town, Zanzibar, we started out by trying to engage the 20 participants from Zanzibar and Tanzania mainland, who ranged from nursery teachers to university professors. They were instructed: "Divide into four random groups, each person presenting a song to the rest of the group. Then you choose one of the songs and teach it to the rest of us." The rest of the first day was engaged in singing and dancing.

Then we had the first theory lesson. In short: "You taught us a song. Now, how did you do that?" From the group discussions methods evolved, such as: "First we sing a line, then you repeat", or "Dance and movement together with the song, everybody's taking part from the start", or "We just started singing and after a while everybody knew the song", or "We told a story, and it showed the meaning of the song". Now there were already several methods!

Three teaching principles

The following day the Norwegian instructors took – in their own words – "the liberty to suggest a few teaching principles that may correspond with Swahili culture". Most of these had already been skilfully demonstrated by the participants.

The first principle was emphasising *imitation* as a musical teaching form. This is found in oral musical cultures all over the world. Most of the time children learn music intuitively because they hear and see others and they imitate them. This can also be used as a method. Instead of explaining, you sing or play, and they repeat, one line at the time, or they repeat the whole song.

The second was the idea of *call and response*. Especially in African music, this is a well-known formula. There is a call (from a singer or an instrument), and the others reply by a different phrase, or with varying musical responses

to different calls. A call in music teaching could also be challenging one child by mentioning his or her name in the song, and the child gives a response – like singing an answer, picking an instrument or stepping into the circle to improvise a dance.

The third, and maybe most exciting teaching method, was the principle of *improvisation*. Improvisation may take the form of a rhythm, a sung or played melody, lyrics, or dance and movement. Good conditions for improvisation seem to be: a) a solid musical framework, like a repeated rhythm that everybody knows well, a melodic phrase that is played repeatedly, a part of a song or a combination of these, and b) a starting point for the one improvising with a limited number of options (like neighbouring staves on a marimba, repeated), with the opportunity to grow from there.

In order to succeed with improvisational training a possible guideline could be:[2]

- Keep it simple, at least at the start (like playing only two notes).
- Repeat your first idea (like a drum pattern) many times. Then you can move on, using this idea.

For the rest of the workshop, the participants worked in groups to develop activities for children that could correspond with methodological principles like these, ending in a musical gathering for a group of children.

Two other presentations were given. Dr Mgandu of UDSM gave a résumé of the history and current state of the musical syllabus in Tanzanian schools. This proved that a lot of work needed to be done at the political level in order for music to be accepted into schools as a subject, and in order to accept traditional music as a main value for musical teaching and activities. Two musicians from Zanzibar, DCMA teachers, Mohamed Issa Haji "Matona" and Kheri Kombo, told their stories of how they became musicians and how they learned percussion and string instruments. Their stories, in many ways, showed that the best teacher can be yourself, growing up surrounded by music, in a family or following musicians' performances. They both had to learn in secret, and stepped onto the stage when they got the chance.

"Imitation" in its most extreme form, maybe.

Workshop 2, March 2004: Repertoire – recording and applying

The second workshop was a continuation of the first and was combined with training in recording and music editing skills. The group went to record a number of children's songs in Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar, giving two students the opportunity to acquire practice in recording skills. The workshop participants were given the task of collecting material for their own repertoire. The following workshops ran parallel and focused on collection of musical material for use in the classroom setting with children.

Theme 2: Establishing a repertoire

After the first workshop, the need for a repertoire (songs to use in schools or with children elsewhere) led to the idea of making a book and CD/cassette with Swahili children's songs. The process of collecting, recording and presenting these songs was integrated as a part of the second workshop, and a group of workshop participants formed an editorial committee.

After collecting traditional songs from schools and children, but mainly from one another, participants moved on to applying the methods from the first workshop to develop classroom activities. These were challenged by the following perspective:

The "ngoma" principle of teaching music

In his book *The Muse Within*[3], which discusses the universal ideas of music and culture from birth to aging, the Norwegian Jon-Roar Bjørkvold emphasises the point of the Kiswahili word *ngoma*. He describes it as the musical idea that best fits the way all children naturally learn music. Whether right or not, the Kiswahili word should at least apply to Swahili culture. The word itself means "drum", but describes a musical practice, which always includes several musical expressions simultaneously, such as drumming, singing and dancing. In addition, it also reflects a social dimension of making music together, or music as a social happening.

How can we teach music inspired by this concept of *ngoma*? We could:

- Integrate several musical expressions in the classroom.
- Use the music in a social setting, or in order to create a social setting.
- Always bring the musical activities further than "education" – make it a happening in itself. (Do not stop once the children know the song. Make it come alive!)
- Let the children "grow into" music by offering a musical situation that they could step into – without too much teaching (or any at all).

Workshop 3, September 2004: Musical storytelling – African heritage

The workshop was facilitated by Pedro Espi-Sanchez, music educator from South Africa, and Ms Madosini, a musician famous for her playing of traditional South African instruments. The workshop was split in two sessions. Espi-Sanchez started the first session with an introduction of storytelling as a teaching method by using songs like the "Crocodile's sore tooth" or "Baby has hiccups". During the second part the teachers made their own instruments from natural material and Madosini performed on her traditional South African instruments.

Theme 3: Storytelling and traditional instruments

The whole workshop was concentrated on learning how to teach effortlessly by using music instruments or stories about animals, even using stories in order to teach music.

Storytelling as a teaching method

According to Espi-Sanchez, stories such as "Crocodile's sore tooth" and "Baby has hiccups" help one to use stories to teach effortlessly, teach music (music is a very good friend of stories: "Xola and the Rabbit") and use local stories told by the participants with or about music. These stories also inspire teachers and pupils to create their own songs, sound pictures and stories by using self-made instruments.

Playing traditional African instruments

Madosini demonstrated how to play *uhadi*, *mrhubhe*, *isitolotolo*, and "Jew's harp", and demonstrated how to make bows for *isitolotolo*. Participants also made their own *lekolilo* flutes.

The workshop ended with a performance by the participants, with Espi-Sanchez and Madosini. They performed a rhythm by playing their self-made instruments and playing a short drama. Espi-Sanchez reports:

In spite of problems with language (Madosini only speaks Xhosa), communication between the workshop instructor and the participants was very good. With the help of a translator, the participants could follow easily what Pedro and Madosini were teaching. The participants attended very attentively and concluded with their own ideas and opinions about teaching children. They learned different methods of teaching children, which they are able to practise and show in their own classes. The session made them use their creativity and enabled them to compose their own songs. They also received an impression of using traditional South African instruments. All participants learned different techniques for developing local instruments from various materials like plants, which is helpful in an environment where few resources in the classroom are available. Nobody was shy to show his/her own stories and songs or to interpret with singing and acting the children stories, which were told by Pedro. The participants reached back into their own childhoods and began to act creatively in a powerful and open way.

Workshop 4, December 2004: Musical storytelling – crossing cultures

Building a bridge from African to Norwegian traditional storytelling, Tony Valberg offered his experiences in using traditional culture, teaching music to children, and setting up concerts for children, which include different artistic expressions, not very different from the *ngoma* principle of music. Valberg used his own musical performance of a traditional Norwegian story as an example, inviting all participants to take part in performing it by the end of the week.

Theme 4: Musical storytelling and concerts for children

The main focus was the use of storytelling to build musical performances for, and with, children. Valberg gives the following description of the workshop:

By presenting a traditional Norwegian story, "The Pancake", I tried to exemplify some principles on how storytelling can help children obtain music and drama experiences. I also tried to point out how storytelling can reflect and preserve local identity and culture, while at the same time be an excellent example on cultural experiences shared all over the world.

In the West, musical concerts were normally created for an audience of adults who have knowledge of music. However, during the past few decades concert-producers have targeted new groups of listeners, and have devoted a large part of their resources to children and young people. This shift of focus has resulted in the development of concerts that combine the best of the traditional concert with elements of children's culture. These elements may include a dialogue between the stage and the audience, or inviting the audience to participate actively with songs or motions, or tying it together with a story, all of which are included in "The Pancake".

This pancake must be one of the most impudent pancakes in history. Not only does it jump out of the pan and cheat the old man and seven hungry, howling brats out of their meal, but it also manages to enrage everyone it meets with its glib impertinence. Manny Panny can't catch it, nor can the cackling hen or crowing rooster. The good-natured geese, not especially bright, can't catch it either. Nor can the duck that can't pronounce "o", poor thing. The pancake thinks it can outrun anybody, but as everyone knows, pride goes before a fall. Towards evening the pancake reaches a river, and Piggy Wiggy offers to ferry it over for free...

Valberg continues:

We tried to make the concept our own. Although most of the songs were Norwegian folk tunes, we did it in our own fashion, trying to include elements that meant something special to our group. Besides promoting a good artistic product, it helped create a supportive atmosphere. Melting Norwegian folk

music with African harmonies, dancing and humour gave a strong message of the shared culture this workshop was all about, and this was regarded just as valuable as the final concert itself. The final song was a Norwegian and an African song blended together. We had some discussion about what was regarded as proper Islamic behaviour. In these and other more artistic discussions I tried to enable everyone to be heard and to value their contribution.

It takes special skill to organise concert programmes for young audiences. You need skills in music, dramaturgy and music education to produce the programmes that are highly appreciated. During the workshop we focused on these skills, allowing the workshop participants to develop their technical skills and give each other feedback on their music and drama performances.

The concert was performed with everyone's participation in storytelling and music/dance. I told the story in English and the workshop participants translated simultaneously to Swahili. A large group of pupils was invited and formed an enthusiastic audience participating in song and dance. A little band of four musicians was accompanying the musical storyteller group. The concert is documented on video, as is the rest of the workshop programme.

Workshop 5: Local competence

The fifth workshop was held May 2005, and carried out by two teachers from Bagamoyo College of Arts, Hussein Masimbi and Benignus Mbiro. The workshop focused on the practical application of teaching music in the classroom setting in an African context, based on Tanzanian traditional music and their experiences as music teachers both in Tanzania and in Norway through a voluntary worker exchange programme, *Fredskorpset*.

Since this workshop was carried out after the initial editing of this paper, the description is very brief here. This does not indicate that it is of less importance than the other four. On the contrary, the workshop was one of the most successful, and shows the path to a sustained programme run with local instructors in the future.

In addition to the five workshops all participants in the programme were offered the possibility of studying music theory and taking instrumental

lessons at DCMA at no cost. Several of the women teachers have taken up this opportunity. In addition, two young women were selected to assist with teaching the children's classes at DCMA in order to gain further experience.

EXAMINATIONS

As a final assessment, the participants had to prepare an individual music lesson for children, and the actual performance of this was to be presented with a group of children. For the lesson, the participants had to involve elements from the various workshops, such as:

- Teaching principles based on traditional music (imitation, improvisation, the *ngoma* principle of teaching music, etc.).
- Kiswahili children's songs.
- Musical storytelling and traditional instruments.
- Elements from the last workshop (May 2005).

For practical reasons, the lessons were recorded on video and presented for the other participants and instructors in August 2005 as a final gathering and exam, leading to the handing out of certificates.

CONCLUSIONS

By looking at the contents, people interested in music education will note the priorities given both to traditional cultural elements and the analysis of methods. This last part may seem a bit theoretical and maybe it is. However, in our experience, there seems to be an attitude in music education, even in some African contexts, that Western music is theoretical and formal, while traditional musical culture is not. We try to show that a good musical education with both practice and theory can be derived from traditional culture, and these workshops are an attempt to build a system or framework that can offer guidelines for further musical education.

Hildegard Kiel & Tormod W. Anundsen

ENDNOTES

1. The workshop programme is part of a NORAD funded cooperation between DCMA and AUC through the "Arts and Cultural Education" programme (ACE) ACE programme web page: http://siu.no/vev.nsf/O/NORAD-Arts+&+Culture
2. We are not sure whether this is a typical African approach to learning improvisation but in our experience it seems to fit well with stylistic ideals. The method is described (in Norwegian) in Valberg, T. & Andersen, T. (2003). *Fra min fille fille onkels hage*. Drammen: Lyche forlag.
3. See Bjørkvold (1992).

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APPENDIX
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Strengths

- All of the training modules were conducted with a high level of expertise and professionalism.
- The quality of the material presented in the workshops was excellent, creative and professional.
- Students were engaged, committed and showed a great deal of creativity.
- The variety of participants allowed for a diversity of teaching resources to be brought in to the workshop.
- The diversity of instructors helped students gain a broad spectrum of experiences and teaching approaches.
- The percentage of women participants was very high.
- Students from Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo College of Arts came together for the first time in a study project of this kind. The opportunity for exchange and interaction was enriching for everyone and students were able to draw on each other's experiences.

Weaknesses

- The wide variety of participants also coincided with a wide variety of levels of expertise in music. Because the University and the Bagamoyo College of Arts decided to send teachers rather than students, the first workshops actually had participants with very different learning needs. This hindered the progress as it slowed down the more experienced teachers and made it harder for the ones who had no such background. Even though most of the learning material could be utilised even by non-musicians, a more homogenous group in terms of musical knowledge would have improved the learning experience.
- Overall, although externally financed, the costs of the programme were much too high in relation to the benefits for teachers with instructors coming from outside the country.
- There was not enough follow-up and feedback for participants between

the training modules. A high degree of initiative was required on the part of the students, which not everyone was willing or able to fulfil.

- Providing financial assistance to participants actually proved to be ineffective as some members joined the group just in order to receive their daily allowances and others never stopped complaining that the money was not enough.

Recommendations

On behalf of DCMA and AUC, the following recommendations were made in order to establish a similar programme and run it on a continuous basis:

- Find workshop instructors to run training modules from within Tanzania or the East African region, or train instructors at DCMA or in cooperation with other institutions.
- Reduce the number of participants.
- Follow up students' progress between training modules.
- Screen participants to match levels of expertise and background in music.
- Offer a recognised degree.

CHAPTER **06**

Factors associated with academic performance of students in music at NCE level: A case study of Oyo State College of Education, Oyo, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates factors associated with music students' academic performance at NCE level using Oyo State College of Education, Oyo, as case study. Purposive sampling procedure was used to administer a questionnaire to all final-year music students. Interview sessions were also held with the educators in the department. The questionnaires were analysed using simple percentage and Spearman's rank correlation method. The result of the statistical analyses showed that students' interest in music, followed by parental influence, correlated with students' performance in music. The outcome of the teachers' interviews revealed the problems of inadequate staffing, poor infrastructure as well as the problem of lack of interest as factors associated with poor academic performance of students. Review of entry requirements as a means of selecting students based on their interest in music, adequate funding, staffing and personnel capacity-building were some of the suggestions made to provide the much-desired enabling environment for learning.

INTRODUCTION

The position of education in national development has received considerable attention in academic circles in recent years. The prestigious place accorded education is more pronounced in developed countries where it is argued that heavy investments in education have a great potential for enhancing rapid economic growth (Longe, 1981). All indicators point to education as one of the key factors in economic development and political emancipation.

Nigeria's National Policy on Education states that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers (FRN, 1998). In order words, the teacher's responsibility is most crucial to the successful implementation of any education programme and therefore a determining factor in national development issues at large. The role of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) graduates to the success or otherwise of this present government's educational policies – Universal Basic Education (UBE) – is crucial. This is so because these NCE graduates constitute a large percentage of primary and junior secondary school teachers saddled with the responsibility for laying the foundation of every child's education in Nigeria.

Colleges of Education in Nigeria have the responsibility of training and equipping their students and awarding them the National Certificate in Education (NCE), which is meant to become the minimum entry qualification into the teaching profession.

The study of music is indispensable for the development of the Nigerian child, society and the entire nation. Musical arts education has benefits in the areas of vocational, intellectual, emotional, physical and social development of the learner (Nwadukwe, 1995). Okafor (1988) also states that the general aim of music education is to equip the individual to perform music in the society and to contribute to the economy. In society, music serves social, political, historical, economic, religious, communicative and moral functions. As a result, no stone should be left unturned in ensuring relevant, qualitative musical arts education. This means adequate training of the trainers so that they can effectively discharge their duties at the end of their studies, as well as meet the society's needs and expectations.

The questions emanating from the foregoing therefore are: how equipped are the graduates of NCE music education to practise, or how prepared are they to face the challenges beyond the NCE programme? These questions stem from the fact that despite the crucial roles music teachers have to play to uphold the highlighted roles of musical arts education in the individual and society as a whole, ongoing poor performance of students at the NCE level has been observed over the years. Available information obtained from the two Colleges of Education situated in Oyo State, show that in the last ten years, at least one-third of the students failed every year. The main causes and underlying factors responsible for the failure must be understood if effective and well-focused interventions are to be designed to ameliorate the present situation.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors associated with music students' performance in music at NCE level, using Oyo State College of Education, Oyo, as a case study.

RESEARCH METHOD

Questionnaires were administered to all the final year music students (41) during the 2003/2004 session. Final year students were selected as the respondents because their responses are more likely to represent their true opinions on the relevant issues after three and half years of coursework in music education. An in-depth interview guide was also prepared for music instructors and lecturers to elicit qualitative information to serve as a complement to the quantitative data obtained from the students' questionnaires. A questionnaire was drawn up to collect information from the students. Questions were posed to investigate several variables including students' personal characteristics, academic performance, interest in music, attitude to study and perception of music as a course of study. Other questions included parental influence on respondents' choice of music (as a course of study at NCE level), as well as the respondents' perception of lecturers, instructors and facilities as being related to their academic performance.

Questionnaire data was captured and analysed using the Statistical

Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows version 10.0. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) were determined. For the inferential statistics, academic performance is the dependent variable, while all others are independent variables, hypothesised and tested as factors affecting academic performance of students. The independent variables were scored through the simple accumulation of scores assigned to individual questions measuring each of the independent variables. Mean scores were calculated and then correlated with academic performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Descriptive characteristics of students
Most of the students (87.80%) were between the ages of 21 and 26, while none possessed a qualification higher than Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education (SSCE). In addition, 75.61% of the respondents had no previous knowledge of music, prior to their admission for the NCE programme. However, all respondents (100%) passed through the preliminary class before commencing the NCE programme proper. It is interesting to note that 39 of the students (95.12%) believed the preliminary class gave them a good musical grounding.

Factors affecting academic performance
Parental influence
The influence of parents on respondents' choice of music as a course of study was investigated. While 3 of the students claimed that they were forced to study music against their wishes, results revealed that 20 of the respondents (48.78%) had their parents' encouragement to study music, while the same number of respondents did not necessarily have their parents' influence to study the course. Only 1 respondent (2.44%) was undecided on the question.

Students' interest in music

As shown in Table 1 below, for most students (70.73%), music was not their first choice. For those who made music their first choice, fewer than half did so because of their interest. In all, only 18 (43.90%) of all the students hope to continue with music as a career after graduation.

Table 1: *Students' interest in music*

I was offered music because I could not secure admission to study the course of my choice		
	Frequency	**%**
Yes	29	70.7
No	12	29.3
Total	41	100.0
I chose music because of my interest in it		
	Frequency	**%**
Yes	19	46.3
No	22	53.7
Total	41	100.0
I hope to continue with music as a career after obtaining my NCE certificate		
	Frequency	**%**
Yes	18	43.9
No	23	56.1
Total	41	100.0

Facilities

Respondents were asked to assess the adequacy of facilities at their disposal for learning, such as musical instruments, a college library and music textbooks. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: *Facilities for learning*

The music department is adequately equipped with functional musical instruments		
	Frequency	**%**
Yes	0	0
No	41	100.00
Total	41	100.00
College library is adequately equipped with modern and relevant textbooks		
	Frequency	**%**
Yes	1	2.4
No	40	97.6
Total	41	100.00
Music textbooks are expensive and scarce		
	Frequency	%
Yes	34	82.9
No	7	17.1
Total	41	100.00

Lecturers and instructors

The students' perception of their teachers is that their lecturers and instructors were hardworking (agreed by 95.1%). However, most (80.5%) said they did not have enough time to teach practical lessons. Nine students (22%) said their lecturers/instructors frequently absent themselves from school.

Perception of music as a course of study

The perception of music as a course of study came in two divergent opinions as almost equal numbers of the respondents agreed or disagreed that music is a difficult course. However, most of them disagreed that only the talented ones do well in music.

Students' attitude to work

Students' attitude towards work or study of music was examined through a set of five questions. The findings are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: *Students' attitude to work*

I do not practise on my musical instruments as I ought to		
	Frequency	**%**
Agree	29	70.73
Disagree	11	26.83
Undecided	1	2.44
Total	41	100.00
I don't always do my assignments and practise on my own		
	Frequency	**%**
Agree	3	7.32
Disagree	36	87.80
Undecided	2	4.88
Total	41	100.00
I easily get carried away in music class		
	Frequency	**%**
Agree	3	7.32
Disagree	38	92.68
Undecided	–	–
Total	41	100.00
I sometimes come late to class		
	Frequency	**%**
Agree	4	9.76
Disagree	35	85.36
Undecided	2	4.88
Total	41	100.00
I do not attend music classes regularly		
	Frequency	**%**
Agree	1	2.44
Disagree	40	97.56
Undecided	–	–
Total	41	100.00

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN MUSIC

The actual academic performance of the students, as indicated by their present Grade Point Average (GPA) in music courses only, was obtained from the questionnaire responses and cross-checked with college records. This is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents' present grade point average (GPA) in music

GPA	Frequency	%
Distinction (4.50 – above)	–	–
Credit (3.50 – 4.49)	6	14.63
Upper merit (2.50 – 3.49)	16	39.02
Lower merit (1.50 – 2.49)	17	41.46
Pass (1.00 – 1.49)	2	4.88
Fail (below 1.00)	–	–
Total	41	100.00

Inferential statistics

Calculation of scores for independent variables

All the questionnaire items were coded, while the questions measuring the independent variables (factors affecting performance of students) were scored, and the mean scores calculated. The results are shown in Table 5.

Correlation

Spearman's Rank Correlation method was used to show the relationship between the independent variables (the scores as calculated above) and the dependent variable, which is academic performance (students' cumulative grade point average in music courses). The relationship is shown in Table 6, and discussed subsequently.

Table 5: *Independent variable scores*

	Number of students	Maximum score attainable	Aggregate mean scores	Standard deviation
Parental influence score	41	4	3.4390	0.5024
Interest score	41	6	4.1951	1.2494
Facilities score	41	5	4.1707	0.3809
Perception score	41	4	2.7561	1.4453
Students' attitude score	41	10	8.6341	1.2798

Table 6: *Correlation between factors affecting performance and academic performance*

Students' academic performance	Students' perception
	0.167
	P = 0.296
	Parental influence
	0.355*
	P = 0.023
	Students' interest in music
	0.426**
	P = 0.005
	Students' attitude towards work
	0.081
	P = 0.614

N=41

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

From the study, the following findings emerged:

a) Students' interest in music had moderate, but highly significant positive correlation with academic performance. This means that the greater the student's interest in music, the better his/her performance. In this regard, Nwadukwe (1995) noted that lack of interest or insufficient motivation limited the student's capacity to learn, just as Abdullahi (1996) finds that students' interest as revealed in habit patterns contributed to their poor performance. A second factor was also found to be moderately correlated with students' poor performance but not as strong as the association with students' interest in music as explained above. This is the parental influence variable, that is, students having parents or guardians who encouraged or allowed them to choose music as a career were more likely to perform better academically.

b) The remaining variables – age, previous knowledge in music, present educational qualification, adequacy of facilities, lecturers'/instructors' role, as well as students' perception of music and attitude to work, did not have any significant correlation at the 0.05 level. Passing through the preliminary class did not seem to influence performance of students although as mentioned earlier, most of them were of the opinion that it gave them a good music background. This raises fundamental questions about the desired versus actual impact of the preliminary class on the music students at the NCE level.

From the foregoing, the factors that are more important to academic performance have to do with students' interest in music; this in turn affects their attitude to work and, ultimately, performance. This is substantiated by the results that showed that most of the students did not default in the obligatory and monitored aspects of their study such as regularity and punctuality in the class, or doing assignments. Conversely, practising privately outside the usual coursework (and which is largely a function of individual interest) was not done as seriously as it ought to be. Since "practice makes perfect", this factor made a foremost difference in the achievement of each student.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH LECTURERS/INSTRUCTORS

In-depth interview sessions were conducted with the six members of staff (the investigator being the seventh) of the department. Questions were asked to probe into teachers' perception of reasons behind students' performance.

In the opinion of the lecturers, the most important reason for poor performance was that the department was grossly understaffed. As such, the workload for the existing staff was too much. They did not have enough time for the students. Secondly, the department was underfunded. Thus, it lacked musical instruments, laboratories, music literature and other necessary facilities. This greatly affected both the teaching and learning processes. Thirdly, there was a perceived lack of interest on the part of the students and consequent apathy towards music education. The teachers' consensus was that a student who has an appreciable level of interest in music is likely to perform well in spite of the inadequacies of infrastructure in the department.

This qualitative information from the teachers seems to point more to staffing and funding as the major cause of poor performance among students. This is in agreement with the observations of Kehinde (2000) who noted that poor funding has resulted in the non-prioritisation of music programmes in the colleges of education in the country. Ekwueme (2000) sees poor or lack of funding as a sign of government's negative regard for the music profession. She further identified the lack of a policy statement by the government, which would have assisted in determining the philosophy, goals, standards and quality of music at every level of education. Comparing Nigeria's combined higher institutions' music offering, with the music education programme in the Indiana University as described by Wechsler (as far back as 1980), we cannot but conclude that ours is a pitiful situation. Wechsler (1980) mentions facilities that included six buildings containing classrooms, practice rooms, faculty offices and studies, rehearsal rooms and space as well as equipment for recitals, concerts, and full-scale opera and ballet productions. Wechsler further remarked that there were more than 550 pianos, among other instructional facilities, serviced by five resident piano technicians.

Statistical analyses showed that lack of infrastructure in the department had no significant correlation with the academic performance of music students. Divergent as this looks from the lecturers' submission, there seems to be a meeting point. The lecturers believe that even in a situation of adequate staff, funding and facilities, a student with genuine interest stands to gain a lot from the lecturers and would therefore perform well. This corroborates the statistical inference that more rests with the student's interest.

There was a consensus among all the lecturers and instructors that the mandatory audition test administered by the departmental board of studies on every applicant in the past, but no longer in the last few years, is a possible factor responsible for students' incessant failure. The department therefore has no way of determining each applicant's aptitude and is therefore compelled to admit any qualified applicant based on the general entry requirements. Consequently, the situation has gradually degenerated. They further opined that a revival of the audition test, as is the standard practice in some renowned institutions at home and abroad, would bring a turnaround of matters in the department.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ameliorate the problems highlighted in this study, the following recommendations are made.

Audition tests should be re-activated by the music department as part of the entry requirements for fresh intakes. It would assist in separating "the chaff from the wheat" by ensuring that only genuinely capable candidates are admitted for the programme.

There is the urgent need to fortify the numerical strength of the personnel to meet the minimum standard set by the NCCE. Therefore, well-qualified lecturers, as well as professional and competent instructors to handle tutorial classes, should be employed. Considering the population of students, more staff are needed to ensure a better quality education.

There should be opportunities to motivate lecturers and instructors whose responsibility it is to run the programme, by encouraging and sponsoring

them to attend conferences and workshops to further improve their effectiveness. The lecturers and instructors on their part, need to keep abreast with modern teaching methods and improve their knowledge through acquisition of higher degrees.

Provision of adequate facilities by the college authority and the government is a crucial step towards providing an enabling environment for learning. Some of the required facilities include a well-equipped and functional music complex, which can house eight to ten practice cubicles (properly sound proofed), each with a piano or portable electronic keyboard for students' private practice sessions. The minimum standard as required by the National Commission for Colleges of Education should at least be met, if not surpassed.

Procurement of both Western and traditional instruments for music departments is imperative, while the need to equip both the main and departmental libraries with relevant and updated music textbooks, journals and other printed materials cannot be overemphasised. The government has the responsibility to provide these services. We therefore wish to stress that the time has come to stop paying lip service to the issue of qualitative music education in this country. If indeed it is true that education in Nigeria is no longer a private enterprise but a huge government venture that has witnessed a progressive and dynamic intervention and active participation (FRN, 1998), then the government must back up her statement with positive action by making a huge investment in education as contained in her policy.

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CHAPTER **07**

Learning, linking and participating: Transmitting African music in Australian schools

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ABSTRACT

Considered in this paper is the concept of "change" for practising teachers who are teaching and learning African music in Melbourne, Australia. African music and culture is seen as an effective way for these teachers to experience a cross-cultural odyssey through both social and situated learning. This chapter reports on a music project where teachers perceived African music to be an effective way to learn, link *and* participate *with a new music and culture. The chapter summarises pertinent findings relating to why and how teachers are engaging with African music.*

Key words: cross-cultural, music education, social change, African culture, research

INTRODUCTION

Although learning is the central purpose of schooling and the abiding concern of teachers, there is no fixed recipe regarding what it is or how it is acquired, neither do we know whether we can separate what is learned from how it is learnt. Nevertheless, some useful perspectives are offered from psychology, sociology, philosophy and other disciplines regarding the concept of learning. There has been a general move from individualised perceptions of learning to the social and situated; it is upon such views that my research is based. This chapter reports on a research project entitled "Smaller Steps into Longer Journeys" (2004–2005). The concept of teacher change through notions of learning, linking and participating is investigated through the teaching and learning of African music at both primary and secondary levels in Melbourne, Australia.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES
Change

Change is often a multifaceted phenomenon. Imel (2000) supports this view and contends that like learning, change is a complex process and understanding the relationship between learning and the change process can help adult educators be more purposeful in assisting with change. Teachers are viewed as important contributors to change, as change is closely linked with the learning they experience (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). They are reflective and are continually trying to do what is best for their students. Schubert and Ayers (1992: 14) argue, "It is only reflective teachers (not those who teach by recipe, technique, or doctrine) who are able to grow continuously." It seems that a pervasive factor of teacher change is ongoing reflection, one that supports the need for transformation in teaching and learning.

There are many facets of teacher change, and change in practice can change what children actually learn. Teachers who want to change have decided that they need to change, whether from personal or classroom experience, social interaction with colleagues, or participation in professional development programmes. Teachers who want to change are teachers who want to grow

professionally. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) propose a model that describes such growth as teacher change that occurs inevitably through professional activities. During phases of professional growth teachers are themselves active learners in a learning community. Hargreaves contends "our change efforts need to go wider, beyond the school, if we are going to make significant improvements in what goes on within it" (Hargreaves, 1997: 11 cited in Stuckey, 1999). He argues that cultural change within schools and education systems is critical to schools of the 21st century. Teachers need to adapt so that they can operate comfortably in collaborative relationships that extend beyond their school boundaries and link in with the wider communities (Stuckey, 1999). Such notions of teacher change and professional growth promote social and situated learning.

Social and situated change

Since learning and change are interconnected, schools involved in change appear to be "doing something". This "doing" focuses on learning taking place in a social context that considers the notion that people learn from one another. Albert Bandura is considered the leading proponent of this social learning theory which stresses the importance of observation, modelling and imitation. According to Bandura (1977: 22) "learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do." He suggests that individuals learn best when they see functional value in what they do and if the modelled behaviour results in outcomes they value.

Bandura's work is related to the theories of Vygotsky and also Lave who emphasise the central role of social learning. Lave (1988) argues that learning as it normally occurs is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs. In other words it is situated. This contrasts with traditional classroom activities which involve knowledge, and which are often presented in an abstract form and out of context. According to Lave (1988), social interaction is a critical component of situated learning. He contends that learners become involved in a "community of practice" that embodies

certain beliefs and behaviours to be acquired. Such interaction allows learners to become more actively engaged. Hence, over time they can assume the role of expert. According to Lave (1988), situated learning is based on the principle that knowledge needs to be presented in an authentic context that requires social interaction and collaboration. African music lends itself to such a framework.

African music and culture

African music is part of culture. The effective transmission of African musical culture teaching is related to contextualising the music and making meaning of it. The notion of culture as an expression through African music can be aligned to "as culture often as subconscious" (Hall, 1984). Hall contends that we only become aware of this control mechanism when it is severely challenged, for example, by exposure to a different culture (in my study, African culture). He believes that members of a given society internalise the cultural components of that society and act within what is "culturally acceptable for that society". *Ubuntu* (an isiZulu South African word) is a complicated, controversial and multifaceted concept. However, the idea of sharing, which is central to the concept of the word *ubuntu*, is fundamental to African life and culture. It is within this realm of intercultural communication that Spencer-Oatey (2000) extends the concept of culture to embrace the "interpretative role" it plays in understanding the meaning of "other peoples' behaviour". This interpretative role she speaks about is important when considering cross-cultural interaction or reaction. Thus the "work of music", as Gibson (2003) claims, cannot be divorced from the social networks of people who make and promote it, and the sites they occupy in order to do so.

AFRICAN MUSIC PROJECT: BACKGROUND
Previous project

The teachers project represents an extension of research that I undertook during 2002 and 2003 into the use of African music in teacher education at Deakin University, Melbourne. The teaching of African music to teacher

education students in 2002 and 2003 (students were in their fourth year of study of the Bachelor of Education Primary degree) was the first initiative of its type both within Deakin University and at the national level. This project reported on attitudes, beliefs, competence and motivation, cultural and pedagogical understandings of generalist primary teacher education students in relation to a "foreign genre" (African music) through which music was taught (see Joseph 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005).

Current project

The teacher research project was set up in May 2004 entitled "Smaller Steps into Longer Journeys". The focus of the project was to investigate the extent of effective teaching and learning of African music in primary and secondary schools in Melbourne. Through a web-based survey directed at primary and secondary music teachers, the research aimed to identify:

i)   The reasons why teachers include African music in their school music curricula, if they do;

ii)   The nature of their African music curriculum content;

iii) Sources of existing teacher knowledge and skills in African music;

iv)   Sources of curriculum materials and resources supporting the teaching of African music;

v)   The perceived needs of teachers for professional development in African music;

vi)   Examples of effective teaching of African music in schools;

vii) Exemplary practice in teaching of African music by visiting artists in schools.

The findings from this project support the research and development initiatives of the Australian *Musical-Arts Action Team* (*MAT* cell) which was approved by the Pan-African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE[1]) in July 2003. For the purpose of this chapter only pertinent aspects of the survey will be discussed, namely, why teach African music and how is it taught outside Africa?

The research methodology

A web-based anonymous survey over two months (June–July 2004) provided data that informed my African music teacher project. This type of sampling is what Colwell (1992: 117) refers to as "purposive sampling" where the researcher seeks individuals with a particular characteristic of interest – in this instance, the teaching of African music in schools. I gathered information about the teaching and learning of African music at both primary and secondary level at Victorian schools. I sought two prestigious professional organisations: the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME) and the Association of Music Educators (Victoria) Inc (aMuse) to invite their members to participate in the pilot study. I also invited those teachers on my African music teacher email list to respond to the survey. Web-surveys – which Dillman (1998) refers to as the one type of "self-administered" survey – are an extremely promising method of data collection (Schillewaert, Langerak & Duhamel, 1998).

One concern identified in relation to using this instrument is what Solomon (2001) refers to as "coverage bias or bias" resulting from people either not having access to the internet or choosing not to use it. Thus, my sample of respondents does not represent all or even a cross section of the music teachers in Victoria. All teachers who wished to participate completed and submitted an online questionnaire survey through an online *pro forma* linked to a database associated with the Deakin University website. Only the responses to the survey items were emailed to me from the website and none of the details of the respondents email addresses or places of employment were included in the data provided. Complete anonymity was therefore assured. The survey took approximately 20 minutes to complete and elicited both qualitative and quantitative data. It must be noted that only 17 teachers responded to the survey.

The web-based survey was conducted over a period of two months (June–July 2004). There were a total of 17 respondents of whom 88% were from inner Melbourne. The age range was from 25 to 51 years and over and 76% were female. All respondents were very well qualified. Qualifications ranged from graduate performing diplomas through to master's degrees in music and music education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Learning, linking and participating

I refer to this section of the chapter as learning, linking and participating in the "change process" of transmitting African music in Australian schools. Africa is the second largest continent in the world, made up of many countries and many schools in Melbourne are learning about and or experiencing African music mainly from the Congo, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Sudan. In a world that is in a state of almost constant flux, the challenge teachers face is to maintain the relevance of the curriculum and to promote openness to the cultural diversity represented in contemporary Melbourne society. The teaching process of learning about many different cultures, like that of Africa, presents many challenges for both teacher and learner. The notion of social-and-situated learning lends itself to such music-making experiences through which culture can be richly expressed. The theory of situated learning is concerned with how learning occurs daily and how it is constructed. Teachers reported that both they and their students experienced these conceptions of learning as many schools had "artists-in-residence" or experts in African music. These musicians demonstrated how people create and interpret African music and culture through various activities (singing, drumming, story-telling, moving/dancing and improvisation). In a similar fashion, social learning stresses the need for learning to occur through the simple process of observing someone else's activity. This, teachers reported, was an effective way for students to sing, move, play and make music by either observing the teachers or the artist-in-residence. By crossing boundaries and assimilating African music, teachers in the survey clearly recognised the need for what Campbell (2004: 1) has identified as "striv[ing] for a broadly conceived template of pedagogical considerations that transcend cultural boundaries".

According to the findings of this preliminary study, teachers are making such transitions from a mono- to a multi-cultural perspective through learning, linking and participating in African music. By and large they describe African music to be "very rhythmic", "moving", "energising" and "pulsating". In the main, teachers reported that such an experience provided them and their

students with an understanding and knowledge that encompassed cross-cultural "awareness, competence and tolerance". Teachers stated that the teaching and learning of African music was "fun", "new" "different" and "interesting", and an effective way to learn about "a new music, society and culture". It was also a welcome change from what both students and teachers would normally experience in their learning and teaching. All respondents in the music teacher project stated the need for African music to be included in the curriculum because the students enjoyed it so much. Many stated, "They love it!" Although African music can generally be classed as "traditional" (passed down orally and aurally, and relying on percussion instruments) and "contemporary" (sharing many characteristics of Western popular music in the mid-20th century), by and large, teachers and students at school are experiencing traditional African music. The artists-in-residence to a large extent teach traditional folklore which incorporates music, dance and culture. Respondents did remark if time and money permitted, they would like to experience and learn about Africa urban music (township jazz, especially from South Africa), as many Australians are aware of the famous group "Ladysmith Black Mambazo".

Why teach African music and how was it taught?

It was apparent that African music was something teachers wanted to engage with and they were interested in changing the content, teaching through a "new" and "different" genre. All respondents saw African music as a meaningful means of cross-cultural engagement rather than just a process of learning about different types of world music. African music provides a platform for such types of cross-cultural dialogue. Teachers reported that students learned not only music but also learned about the lives of those people. It must be noted that some respondents remarked that it is not always financially possible to have the luxury of an "African artist" visiting the school. In the main it is not only the input from a visiting artist but also the passion and interest of the teacher to engage students with another type of music that results in successful outcomes. Most respondents stated that

they changed their teaching environment by having African musicians or artists-in-residence (from Ghana, Congo and South Africa) teach African music not only to their students but they themselves received a form of professional development which impacted on their beliefs, attitudes and pedagogy about African music.

It would seem that those respondents who had visiting African music artists at their schools benefited greatly and learnt as much as their students did. In the main, they felt that having an artist/s-in-residence authenticated the experience, even more so for their students. As educators, we have to give due attention to how we transmit the experience, sound and culture of African music to students in the same vein this applies to any other culture. Some respondents stated that having the visiting artist/musician filled the knowledge, skills and understanding gap necessary for such cultural transmission to take place. Although respondents in the main did not have any formal African music training, they all stated the need for such training to occur at tertiary level. This apparent need for teaching "other" types of music aside from the Western genre was listed as essential by most respondents as they did not always feel competent in teaching African music, given their limited training.

Teachers (64% of respondents) stated that integrating African music with SOSE (Studies of Society and Environment) and other Key Learning Areas, made valuable cross-cultural connections. When asked "How does African music particularly engage students in such a learning experience?" one respondent stated, "It gave them [students] a greater understanding of cultural diversity, music history and style." Such an experience cannot be learnt through Western music only. Given the culturally diverse nature of the population in Melbourne, it was considered, as one respondent stated, "necessary for students to have a wider understanding of dress, culture, social and family life of other cultures like that of Africans". African music provides a platform for this type of cross-cultural dialogue.

Many respondents chose to use the term "integration" as the means by which cross-cultural connections between music, dance, drama and art were

made. All respondents agreed that using African music creates a place in the curriculum for performing (singing, playing and moving). As one respondent stated, "it creates an atmosphere of team building" in the class and everybody is involved in making music together. This experience is often not the case in Western music where we play *for* each other. This making of music "helps children experience and understand the deeper meaning of another's culture" as one respondent stated. This was reiterated by another respondent who stated, "One of the most important things that occurs during the workshops is that the kids actually meet and play with African musicians." This experience gave students the opportunity to not only explore music-making at first hand but also to hear the "story-telling" behind the music which helps to authenticate the transmission of African music to non-African settings. Such learning experiences, as one respondent suggests, "promotes cross-cultural understanding and fights racism in schools through empathy and understanding".

From the data it was apparent that African music gave students the opportunity and a medium to experience another culture through music. As one respondent remarked, "African music instils rhythm and excitement into any program … it is emotive and usually accompanied by movement." "By engaging students with African music, students also came to understand how music and dance are inseparable in African culture," another said. Another respondent supports this view: "We do not specifically teach African music in our school but rather use concepts from African music to teach and make cultural connections."

Although respondents stated that students had fun and enjoyed African music, only four respondents had African music ensembles at their schools. Nearly all respondents included movement and body percussion in their lessons. In the main, teachers felt that students saw the relationship between music, movement and culture. A very high percentage of respondents (94%) reported that the use of African music certainly motivated their students learning specifically about rhythm, beat, accent, timbre, duration and pitch. Respondents also stated that the playing, moving and singing of African

songs helped students understand music concepts like articulation, metre, texture and form. It seemed apparent that respondents themselves were moved by such music and its forceful rhythms, and claimed that African music added to their student's experience to a significant extent – in particular, their students "enjoyed playing and singing of the various rhythms". In the main, respondents stated that students experienced most rhythmic learning (beat, accent and duration) through drumming. Such an experience was "fun and simple. They also learned about syncopation, ostinati, call and response and polyrhythms through drumming."

CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that Australia is a multi-cultural society, Campbell (2001) rightly points out there are continuing concerns about access, respect, preservation and renewal regarding such enculturation experiences in most multi-cultural settings. She further expresses the need to seek a balance between the preservation of music and the use of music as a launch pad for creative musical development in our classrooms. Tertiary institutes in multi-cultural Australia are therefore challenged to prepare graduates who have an understanding of a diverse range of cultures and cultural difference so they can incorporate curriculum change that is more inclusive, one that considers musical arts education in a diverse and multi-cultural world.

Learning, linking and participating in African music may be seen as a process of "change in motion" for teachers in Australia. By establishing an understanding of African culture through music that they had little contact with before, they are helped on their lifelong path of personal growth and professional understanding. The theory of social and situated learning has been useful in this context to effectively transmit African music in schools. African music is more than just playing; it is an essential thread in the fabric of life for African people as it underpins their culture. It was clear that those who responded to the survey found that what they did with African music had a very positive result for their students and for themselves. This has worked for us, as teacher, student and for me as teacher educator. The

question I pose is: "Can the study of African music open up an understanding of cultural difference within your context?" We must all begin with "Smaller steps into Longer Journeys".

ENDNOTES

1. PASMAE (Pan-African Society for Musical Arts Education) is a regional wing of the International Society of Music Education (ISME), the world body for music education. The Australian MAT cell provides a different perspective on the teaching and learning of African music in Australia and "opens doors down under" for collaborative research both nationally and internationally. The singing of hymns is an obvious, acculturated exception.

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CHAPTER **08**

The use of Tanzanian folk songs and story-telling in a teaching environment

Hetta Potgieter and Jeanne Colling[1] South Africa

ABSTRACT

Over a study period of two years, the authors established that little-documented research had been done on the folk music of Tanzania, and that teachers needed guidance on how best to apply these songs in a creative manner. This chapter is based on research documenting Tanzanian folk music, creating arrangements for strings and percussion that derive from the folk music, as well as compiling classroom music packages from these materials. The content of the packages was experienced in teaching environments in South Africa and Tanzania. After dealing with the background and stating the research aims, there is a discussion of the investigation, including how a particular story about two girls, a bird and a leopard was used in educational institutions in Tanzania and South Africa.

Key words: Tanzania, South Africa, folk songs, story-telling, music education, creative arrangement

INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on research on Tanzanian folk music in teaching environments in Tanzania and South Africa.[2] The teaching environments include primary and secondary schools, tertiary education institutions, adult enrichment courses, and teacher in-service training courses. Over a period of two years, we established that little documented research had been done on the folk songs of Tanzania, and that teachers, especially in the Nzega district of Tanzania, needed guidance on how best to apply their indigenous music in a creative manner. We also confirmed that there was a void in southern African schools as far as the use of Tanzanian folk music was concerned. In the case of South Africa, it was necessary to inform learners about indigenous music from other African cultures and countries that were new to them.[3] *Curriculum 2005* (South African Department of Education, 1997) emphasises the importance of the cultural identity of every learner in South Africa – if learners appreciate their own culture, then they should be able to appreciate other cultures. On this issue, Mngoma explains the importance of indigenous music in teaching programmes in the following words:

> *Music tells us something about … our capacity to experience; the meaning that each of us derives from a musical composition may tell us something about ourselves that we might not otherwise have realized. Similarly, a music that is new to us can, if we deal with it intelligently, tell us something about those to whom the music is native. The full benefit, pleasure and understanding of musics is [sic] dependent upon our willingness and capacity to accept every music as unique. Music is useful to different people in different ways, but whatever its uses and meanings, it is inextricably bound with the human condition. We cannot fully understand other peoples and their environments merely by superimposing upon them our understanding of ourselves.* (Mngoma, 1988: 2)

In Tanzania, as elsewhere in Africa, music-making is a custom or tradition that is learned from the elders and peers in the community. Music is played, often incorporating singing and dancing, to entertain people and to accompany events. Folk songs are passed on orally from one generation to another and

form an integral part of the community's rituals as well as their teaching and learning.

Why should folk songs of *other* cultures be taught to students? Blacking provides a meaningful answer to this question by asking in return:

> *How can we combat narrow-mindedness, racism, prejudice in schools, and ethnocentrism in education? How can we teach people through music making that there is a larger social world outside and a richer world of experience inside each individual? (Blacking, 1987: 147)*

Applying the principle of working from the known to the unknown, the songs could be used to connect the musical culture or "mother tongue" of learners with other musical cultures and traditions. Hopton-Jones (1995: 26) states that with so much emphasis being put on multiculturalism in education, the study of the music of other cultures is important. By exploring other cultures, learners can better understand those cultures. This should be a highly valued educational goal. By having learners listen to, experience and sing traditional music of various African people, they can gain insight into the musics of those cultures.

Aims

The project aimed to:

- Preserve Tanzanian folk songs as accurately as possible (by making a tape recording of Tanzanians singing their folk songs in the Nzega district and transcribing the songs into staff notation);
- Make the songs accessible for musical arts education in general by compiling a songbook with the notation, the Swahili text and the English translation of the words;
- Arrange the songs and create arrangements, using the Tanzanian folk melodies, adding and experimenting with voice and instruments such as violin, cello and percussion;
- Record 18 arrangements on CD;
- Investigate teaching methods that complement a holistic approach;
- Incorporate the original folk songs and the CD with arrangements of

the folk songs for teaching learners in schools, music students at tertiary institutions, and teachers at in-service training courses;

- Create stories and integrate the songs with the stories.

The process of collecting the songs and creating arrangements provided us with an opportunity to experience traditional Tanzanian music, culture and music-making, and to interact with the indigenous population.

Collecting the songs

Working as a volunteer teacher in the Nzega district of Tanzania at Lusu Primary for four years, Jeanne Colling decided to collect folk songs from adults and children in the area. The school children were the first to provide songs for the project. Once the children's parents and other adults in the community heard about the project, they were eager to share some of their songs and to assist.

People travelled to the school to sing familiar folk songs that they thought might be appropriate. The following themes were included in the adults' songs: a love for their country; the beauty of Tanzania; respect for the country's leaders; health problems such as Aids; and a motivation to improve moral and educational standards. The themes of the children's songs included the alphabet; animals; school; and the environment.

All the songs were in the local language, Swahili, and were recorded with a basic tape recorder and then transcribed. With the help of a bilingual Tanzanian, Mr Bayit Pasgal, the Swahili words were checked and translated into English to make the music understandable and accessible to non-Swahili speakers.

CREATING NEW MATERIAL

After the transcription process was completed, Herman Jordaan, an organist and composer of the University of Pretoria, wrote arrangements for soprano, piano, string ensemble, African drum and glockenspiel.[4] The original folk melody is sung by the soprano. The creative manner in which the other instruments are treated, gives a unique character to the arrangements. The

combination of these instruments assured that a new dimension was added to the folk songs. The inclusion of drums and other percussion instruments such as rattles and glockenspiel was merely intended to suggest an indigenous African flavour. The end result was a unique fusion of Western music tradition and the style and characteristics of Tanzanian folk melodies arranged into new "compositions".

Blacking describes the creative process of "re-designing" existing folk music into original, innovative compositions as follows:

Specific music structures and ideas have been invented at a given moments of time, but the musical process which gives life to those structures and ideas is constantly evolving – to such an extent that one might ask whether each single invention has any more significance than the imperceptible gaps between pitches which make a melody rather than a glissando… [F]olk music is made up of socially accepted patterns of sound that have been invented and developed by interacting individuals in the contexts of different social and cultural systems. If they have been diffused from one group to another, they have frequently been invested with new meanings and even new musical characteristics, because of the creative imagination of performers and listeners. (Blacking: 1987: 19)

The application of African folk music in creative settings is currently very popular in South Africa. An internationally acclaimed group, the *Soweto String Quartet*, often combines African melodies, rhythms and intonation with the style of a European string quartet.[5]

TEACHING

Hetta Potgieter put both the raw data and the arrangements to the test by preparing arts and culture lessons for different age groups in primary and high schools. She selected a topic, the music, general outcomes to be reached and appropriate teaching aids. Music activities such as singing, dancing, listening, instrumental playing, creativity and notation were the basis of the teaching process. She created stories to do justice to the context of the songs and also to enhance the teaching of new songs. The use of story-telling as a

method is in line with the aims of the South African school curriculum. In *Curriculum 2005* story-telling is highlighted as a neglected teaching genre.

A story integrates various elements of the visual and expressive arts. It encompasses the holistic approach of African musical arts and can be facilitated or taught in different ways. In introducing story-telling in a teaching environment, it is important to provide an appropriate context. Teachers need to provide learners with the historical background, geographical situation, socio-cultural background and materials associated with performance (such as masks, paint, musical instruments and other implements) along with vernacular terms and the text in the original language. A story may also have a moral aspect – the good will survive, but evil will not (Mans, 1997: 5–6).

In the classroom, a story can develop into a play. The story-teller has the artistic freedom to diverge from or improvise on the oral text, or create a totally new story (Kwami, 1991: 3). There are different types and categories of stories in Africa. Stories can include both narration and song, be they all-music or anecdotal or an all-text model where the storyteller exploits the beauty of the indigenous language, adding to it the moral of the story and the social guidance. Anecdotal stories refer to "a brief incident with a moral implication in song that could be developed into dance, danced drama, and musical plays". (Okafor & Ng'andu, 2003: 184)

Kandege Kamenaswa (Appendix A) is an example of a story we created for the learners and is about a bird caught in a snare, based on a Tanzanian folk song with the same title. The song is integrated into the story and is taught phrase by phrase as the storyline develops. The story can be told by the teacher or learner(s) and acted or performed by the learners.

Investigation

Four South African schools, four Tanzanian schools and students of the Music Department of the University of Pretoria were selected for the presentations. In Pretoria and Witbank the learners in Grades 1 to 3 (pupils aged between seven and nine) stated that they enjoyed listening to the story of the bird, that they felt sorry for the bird and wished they could also help an animal like

Lulu and Mwasaidie did. For a visual art project, learners were asked to draw pictures of the story. This enabled them to create a visual image of the clay huts, the leopard, the giant trees, how frightened the bird was, and how everybody danced when they released the bird and it flew away. The learners also commented on how they enjoyed dancing and playing instruments during the course of the story. Some learners explained that the music and dancing helped them to celebrate the bird's freedom as well. It was not necessary to explain to the learners at length what the song was about – it was accepted spontaneously.

The story was not told to the Grade 6 learners (aged between 12 and 13). The pupils sang the song but were not keen to dance; however, they were highly impressed with the arranged versions of the folk songs and preferred them to the original folk songs. The Grade 9 learners (aged 15 and 16) first listened to the CD with a listening guide. They did not like the arrangements, which they thought they were misleading. They felt that it was difficult to discern the roots of the music. They were investigating the musics of different cultures in arts and culture, and were interested in issues of musical authenticity and context. Comments were heard that the music sounded too European, and was certainly not African! They noted that the listening questionnaire was user-friendly, but unnecessary.

The students at the university were fascinated by the whole process and wanted to do similar projects involving the different cultural groups of South Africa.[6]

Teachers and children of the Nzega district in Tanzania listened to the story attentively and spontaneously sang and danced the songs. In schools where drums were available, there was a creative drumming session in which the concept of call and response was used. When the learners listened to the arrangements of the folk songs, they clapped their hands and shouted with joy and excitement. The Tanzanian learners and teachers explained that it was wonderful to hear their own music in a different form, sounding so familiar yet so different. They also enjoyed learning more about the type of instruments used in the recording.

Although music forms part of the school curriculum in Tanzania, Jeanne Colling became aware that teachers in schools experienced difficulties concerning their facilities, resources and their own music abilities. She therefore decided that, while she was in the region, she would conduct a short investigation and send questionnaires to teachers at 15 primary schools. The following questions were asked:

- Do you think music is successfully presented at your school?
- Why do you think so?
- What resources do you have available for teaching music?

The results of the questionnaires are summarised as follows:

Do you think music education is a successful subject in your school?
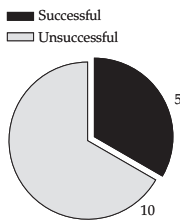
Ten of the fifteen teachers felt that music is not a successful subject at their school.

Why do you think so?
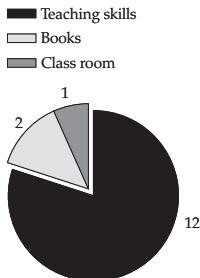
Twelve teachers felt that they do not know how to teach music and that they needed more instruments. Two felt that books would make a difference, and one teacher said that he needed a classroom to teach music in.

What resources do you have available to teach music with?
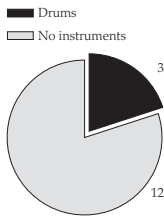
Three of the teachers stated that they only had *ngomas* (drums) available at the school, while the other twelve teachers did not have any music instruments available to teach music, nor any other resources except a blackboard.

CONCLUSION

This research project, which gathered songs from the Nzega district in Tanzania, led to folk songs being transcribed and used as creative source material. Both the original songs and the arrangements were used in music classes in Tanzania and South Africa. Because songs were presented through story-telling, a combined musical arts experience resulted. In the documented reactions and comments of the learners and students, telling results emerged.

It was clear that folk songs are considered an important starting point for investigating a culture, and an important resource for education. Arrangements and new compositions based on folk songs can contribute to creating an awareness of the music of other cultures and, similarly, story-telling and drama could be utilised to facilitate different age groups to experience musical arts. It was felt that musical activities such as singing, dancing, listening, notating, creating and instrument playing can be experienced in a playful manner and incorporated in stories. The documentation of indigenous music

is relevant and important in research, and students in South Africa are keen to participate in such projects.

ENDNOTES

1. Arts and culture is the learning area in *Curriculum 2005*, an outcomes-based curriculum, dealing with four art strands: music, visual art, drama and dance.
2. The term "folk music" covers a vast terrain and for the purpose of this article the terms "folk", "traditional" and "indigenous" will be used as synonyms.
3. It is noted that this need still persists in South Africa.
4. Herman Jordaan received the first prize in the St Albans organ competition in 2003.
5. The members of the *Soweto String Quartet* are Sandile Khemese (violin), Thami Khemese (second violin), Makhosini Mnguni (viola) and Reuben Khemese (cello).
6. The "Mother's milk, mother muse" project, funded by the National Research Foundation, which is to document all children's songs in South Africa, was launched at the beginning of 2004.
7. It is an integral aspect of the indigenous black African story-telling tradition that anyone present can interrupt a story with a song. Sometimes a particular song (or songs) is performed at set places in the story. Some stories are primarily recounted through music (Kwami, 1991). As in Kandege Kamenaswa, it is expected that all present will join in the singing, led by the narrator, at the appropriate places indicated. In most traditional contexts, those who do not know a song normally "pick" it up aural-orally, through participation. Unless this method is adopted and made explicit to learners, it is suggested that the song be taught before the narrator tells the story.
8. An appropriate song could be sung, with dancing and an instrumental accompaniment.
9. The complete version of the song could be sung, with dancing and an instrumental accompaniment, as suggested.
10. The notated version could be presented, or the teacher, in the role of Ms Kelly, could notate the song as the children sing it.
11. There is also the issue of anthropomorphism which may need to be acknowledged – the "bird" may stand for a human being and a story using animal characters may actually be a parody or disguise for an actual event that occurred in a community.

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APPENDIX

KANDEGE KAMENASWA[7]

Kandege kamenaswa kandege chini ya urimbo.

Young bird being caught, young bird in a snare.

Kandege kamenaswa kandege chini ya urimbo.

Young bird being caught, young bird in a snare.

Usimwamshe aliyelala ukimwamsha utalala wewe.

If you wake him, you will sleep yourself.

Usimwamshe aliyelala ukimwamsha utalala wewe.

If you wake him, you will sleep yourself.

Lulu and Mwasaidie are two seven-year old girls living and growing up in a rural area of Tanzania called Lusu. It is a small and very peaceful village. The villagers cultivate their own rice in the rice paddies next to their homes, as well as corn, which they plant and grow themselves. During daytime, while the two girls attend school, their fathers look after their cattle while their mothers clean their thatched clay huts and prepare food for the family.

Lulu and Mwasaidie are not only friends, but also neighbours living in next-door huts. The girls attend Isanga Primary School, which is not too far away from their homes, and they enjoy walking together to school every morning.

One day after school, the two friends were walking home on the dusty gravel road through the maize fields and past the giant mango and baobab

trees when, suddenly, they heard a bird singing. It was not a cheerful sound; rather, it was a distressed call for help:

Kan - de - ge___ ka - me na - swa kan - de - ge___ chi - ni ya u - rim - bo

They decided to walk in the direction of the sound to see whether they could help the bird. Lulu listened and asked Mwasaidie: '*Kakowapi kandege?*' (Where is the bird?) Mwasaidie stood still and listened for a moment, then shouted in excitement: '*Kandege kale pale!*' (The bird is there!). They ran in the direction of the sound. The girls could not believe their eyes! Under one of the giant mango trees, they found the prettiest bird caught in a snare, battling to free itself and shaking from fear. When the girls looked up, they almost fainted, because a scary leopard was sleeping peacefully on one of the branches of a nearby tree.

Usim - wam she___ a - li - ye - la - la Ukim - wam - sha___ u - ta - la - la we - we

The girls were so scared, thinking about what would happen to them and the bird if the leopard awakened.

Usim - wam she___ a - li - ye - la - la Ukim - wam - sha___ u - ta - la - la we - we

With great care, they released the bird from the snare, quickly took it, and ran home as fast as they could to the safety of their huts.

At home, Lulu, who was still holding the bird, opened her hand and … up, up and away flew the bird! The girls jumped up and down for joy; they danced, played instruments and sang a song with their parents and the rest of the community to celebrate the freedom of the bird![8] The next day, Lulu and Mwasaidie went to school and excitely told the story to their new volunteer teacher, Ms Kelly from England, and the children in their class. She asked the

girls to teach her the song and the meaning of the words. Soon the whole class celebrated the experience by singing, dancing and playing instruments in celebration of the freed bird.

Ms Kelly wanted to use the song to help the pupils understand and learn about various aspects of her musical culture and what the children were supposed to learn about music.[9] She therefore asked the children to sing the song repeatedly, while she listened and transcribed the song to staff notation.[10]

Mchaka Mchaka Wimbo Watoto

Traditional

Kan - de - ge___ ka - me na - swa kan - de - ge___ chi - ni ya u - rim - bo

3

kan - de ge___ ka - me - na - swa kan - de ge___ chi - ni ya u - rim - bo

5

Usim wam - she___ a - li - ye - la - la Ukim - wam - sha___ u - ta - la - la - we - we

7

Usim - wam she___ a - li - ye - la - la Ukim - wam - sha___ u - ta - la - la we - we.

In order to teach the learners more about rhythm, melody, timbre and musical styles, Ms Kelly played a CD recording. The pupils listened to an arrangement for strings and percussion that were created from the melody of the folk song. She compiled a listening questionnaire and asked her pupils to listen with attention while they followed the melodic contour on the graphic score in the form of a flash card.
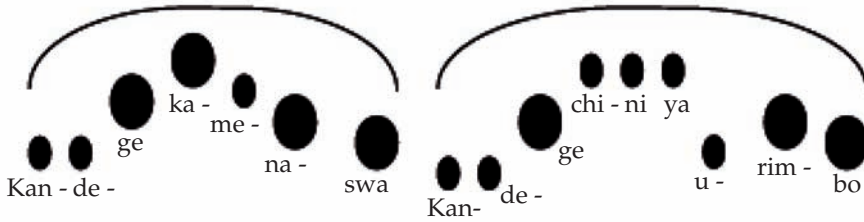
Kan-de-ge ka-me-na-swa

Kan-de-ge chi-ni ya u-rim-bo
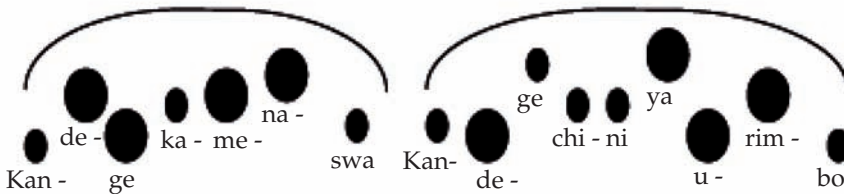
Kan-de-ge ka-me-na-swa

Kan-de-ge chi-ni ya u-rim-bo

Is the melodic contour reflected in number 1 or 2?

Clap the rhythmic pattern of the first phrase and create a new rhythmic pattern for phrase 2.

The story of Mwasaidie, Lulu and the bird is a metaphor to show how cruel people can be to animals, by catching them in snares and letting them suffer pain and fear. Luckily, some people know right from wrong. Through this story we can all learn that sometimes it takes a lot of courage and bravery to stand up for what you believe in, and to do the right thing.[11]

CHAPTER**09**

The healing power of music …

Estelle Marié van Heerden *South Africa*

ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with music education during hospitalisation. It is noteworthy that music therapy, and not music education, has been implemented in several South African hospitals. However, many of the therapeutic activities need to be preceded by basic music education, otherwise many music therapy activities will be too difficult to perform if the patient does not have basic music knowledge prior to the therapeutic treatment.

"Each individual composes the music of his own life …" (Khan, 1979: 65)

Key words: music education, music therapy, hospitalisation, music and medicine, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

While the therapeutic use of music in hospitalisation has been researched for several years, the application of *music education* in this milieu is a relatively new field of research. My research aims at developing an understanding of the music educational approaches that may contribute to the lives of patients undergoing hospitalisation. The dual theoretical and practical character of music education, both of which are equally important and often inseparable, affects its application in a hospital environment. According to Schoeman (2004: 1) music education can be described as an umbrella term for different music disciplines. Prenatal music listening, music-making, appreciation, therapy, and formal music teaching and learning, fall under this umbrella. Although the main focus of this essay will be on music education, its therapeutic value will also be discussed. The "musical child" theory suggests that music therapy is so successful, particularly with the developmentally disabled, because humans have an intrinsic wiring for it, and a universal capability to listen, perform and enjoy music. But what role does music education play during hospitalisation?

LEARNING VERSUS HEALING

In this section the definitions of *music education* and *music therapy* will be discussed.

Music education

Regelski (1981: 33) defines music education as the invention and establishment of musical and pedagogical environments, situations and events for the purpose of inducing fruitful music actions. These musical actions, often referred to as skills, involve singing, listening to music, playing instruments, creativity, movement and notation. Knowledge is thus conveyed through active involvement in the learning process as participants gradually develop their skills.

Elliot (1995: 12) describes music education as having several basic meanings, including education *in, about, for* and *by means of* music. Education

in music involves the teaching and learning of music, including music listening. Education *about* music includes formal knowledge about music-making, listening and history, while education *for* music focuses on the preparation of individuals to be able to participate in music-making, becoming a performer, composer or music teacher. Where music is taught in direct relation to specific goals such as improving one's health, mind and soul, education is done *by means of* music – this aim being almost therapeutic.

Reimer (1989) states that the definition of music education is subject to its nature and value, based on *a* philosophy, rather than *the* philosophy. Reimer describes the values of music education in terms of art as being:

- Descriptive of human nature.
- The arts may be conceived as being a means to self-understanding, a way by which a human's sense of nature can be explored, clarified and grasped (Reimer, 1989: 25).
- Related to feeling and communication. If all meaning could be adequately expressed with words, the arts of painting and music would not exist. There are values and meanings that can be expressed only by immediately visible and audible qualities (ibid. 1989: 31).
- An aesthetically meaningful, educational experience. The experience of music as expressive form is the be-all and end-all of music education, for such experience is the only way of sharing music's aesthetic meaning (ibid. 1989: 69).

For the purpose of my work, the active learning processes of Regelski, alongside the implementation of education *for* and *by means of* music (Elliot, 1995) were selected for their direct relation to goals that include health. Furthermore, the more philosophical approach of Reimer brings a humanitarian centre to the definition of music education. This is mentioned because the humanitarian centre is often exclusive to music therapy definitions (Reimer, 1970: 18).

One should, however, compare these Western ideas and philosophies with those of recent leading African music educators. A South African rationale can no longer be based exclusively on Western concepts. It needs to acknowledge

and include aspects of indigenous knowledge systems. It must reflect a new philosophical model which fits the South African context (Hauptfleisch, 1993: 33).[1]

In African cultures the musical arts are facilitated and transmitted in a holistic way, by incorporating movement, singing, instrument playing and drama amongst others, and the term "music" appears to be semantically diffuse (Agawu, 2003: 1–2). Furthermore, one could argue that African communities make "music" even if they do not describe it as such. Although it is possible to extract individual musical activities, these are often placed in a socio-cultural matrix where other artistic elements are included (Nzewi, 2003: 13). Therefore, I shall use the terms "musical arts" and "music" synonymously. One of the most important aspects of music-making in African cultures, is the way in which the connections with other artistic dimensions are holistically combined in a performance. Also, the socio-cultural, religious, philosophical and other aspects, such as technology, are all combined in a world view in which music-making plays a crucial role.

The musical arts constitute an integral component of cultural identity in African communities (Herbst et al. 2003: 15). Within the indigenous black music psyche, it seems to be assumed that human beings are inherently musical. African music education outside of schools is normally carried out through enculturation or socialisation processes. The main methods of music education are through aural-oral processes, movement or dance, and other artistic aids.

Kwami (in Herbst, et al., 2003) has argued that the dominant paradigm of formalised music education is the Western music tradition, and that such a perspective has disadvantaged the facilitation of non-Western music traditions in curricular contexts. If this is the case, it is important that the broader, more holistic conceptualisation and approach of indigenous African practice is accommodated within educational contexts. It is important to consider both the Western and African perspectives to formulate an understanding that is applicable to the diverse cultures represented in music in South Africa and other countries on the continent (Schoeman, 2004: 2).

The current aims and outcomes of South African music education are based on the revised *Curriculum 2005* and Outcomes-Based Education philosophy. Dewey (in Goodlad, 1984: 44), states:

The aim of education is not merely to make citizens … but ultimately to make human beings who will live life to the fullest.

Curriculum 2005 focuses on equity, access, redress and quality assurance for all learners.

Different approaches to general music teaching are addressed. Mokwunyei asserts that these approaches also exist in traditional African societies and are offered in two stages:

The first, which is for everybody, initiates junior members of the community into their culture and prepares their culture (sic) for an active participation in musical activities all through their lives. The second, which is for the talented, is aimed at making learners proficient and skilled performers within the norms of their particular culture. (Mokwunyeni, 1998: 434)

Primarily, the goals of South African music education are to promote the composition, performance and appreciation of music, thereby contributing towards an evolving South African culture. It also includes the promotion of individual musical growth by developing auditory and perceptual discrimination, psycho-motor, technical and technological skills. It promotes personal growth and social skills by developing *in, through* and *for* music, modes of critical thinking, as well as intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities. It develops an understanding of one's own cultural identity and experience, realising that one can possess a hybrid identity, in relation to exploring the otherness of other people's identities and experiences. Music education thereby also addresses the issue of multi-culturalism, presently so predominant in South Africa.

Added to this, music education aims to promote a deeper understanding and acceptance of the similarities and differences amongst people of different ages, musical preferences, and religious and cultural traditions in South Africa. Interpersonal tolerance and respect are thereby encouraged.

Music education with its emphases on personal contact and the value of the

patient as a creative, productive human being has a significant role to play in the fostering of hope and a sense of purpose in the individual. Hope involves feelings, thoughts and requires action; in other words, like music, it is dynamic and susceptible to human influence. (Khan, 1979: 20)

The outcomes also include education in music, which deal with a specific aspect of music, such as playing an instrument, composing songs, listening to music, or conducting a choir, in which music is not only the medium through which something is taught, but is the very aspect that is taught (Choksy et al., 1986: 75).

Although the educational value of music is clear, much research could still be done on its effect in the hospital setting. Music, especially rhythm, forms an integral part of everyday life, which, for example, includes heart rate, blinking and breathing (DeNora, 2000: 75). It is therefore important to note that music education can indeed help humans to get cured or become healthier, the latter being the focus of this study.

Music therapy

According to the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), music therapy can be described as an established health service similar to occupational therapy and physical therapy (Landis & Carder, 1972: 73). It uses music therapeutically to address physical, psychological, cognitive and/or social functioning of patients of all ages (Weinstein, 1995: 17). Because music therapy is a powerful and non-invasive medium, unique outcomes are possible. In addition to its application to hospital patients, music therapy is also used successfully with other persons of all ages and disabilities (Edwards, 1999: 26).

The Australian Music Therapy Association defines music therapy as the planned and creative use of music to attain and maintain health and well-being (O'Neill & Pavlicevic, 2003: 13). This association agrees with the American scholars (above) that music therapy may address an individual's physical, psychological, emotional, cognitive and social needs within a therapeutic relationship. The Australian Association further states that their

focus is mainly on meeting therapeutic aims. This distinguishes it from musical entertainment or music education (Heal & Wigram, 1997: 31). Bunt and Haskyns add that

> *music therapy is the use of sounds and music within an evolving relationship between child or adult and therapist to support and encourage physical, mental, social and emotional well-being. (Bunt & Hoskyns, 2002: 67)*

The goal of music therapy is thus to use the experience of music to aid the patient in attaining, maintaining or regaining optimum levels of functioning or adaptation in all areas of development. This is very similar to local aims of music therapy. The philosophy of music therapy can be stated as a service intended to meet a need within the patient. That need may be related to the patient's psychological, physical, social or developmental well-being or progress (Hodges, 2000: 20).

Although recent literature (DeNora, 2000) mentions music in relation to identity, Gaston (1968: 6) argues that an adequate understanding of the nature of humans and their behaviour is incomplete without some knowledge of humankind's development. To apprehend music as an essential form of human behaviour is to make more secure the foundations of music in therapy. Music therapy has long needed such a platform for its theoretical constructs, one that would be in accord with biological as well as psychological concepts.

Music therapists distinguish between music in therapy and music as therapy. In the first instance the music is used as part of the therapy. This method is often used by psychologists and psychiatrists to relax patients to enhance verbal psychotherapy. Where music is used as therapy, it is the central medium of therapy. Change in music, in this instance, often reflects change in the therapeutic relationship and, hopefully, change in the patient's life (Maranto, 1991: 72).

Much evidence exists that music therapy has been used since ancient times in Africa, America and Asia, although the term *music therapy* has not been used yet.[3] The flourishing era of music therapy began in the early 20th century. It can be used in diverse contexts, including education, health services,

rehabilitation, correctional services, community, long-term care for emotionally disturbed patients, and privately.

The reason music can be applied as a healing medium is because most patients are exposed to recorded music, whether on radio, television, compact discs or tapes. Many share in making music, for example, at kindergarten or school (Pavlicevic, 2001: 17). Thus, music forms part of a patient's healthy life. It is the therapist's goal to engage that healthy part of a patient to help him/her cope with the illness, disorder, disease or other medical crisis which has caused the patient to be hospitalised (Hooper & Lindsay, 1990: 19). Consequently, therapy aims to enhance or improve self-consciousness, self-control and self-trust, an awareness of the physical environment, and an awareness of significant others and one's peer group. Equally important are improvement of perception and discrimination in sensorimotor areas, insight, self-expression and emotional or impulse control, along with personality integration, interpersonal relationships and communication, coping with pain and anxiety, and musical creativity.

WHERE LEARNING STOPS, HEALING CAN START …

This brings us to the question: What are the main differences and similarities between music education and music therapy?

In summary, the primary similarity between music education and music therapy is that both use music as a *medium* to accomplish their aims and outcomes (Wilson, 1991: 16). The main difference can be seen as an offspring of the primary similarity, being that music education uses music to teach learners music skills, whilst music therapy uses music as a medium to improve non-musical aspects (Patterson, 2003: 36).

What is important is that some of the music therapy activities need to be preceded by a music education basis. Some of the therapeutic activities include song writing (composing) and improvising, which both require a certain amount of skill that can only be taught through music education. For this reason, music education and music therapy should complement each other in the hospital setting.

WHERE LEARNING AND HEALING TAKE HANDS, MUSIC HAS A HEALING POWER

Music, especially its therapeutic use, is a relatively recent addition to the allied health services provided to meet the needs of patients receiving care in hospital. In this context, music aims to facilitate adjustment to hospital for the patient and, where necessary, the patient's family.

In a hospital setting, music offers the patient structure, for it is organised and something over which the patient has control in an otherwise uncontrollable setting. Streeter (1993: 5) mentions several other musical outcomes that may result from music education during hospitalisation, which includes language development, play, physical development and the building of social relationships.

According to Aldridge (1999: 31) stressors in hospital include young patients' experiences in the hospital environment, patients' separation from parents during acute procedures, patients' need for interaction with strangers, their experiences and expectations concerning painful or uncomfortable procedures, and the separation from peer group and siblings. Aldridge (1996: 218) further lays out fears patients have to deal with, including: fear of mutilation or amputation; the pain attached to such amputation; uncertainty about the success of treatment; the possibility of a disease's reoccurrence; deterioration of current health conditions; and, ultimately, death.

In the hospital environment it is difficult to maintain any normality. Often, patients have difficulty in experiencing any sense of significance other than this powerful event happening inside them. They often just give in. Hence, their passivity and lack of stimulation. They lose control or lose interest in structure and predictability. They lose their sense of time, having to undergo certain procedures because a disease follows its own path and time. For hospitalised patients, the disease rules and, in addition, surviving, overcoming or destroying it, rules as well (Sontag, 1990: 27).

Several social factors may also contribute to, or influence the biology, even at cellular level. Some of these factors include depression, anxiety, stress and excitement, all of which in turn weaken the immune system. For the patients,

their sense of control or ability to cope is of great importance. The way in which they react towards threats or challenges can predict the effects of stress on the immune system (Barlow & Durand, 2002: 306).

Music education in a hospital setting is not a form of treatment in the medical sense. It is, however, a form of accompaniment (Khan, 1979: 24).

Music can restore a normal part of life to a patient. It has accompanied us life-long, even if unconsciously. Our music is a reflection of our period of time, personal and global, and is symbolic for our experiences, ideas, behaviours and philosophies of life. It is a mirror of our worlds – past, present and future – our personal life story. (Storr, 1992: 38)

In this way, music, which forms part of every person's life, is structured and gives the patient a way to still be in control of at least something, namely musical learning. In addition, Olofsson (1995: 113) is of the opinion that the making of music allows the patient to be creative, and creativity is life-giving and life-enhancing.

Khan (1979: 17) also mentions that the use of song may enhance communication and creativity. Singing consists of verbal and musical components. Because of this, it stimulates the cognitive, physical and emotional aspects of any patient. Furthermore, music offers a unique avenue to express feelings that cannot necessarily be conveyed in words.

In palliative hospice care the aim is not only to control pain, aid relaxation and ease suffering, but also to enhance the life that remains (Aldridge, 1999: 31). Just as with the recognition of having an HIV-positive status, the diagnosis of any disease can precipitate a state of profound anxiety associated with sensitivity, vulnerability, hopelessness, thoughts about death and uncertainty about the future. Aldridge (1996: 219) states that this mental state may itself contribute to the progressive development of the disease. However, a systematic process of using music and music education may promote health in a specified environment (ibid., 1999: 34).

Music in the hospital setting is not a new phenomenon – it is primarily used to reduce pain in surgical, dental, obstetrical and gynaecological procedures. Literature shows that where music therapy is introduced, patients

view their hospitalisation more positively, report reduced physical discomfort and experience improvement in mood parameters. Music therapy has important functions in the care and treatment of patients in a hospital: pain management, anxiety reduction, normalisation and psychosocial support. Spintge completed a study in the early 1990s of nearly 90 000 patients in the pre- and post-operative phases of surgery. Ninety-seven per cent of the patients mentioned that music during their recovery helped them relax. Other patients found that music enabled them to get by with less anaesthesia (Aldridge, 2003).

Music in a hospital provides interventions which address needs within developmental, pain management and psychosocial domains for patients with a range of conditions. The work is often unpredictable in the sense that directions of the session are determined by the patient, where possible and appropriate. Therefore, it is necessary to compile a flexible education lesson that addresses the patient's needs at that specific stage of hospitalisation.

Some of the applications of music therapy in the hospital setting require a prior exposure to music, and this often leads to an introduction to music education. Emotional, physical and psychological equilibrium may be compromised and need attention from the staff team, which may include the music therapist and/or educator.

The need for comfort, familiarity and control is addressed through the provision of music within a relationship of trust and support, whether therapeutic or not. Music has been shown to be an efficacious and valid treatment option for medical patients with a variety of diagnoses. It can be used to address patient needs related to respiration, chronic pain, physical rehabilitation, diabetes, headaches, cardiac conditions, surgery and obstetrics, amongst others (Azzara, 1999: 24).

As a form of sensory stimulation, music provokes responses due to the familiarity, predictability and feelings of security associated with it. Nowadays, sound has been incorporated into many different types of therapeutic settings, including hospital surgery, recovery and birthing wards; the care of patients with Alzheimer's disease, cancer and Aids;

palliative care or hospice for the dying; for dentistry; and for psychotherapy (Bunt & Hoskyns, 2002: 37).

Music educators and therapists use music activities to facilitate changes that are either musical or, more often, non-musical in nature. Frequently functioning as members of an interdisciplinary team, music educators and therapists implement programmes with groups or individuals addressing a vast continuum of outcomes (Bruscia, 1991: 23). Music educational objectives for each individual are specific and relevant to medical diagnosis, course of treatment and discharge timeline. Through planned and systematic use of music and music activities, opportunities are provided for medical or biological benefits such as: anxiety and stress reduction; non-pharmacological management of pain and discomfort; positive changes in mood and emotional states; active and positive patient participation in treatment; and decreased length of stay (Campbell, 1983: 45).

Although the above are clearly medical goals, a correlation exists between the medical aims and music educational outcomes. Music allows for increased emotional intimacy with families and caregivers, relaxation for the entire family and meaningful time spent together in a positive and creative way (Edwards, 1999).

Shurin (in Aldridge, 1999) comments on the effectiveness of music in the treatment of neurological impairments. Music enables people to put words together in ways that are hard for them to do otherwise. It seems to get through to the patient and enable the patient to get through to the therapist. This may be very hard to do with any other medium.

In hospitals, both adults and children alike experience isolation from home, family, work, school and friends. Therefore, group singing and music-making encourage socialisation. Note, the importance of a music educational basis for music therapy aims to be accomplished, for example, in writing a song. Opportunities should be provided to use existing abilities and strengths.

Music education can be applied therapeutically to address physical, psychological, cognitive and/or social functioning for patients of all ages,

even though this is not one of the primary outcomes which music education addresses. When music is applied therapeutically, it is used as a medium for non-musical outcomes, and not necessarily to learn more about music. Therefore, music therapy aims to improve health, mental states, or emotional stability or function, rather than having a music-specific outcome as its goal.

Thus, the use of music as a medium to accomplish therapeutic and educational aims is underscored. The main difference is that music education uses music to teach musical skills, whether instrumental playing or composition, whilst music therapy uses music as a medium to improve non-musical aspects.

From the above, it is apparent that some music therapeutic activities need to be preceded by a music education basis. Some of the therapeutic activities include song writing (composing) and improvising. Both of the mentioned activities require skills that can only be taught through music education. For this reason, music education and music therapy should complement each other in the hospital setting so that both the skills and the therapy can be provided.

CONCLUSION

In the current South African situation where music education has no place in hospitals, it is important to understand that this is an area that can contribute in more than one way to applied music therapy in the hospital setting. Music education and therapy, often inseparable or confused with one another, hold many opportunities that may help with the healing process of patients hospitalised for extended periods. The value of music in the effective treatment of patients in hospital can at best be described as qualitative, and is therefore difficult to measure. Research shows that music has a healing effect and helps patients to improve sooner than they would have done without music. Music often improves patients' outlook and helps them to enjoy what remains of their lives. Hence, music educators and therapists should provide opportunities to experience music and its healing effects … healing through spiritual food (Earl, in Van Dyk, 1998):

> *Music should belong to everyone … music is a spiritual food for which there*
> *is no substitute … there is no complete spiritual life without music … there are*
> *regions of the human soul which can be illuminated only through music.*
> *(ibid. 77)*

ENDNOTES

1. Since the 1980s, various institutions and organisations have made recommendations regarding music education policies (Geldenhuys, 1990: 107). This policy debate gained momentum from 1994 onwards. However, the different education departments have not consolidated their music policies, and often use separate circulars and documents as policy references (Smit & Hauptfleisch, 1993: 21). Presently, the revised *Curriculum 2005* makes it possible for different education departments to use unifying rules and similar music policies.

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African practice – past into future

The Talking Drum (TTD): Mouthpiece for PASMAE

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ABSTRACT

The Talking Drum (TTD) *is a tool used by educators primarily in South Africa, but also beyond, for the use and dissemination of indigenous knowledge systems primarily in South Africa. It began in 1992. In 2001 the Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE) was offered the use of* TTD *as its mouthpiece for activities and ideas. PASMAE accepted. The readership grows and continually expresses appreciation of the uniqueness and value of* TTD. *One example of numerous comments received: "With teachers using these music and cultural ideas, the songs and rhythms and movements and 'other' experiences are transmitted to the young who become enlightened of the music and its makers, and who can make new meaning of these human expressions." An invitation goes out to all to share their materials through* TTD.

Elizabeth Oehrle

THE TALKING DRUM (TTD): MOUTHPIECE FOR PASMAE

As editor of *TTD* since its inception in 1992, I offered the newly formed PASMAE (2001) the opportunity to utilise this publication as its mouthpiece to disseminate relevant news and information. Beginning in March 2002, PASMAE information has appeared in this biannual publication, that is, the last six issues.

TTD is one of the initial tools for the use and dissemination of indigenous knowledge systems for South African education. Prompting the birth of this publication was the need to make available or bring into greater focus the musics from the peoples of South Africa for education. More specifically it was important to realise the significance of the aural approach and processes of music-making in Africa for the school curriculum, and to realise that the musics studied should reflect more of African cultures. The attempt to redress the previously neglected musics of the people of Africa in the syllabuses was the primary impetus for starting *TTD*. Here is a brief background to the birth of *TTD*.

At the 10th Ethnomusicological Symposium in the early 1990s the idea of establishing a Network for the promotion of Intercultural Education through Music (NETIEM) in South Africa was put forward, and it was accepted. Respondents from Ghana, Namibia and Zambia said that we should extend to southern Africa. This suggestion was accepted.

The confirmed aim of NETIEM is to promote intercultural education through music. The initial objective was to build up a database of composers, performers, researchers and teachers actively involved in the musics of South Africa and to discover places and programmes where the musics of South Africa are taught and performed. Information gathered is not only of value to educators but also to those in churches and theological colleges working towards relevant musical approaches and teaching. This will also feed into the development of teaching materials for use in the curriculum development processes The most successful and continued outcome of the network is *TTD*, which has grown and prospered.

TTD began in 1992. Prior to this date discussions took place around the need to link people and organisations who are working to promote intercultural education through music. Jaco Kruger said, "There are people, like myself, sitting on material. Provided things are done properly and legally, I have no qualms about making available songs, transcriptions, audio and video recordings for the project and I would like to think that others would feel the same." Kruger has made available a mountain of material through *TTD*. Among other generous contributors in the field of ethnomusicology are Andrew Tracey, Dave Dargie and Minette Mans. The hope is that others in this field of ethnomusicology, or applied ethnomusicology, will be as generous and share their materials with teachers in the field.

Many readers are teachers from the rural areas with no access to computers or to money for subscriptions. For this reason the publication and postage of *TTD* was paid for through research money received from The Swedish International Development Association (SIDA). This has been the case since the inception of *TTD* in 1992 up to the present and each publication costs approximately R10 000.00.

We have also been debating about whether *TTD* should remain a newsletter or be "upgraded" to a journal. The readership was questioned and the majority replied that they wish it to continue as a newsletter with materials they can adapt to use in the classrooms, and articles to broaden and stimulate their knowledge of the musics of southern Africa. The response from America's leading multi-cultural music educator, Patricia Shehan-Campbell, was also influential in the decision to continue as a newsletter for the next few years. She wrote:

> *The* Talking Drum *#19, wow! It lives and is stronger than ever before, so clear to read, so full of clever activities for teachers to use. It is refreshing to see a publication continued for the sake of caring teachers, and not become just another talk-sheet for the small band of talking-heads (scholars) who enjoy the obscure and sometimes "disconnected" world of academia. With teachers using these music and cultural ideas, the songs and rhythms and movements and "other" experiences are transmitted to the young who become enlightened of*

*the music and its makers, and who can make new meaning of these human
expressions. Thank you for persevering all these years on a wonderful offering!
Readers and users like me are truly grateful! If it was not so much African
you were looking for (which I think you must continue), then I could/would
contribute some ideas on Asia, the Americas. But alas, I am a student of all
that* TTD *has been able to offer. (letter from Patricia Shehan-Campbell)*

Following is an example of the type of article which informs. The hope
is that others will be willing to share their materials and knowledge
through *TTD*.

ARTICLES

XHOSA MUSIC
© Dave Dargie: University of Fort Hare

5. SWEET SOUND OF THE CALABASH BOW

The previous issue of *The Talking Drum* carried four articles about XHOSA MUSIC written by Dave Dargie. Articles 5 and 6, the last of this six article series, are about the calabash bow and Xhosa song respectively.

* * * *

An interesting and important Xhosa musical instrument is the large bow called *uhadi*. The name seems to be related to the word *umhadi*, meaning a deep pit. Apparently this term refers to the hollowness of the calabash which acts as resonator for the instrument.

The illustrations show how *uhadi* is constructed, and how one plays it. The stick should be about 20–22 mm in diameter, and about 120–130 cm long. When the stick is bent, the string should stretch about 100–115 cm from end to end. The string should be 0.6 mm bronze wire or something similar. The calabash should be about 15–20 cm in diameter and hollowed

Illustration no.1: *Uhadi* – **The Finished Project**

out carefully. The opening is about 9–12 cm across. The calabash is firmly attached to the stick by the string pulled through two small holes in the base, and then wound around and around in between calabash and stick until it can be held firmly. Some bow players prefer a larger calabash than the one illustrated. Some like a relatively small hole, some a larger hole. The playing technique differs according to the size of the holes or openings. Traditional bow players usually pad the calabash against the stick with a strip of cloth. I prefer string, because this gives a louder tone, and makes the overtones more audible.

As with the *umqangi* (mouth bows) described in article 4 of the last *Talking Drum*, the *uhadi* produces music by using the overtones of the string. Because this bow is larger than the *umqangi*, it produces deeper fundamental tones. The players mouth is too small to serve as an effective resonator so a calabash is used. With the *umqangi*, the player creates melodies by emphasizing overtones and by altering the shape of the mouth. For the *uhadi* a different technique must be used.

When the string of the *uhadi* is struck with a small stick, a warm, rich sound is produced through the calabash. Its richness comes from the pattern of overtones which form a major chord. The player holds the bow with the calabash opening facing the player's breast. By closing the opening of the calabash against the breast, the player dampens or suppresses the overtones. As the hole is gradually opened while the string is struck, the overtones gradually emerge, beginning with the lowest until all the audible tones may be heard (see Illustration 2). As with the *umqangi* (mouth bow), the player then pinches the string, holding it with the forefinger against the thumb nail. This creates a fundamental tone a whole tone higher than the tone of the open string – a second overtone chord. If the hole in the calabash is large, the player may open it just by rolling the calabash against the breast. If the hole is smaller, the player must move the bow towards and away from the breast. What one is wearing is also important. The sound will reflect better from a shiny shirt than from a woollen pullover. Many traditional *uhadi* players make skin, i.e. they bare a

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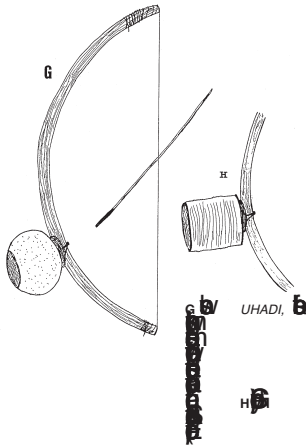
patch of skin against which to hold the calabash as skin gives a good reflection of the sound.

Its easy to make pleasant sounds with *uhadi*, but it requires practice and skill to play the instrument well. The songs usually played are traditional Xhosa songs but any other songs using the pentatonic (five-tone) scale are possible. American spirituals: "Swing low sweet chariots", or "Were you there", are two such songs. The scale which can be played by *uhadi* can be written as F, G, A, B, C, D – the tones F, A and C being produced by using the open-string chord, and G, B and D by using the held-string chord. The player must practice to get the feeling for the tones, which chord position to use, and just how far to open or close the calabash.

Because the calabash produces chords, the notes of a melody are always accompanied by a background of soft harmony. So with just one string the player produces melody and harmony.

Highly skilled players like Mrs Nofinishi Dywili of Ngqoko are also able to accompany two rhythms at the same time with their *uhadi* bow. In many Xhosa songs the body rhythm is different from the voice rhythm. A song may move in three-beat patterns, and against this rhythm, people clap and dance two-beat patterns. Nofinishi is able to combine both rhythms in her bow-playing.

But do not be discouraged. As with many musical instruments, it is possible to play *uhadi* in a very advanced way, but also in a very simple way. Just to beat *uhadi* gently with a simple rhythm is soothing. In time one will be able to play and sing with the bow in more complex and exciting ways.

Illustration no.2: **Playing *Uhadi***
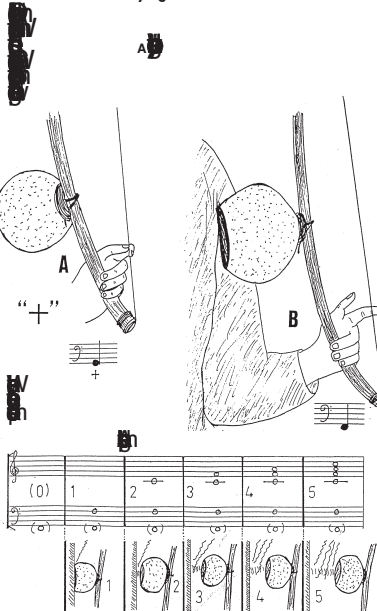
Mrs Nofinishi Dywili, uhadi player, of Ngqoko village, performs an uhadi bow song, at Basel Academy, 1995.

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CHAPTER **11**

Change, innovation and continuity in the performance practice of traditional Luo instrumental genres in contemporary popular settings

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ABSTRACT

Traditional Luo[1] musical genres are consistently being eroded by the wave of urbanisation and the impact of Western culture. Although traditional Luo genres remain common and widely appreciated in contemporary musical practices, many have compromised their traditional usage and contextual implication. Some instrumental Luo musical types have therefore lost their institutional roles, resulting in changes in their original musicological meaning. This chapter analyses two traditional Luo instrumental genres to determine their content and context of performance in contemporary popular setting, contrasting them against the traditionally accepted status quo to establish whether musical change has occurred.

Key words: performance practice, identity, Orutu, contemporary music, Kenya, Luo

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Luo musics and dances have undergone a lot of transformation in the face of influences from the Western world, enhanced by the wave of urbanisation. The idea and concept that informs traditional genres are increasingly being eroded by modern trends in the society. Owing to these changes, "new" idioms or forms of Luo musics and dances have evolved. The "new" musical forms have elements and characteristics that resemble the musical traditions of the past, but defy the traditional context of performance, thereby transforming Luo music from its traditional roots into modernity. Traditionally, performance of Luo music and dance was restricted to specific occasions or events. The context of performance dictated the content, venue and participants. Currently, some Luo traditional music types have lost their institutional roles and contextual implications, changing their original musicological meaning. By compromising their traditional usage, they have compromised their context-specific utilitarian foundation.

With the introduction of the neo-traditional musical forms, this scenario has changed. Traditional Luo music and dance are now performed to audiences with no common cultural denominator, in nightclubs, bars and restaurants, in rural and urban spaces. The music is now engaged for occasions which tradition never envisaged and would have deemed an abuse of meaning. The artists of traditional music are now concerned with producing music that is acceptable to the contemporary audience's taste, without considering the utilitarian component of Luo traditional music. This new tradition of music practice represents a significant change. This has given rise to two opposing groups within the Luo community, hereby referred to as the "traditionalists" and the "modernists".

Traditionalists versus modernists

Those allied to the traditionalists' school of thought view the new developments in traditional music as "adulteration" of the "authentic" music genres (Odera, 2004). They believe that traditional music is facing a serious threat of decline and will eventually be subsumed by the neo-traditional musical forms, which

to them are "killer arts". They therefore see a significant change in the traditional Luo music system and practice.

The modernists, on the other hand, look at the new developments as a way of preserving the traditional music through performance in re-contextualised settings. They argue that music and dance that do not lend themselves to such creative forces and innovations are either extinct or are in the process of fading away (Achieng', 2004). They therefore view the new developments as a form of innovative continuity, hence, an extension of the traditional genre.

It is evident that the contentious issue is the survival of Luo traditional music and dance and the mode of their preservation, either in terms of growth and innovation as is advanced by the modernists, or fossilisation as is maintained by the traditionalists. The solution could lie in analysis of both traditional and neo-traditional Luo music to determine stylistic characteristics and performance features.

This chapter analyses two traditional Luo instrumental genres to determine their content and context of performance in the contemporary popular setting, comparing these with the traditionally accepted mores. The results are then used to determine what has been compromised or gained in the cause of re-contextualising the music genres to fit into the world view of a contemporary audience, and whether this points towards an innovative extension of traditional music, or a significant radical change in the musical system and practice of the Luo.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The authentic musical traditions in Kenya are rapidly disappearing, while others are being transformed into "new" musical forms. This fate has also befallen Luo traditional music and dance, much of which has either been relinquished or is in the process thereof. However, the few traditional Luo musics and dances that have managed to survive continue to thrive among the majority of Kenyans.

Amongst the surviving traditional Luo musical arts are *orutu* and *ohangla* song dances, which are currently the most popular forms of neo-traditional

Luo musics performed in contemporary Kenya (Omolo-Ongati, 2005). *Orutu* is a one-stringed fiddle played using a sisal bow.[3] *Orutu* ensemble incorporates instrumental performance, singing and dancing, a combination referred to as *orutu* music. *Ohangla*, on the other hand, is a song dance performed on a set of four to eight tuned drums, distinguished by the presence of a long single-headed cylindrical drum. The head of the latter is covered with alligator or python skin known as *kalapapla*. Like *orutu* music, it incorporates instruments, song and dance. The main focus of this chapter is *orutu* music, but *ohangla* music will also be discussed because current trends suggest some fusion of elements in the contemporary popular setting. People are therefore confused about when to call a performance *orutu* or *ohangla*.

The information on the historical background of *orutu* music has been drawn from personal communication with several respondents through oral interviews. The time frame of reference is the period from the 1930s to present, based on the information from respondents. Most of them participated as members of the audience, dancers or performers in the ensemble during this period, having been born from 1920 onwards.

In my initial communication with Nyakiti (2004) on the origin of *orutu*, he states that *orutu* music was initiated by a man who was playing the instrument while running around the marketplaces in Ahero, a town in Nyando district, Nyanza province, in the 1930s. People ignored him, believing he was mad, and none of those interviewed were able to remember the songs he sung. Odera (2004) confirms this, with some variations in the years. Odera is an eyewitness who saw a person known by the name Jakawango (a man from one of the Luhya tribes, neighbours of the Luo now settled at a place called Mumias). Jakawango was running around the marketplace in Awendo, now Migori district, while playing the instrument, in the early 1940s. Notice that Odera does not negate Nyakiti's views of *orutu's* origin to be the 1930s. The fact that he came into contact with it in the 1940s does not mean that is when the genre originated. A third respondent, Mzee Ongati, born 1924, started participating in *orutu* performances as a dancer in 1939. This supports Nyakiti's view that the genre could have begun in the 1930s.

In the late 1930s *orutu* music incorporated *nyangile*[4] and *ongeng'o*[5] as part of its instrumentation. When Ongati (2004) started participating in *orutu* music as a dancer in 1939, *nyangile* and *ongeng'o* were part of the ensemble. According to him, these two instruments were borrowed from *onanda* (accordion) music, which was the most popular musical form flourishing in Luo land at that time. *Orutu* was then a dance music performed by middle-aged men and women in partnership. The dance was performed in the afternoon, but could extend into the night depending on the occasion. It was a respectable dance, performed by morally upright people and no form of immorality was condoned.

In the early 1940s, *orutu* posed a serious threat to the popular accordion music, reducing its popularity. As *onanda's* popularity receded, *orutu* took centre stage, enjoying overwhelming popularity. But this situation was not to last for long. In 1945 soldiers started returning from the war camps and they came back with acoustic guitars. The introduction of guitar music in 1946–47 reduced the popularity of *orutu* music. The genre came to be seen as inferior when compared to guitar music which was now deemed "elitist music".

Towards the 1950s, the popularity of guitar music was negatively affecting *orutu* music, which was now only sporadically found in areas such as Kanyamwa, Sakwa Awendo, Gem Asumbi, Kagan, Kochia, Kobuya, Kachien, and parts of Nyakach and Kano. These were places perceived by some as primitive and backward, associated with those who had not gone to school. *Orutu* performances were reduced to private, paid, entertainment at homes or functions. It was no longer a symbol of expression of the Luo community but a sign of an individual's prestige and wealth, since not everybody had the resources needed to invite a musician to their homes. This form of patronage changed *orutu* song texts. Themes initially meant to motivate society by way of warning, correcting or critiquing social or political deviators (encouraging virtues and condemning vices), became praise songs (praising those who had invited them to perform).

According to Odera (op cit.), *orutu* resurfaced again after independence in 1963. He claims that the electric guitars introduced around 1965 made the

band music too expensive to be hired by an individual. So the patrons of these venues went back to hiring *orutu*, and other forms of traditional Luo musics. Furthermore, Kenyan black politicians urged fellow Kenyans to retrace their roots, and this could not be achieved in any better way than performing ethnic musics.

Orutu music took centre stage again from the 1970s, but then featured in social celebrations of a quasi-traditional nature in bars, restaurants and nightclubs, in urban and rural spaces. Some of these venues were demarcated for guitar music and live bands. So, to match the demands of the new performing environments and contexts, *orutu* artists began to imitate the guitar band performance practices. The traditional instrument was amplified using modern technology, since they were performing to bigger audiences. Instruments that could not lend themselves to the creative modifications, for example *nyangile*, were abandoned. *Orutu* music is now very popular in Kenya. This popularity has been enhanced by the new wave of cultural nights where members of a particular community gather to celebrate their past heritage. This includes the cooking of traditional foods and performances of traditional musics among other activities.

Traditionally accepted mores

In its traditional context, *orutu* music is dance music. The participants of the genre talk of *mielo orutu* (dancing *orutu*). It was a performer–participant genre involving a homogeneous audience, the Luo. Participation was restricted to middle-aged energetic men and women who danced in pairs, a man and a woman holding each other at arm's length. Other members of the clan watched and cheered the dancers, also helping in allocating positions to the dancers in the case of a competitive context.

Occasions when the music was performed included:

- Funerals, for mourning (*yuak*), showing respect to the departed, and consoling the remaining members of the family;
- Entertainment and recreational purposes (*budho*), relaxation after a day's hard work;

- Competitions, to show off the best dancers of the genre (*piem*) – those identified as the best dancers were always sought after when there were competitions; and
- Memorial ceremonies for the departed (*rapar*).

The performers were either invited to perform, or they just offered to show respect and entertain members of their society. Traditionally, they were never hired to perform.

In the past, the venue of performance depended on the occasion and event. For funerary occasions (*yuak*, *rapar*), the venue was the home of the deceased. For competitions (*piem*), fields were demarcated for such festivals. Moral standards were upheld. The invited visitors came with their female dancers whom they exchanged with the hosts' dancers so that the hosts could dance with the visitors and vice versa. This is because members of one clan were considered brothers and sisters and it was a taboo for a sister and a brother to dance while holding each other. This enhanced respect and interpersonal relationships between different Luo communities. The avenue also provided a ground for courtship, where unmarried men and women met potential future partners.

In the case of funerals, performances could continue into the night. Appreciation of the performance was shown through gifts of animals, money (during the course of performance) and sometimes even a woman as bride to the master musician, depending on how impressed the host was.

Typically, the ensemble comprised: the *orutu* fiddle whose player also doubled as the lead singer; *nyangile*, which played contrasting rhythms with the third instrument *ongeng'o*. The *ongeng'o* was played steadily and consistently throughout the performance, providing a background rhythm and time-line, keeping the pulse. It therefore laid the foundation rhythm. Its sustained rhythm, together with the timbre of the *nyangile*, marked the essence and distinctive characteristic feature of the *orutu* genre.

The *ongeng'o* and *nyangile* players doubled as response to the soloist call, or "followers" of the leader's call as Ongati (2004) describes them, exhibiting an interlocking form where the response overlaps the call. The *orutu* instrument

was sometimes used as a soloist, but at other times it responded to the vocal solo call. In other instances where the call and the response did not overlap, *orutu* could both call and respond throughout the performance.

It was an established tradition that an *orutu* performance had to begin with an instrumental prelude, followed by praise chanting by the soloist, introducing the theme of the song and his reason for praising the personality/object. After this, the whole ensemble united playing contrasting sonorities, culminating in a climax at which only the instruments play. At this point a participant can temporarily stop the performance (*chungo thum*), mostly in the case of an entertainment (*budho*) context, to chant some praises and offer the musician gifts and a signal to continue. According to Ongati (ibid.), the artist could sometimes refuse the temporary stopping of his performance and continue to the end. *Orutu* also came to a stop when one of the dancers, in the competition context, stepped on the foot of his or her partner. In this case the defaulting dancer was replaced. In performing *puch mar yuak* (music for mourning) in *yuak* or *rapar* contexts, nobody was allowed to dance. The music ended with an *orutu* postlude.

Traditionally, *orutu* musical performances served the Luo at different levels in the community. At the ceremonial level, the praise songs reactivated and re-energised the psychic links which connect the human representatives with the psychic forces of which they are the regents. The rest of the members of the community fought hard to emulate the characters of those who were being praised, so as to continue their legacy even after they had died. At the social level, it provided a platform for moral and social education, emphasising integration of young and old members of the community. It was a test of moral standards, which enhanced activities that were conducive to the continued moral, mental and social health of the group. At the recreational level it offered enjoyment and personal satisfaction. It therefore performed therapeutic services to the members of the society after hard work, allowing them to relax and prepare for the next day's work with enthusiasm, hence increasing productivity. At the functional level, *orutu* musical performances fused the Luo into one unit, an indivisible whole, providing a spirit of togetherness and

sharing which is important for the maintenance of ethnic identity and enhancement of social bonding. Performers and participants were therefore considered two sides of the same coin. Finally, at the ritual level, *orutu* performances bridged the gap between the visible and invisible worlds, bringing them into direct contact through funeral (*yuak*) and memorial (*rapar*) songs.

In 1977 Blacking wrote that music-making is a symbolic expression of societal cultural organisation, which reflects the value and the past and present ways of life of the human beings who create it (Byron, 1995: 115–116). In its traditional context, *orutu* music served these purposes of music-making and was a symbolic expression of the Luo society, performed to express shared values. It will be interesting to find out if this remains so in the contemporary setting.

CONTEMPORARY RECONTEXTUALISATION OF *ORUTU* MUSIC

Bowman (1998) observes that culture is constantly being created, recreated, modified, contested and negotiated. *Orutu*, being a cultural phenomenon, has undergone these changes. The music now features in social celebrations of quasi-traditional nature, performed in bars, restaurants and nightclubs, in rural and urban spaces. Other contexts include parties, government public holidays, political rallies and campaigns. The *yuak*, *rapar* and *piem* contexts of performances have slowly receded into the background. Thus, *orutu* music has basically become entertainment music, depriving it of its original institutional and contextual roles.

Orutu is now a band music competing with popular guitar bands. Members of bands are ethnically mixed. It is no longer a performer-participant type of music, but performer-audience music, attended by audiences with no common cultural denominator. This presents the contemporary *orutu* artists with the challenge of searching for modern presentational features that would match the rapidly modernising Kenyan society, since the target population of the music is not Luo any more, but an international audience. This has compromised the utilitarian purpose of sharing music for social bonding

purposes and the spirit of togetherness shared by members when *orutu* was an important tool for creating and consolidating the Luo community, and was an agent in the creation and maintenance of social order.

Omondi (1992) observes that African traditional music and dance arise directly from the life of African societies and are performed to express shared values. The genres therefore carry information, which is for the most part intended to elicit some form of response from the listeners. Because this concept of performer-participant has changed to performer-audience, the art of collective composition and spontaneous performance-composition tradition has been compromised. This was previously a technique used for thematic development of Luo songs.

The age limit for participants in *orutu* performances is not an issue nowadays. Both young and old mix, as long as one can afford the financial demands. This compromises the initial musical purpose, usage and socio-cultural implications of the music. Dancing is free style – mixing both traditional and conventional dance styles. This has introduced obscene dances maximising rotational hip movement and sensational acrobatics, which are not idiomatic to the Luo dance movements.

The song texts and themes of *orutu*, which were philosophical and meant to promote virtues and condemn vices in the community, are now based on social satire, love, praise of the patrons and clients, sexual themes describing the physiological structure of a woman, or lamentation of a lost love. The artists combine several languages to communicate with their audience and find a common ground acceptable to the contemporary audience's taste, without caring whether the event-based objective of the music is affected. They compose music basically for aesthetic listening, compromising the utilitarian-contextual foundation of traditional *orutu* genre.

Because of the contemporary commercial nature of *orutu*, the artists are remunerated by their employers, who use them to promote their businesses. Artists also generate additional income from offers made by any client who finds their music appealing. They are therefore conditioned to compose music to the taste of their customers in order to keep them in the same venue. The

charges levied on those who attend *orutu* performances during Luo nights promote the commercial orientation of the art. This has degraded the music to a consumer commodity whose popularity is the gauge of its value. It loses precisely what made it worth listening to and engaging in, since, in the African context, music's worth has traditionally been gauged in terms of social obligations.

In the contemporary popular setting, the *orutu* fiddle is still maintained, even though there are instances where some bands play two *orutu* in harmony at the interval of a third. This practice has been borrowed from popular guitar music, where two vocalists call at an interval of a third. Amplification for volume sometimes also compromises the authentic tone colour of the instruments.

The music now begins with an *orutu* prelude, or *asili* (Luo aerophone) and drums plus *oporo* (horn), and sometimes a vocal solo. After this the whole ensemble unites, culminating in a climax at which only the instruments play. At this point *asili* plays a contrasting melody to the original theme, sometimes on its own but sometimes in combination with *oporo*, accompanied by the drums. This is a new innovation in *orutu* performances. Praises are chanted at the climax in the course of the performance. The music ends with a recapitulation of the original theme, exhibiting an A B A form, where B is the *asili*, *oporo* theme.

Nyangile, which was a distinctive instrument in *orutu*, is now extinct. *Ohangla* drums have taken its role, but the rhythms that used to be played on the *nyangile* have not been transferred to the drums. The metallic tone colour that was produced by this instrument has been replaced, compromising one of the distinctive features of *orutu* music. The *ohangla* drums now perform the functions of *ongeng'o*, using rhythmic patterns that belong to the *ohangla* genre. This implies a musical change in the *orutu* genre. The drums are played throughout, providing the background rhythm and marking the pulse. *Ongeng'o* is still maintained for accompaniment, but its rhythms have been redefined. A metallic shaker has been introduced instead of the gourd shaker, for accompaniment purposes.

Western instruments have been incorporated in *orutu* performances. These include keyboard, mouth organ, drum set and, in some instances, bass guitar. The keyboard always replaces *orutu* parts, while the mouth organ plays the introductions and provides episodes or links to some other themes. The Western drum set and bass guitar are used to "beef up" the texture and magnify the volume. An improvised metallic *asili* has been added to the ensemble, usually played in the beginning and at the climax when the other instruments rest. *Orutu* artists now play guitar tunes.

The instruments above also appear in *ohangla* music, bringing confusion in identification. What people do not know is that the *orutu* genre has distinctive rhythmic patterns and structural organisation including songs and dances that go with it. The mere presence of the *orutu* fiddle in a performance does not make it *orutu* music. Conversely, the absence of the *orutu* fiddle in an *orutu* performance, where the instrument is replaced with the keyboard, does not represent *orutu* music, because this is the instrument the genre is named after. All the above elements should be taken into consideration to be able to identify a performance as either *orutu* or *ohangla*.

Having said all this, one might be tempted to ask whether we still have *orutu* music. The answer lies in the style of performance, which exhibits *orutu* as an idiom. I have on several occasions witnessed a band called *Kenge Kenge Orutu System* perform what they call "Orutu set". In this, the only instruments involved are *orutu*, *nyangile* and *ongeng'o*, and the tunes belong to the *orutu* idiom. So the original style is there, but at the request of the clients. Therefore we still have the *orutu* idiom.

The genre is still alive in the collective memories of those who danced it. They have maintained call and response as a formal structure but with variations that have been accepted and enjoyed by the owners of the music. Double-part vocal or *orutu* soloing in harmony, adapting traditional Luo songs, or appropriating them by maintaining the tune and changing the text to fit contemporary audience needs, have been welcomed. Nzewi (1991) calls this innovative continuity within conformity. They have not interfered with the form and meaning of the music. The innovations have become "Luonised"

and are now accepted as the norm. The art of panegyrisation, i.e. the art of spontaneous praise chanting in Dho-luo, has been maintained, identifying the genre as belonging to the Luo.

INTERPRETATION OF THE CHANGES

The modernists assume that the magnitude of new elements in *orutu* music indicates that the community is adapting successfully to the changing circumstances, but this may not be the case. They treat music as morally neutral but they still need to establish the connection between musical creativity and social welfare of the Luo, since as Blacking (in Byron, 1995) puts it, there is a relationship between the state of music and the state of the society. Even though Euba (1970) says that music cannot live without new creative forces to sustain it through changing social circumstances, there is a need to establish a frame of reference by which to change. The deep macro structures which define different categories of traditional music are especially pertinent.

The traditionalists, on the other hand, are fighting for the retention of essential cultural and moral values, i.e. the deep structures and nucleus of the musical system. This is considered the one property which must be maintained to ensure the viability of the musical genre. It is evident that they do not mind any changes or innovations on the *variables* (those micro properties which may be altered, eliminated or introduced in the face of confrontation or change). They would be comfortable if the modernists selected elements from a wide range of new elements and adapted specific ones to the old (traditional) music, since "unchanging cultural tradition is dead and of no use to people … and music without social situations, … ceases to be music as a performing art" (Blacking in Byron, 1995: 156).

The traditional *orutu* and *ohangla* music genres of the Luo are fast becoming consumer commodities like any other goods, thus falling increasingly short of their potential to educate. They are now music for the rich. Their structural and presentational styles are no longer inspired by traditional meaning. They are now performed for community prestige and aesthetic appreciation.

Performances lack the musical merits and spirituality of traditional contextual performance. The increasing modernisation of traditional institutions has changed the lifestyle and worldview of the Luo, and their attitude towards traditional music. People's relationship to traditional music has been reduced to silent, passive and largely mindless consumption. They no longer know what they like; they only like what they know (Bowman, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The changes and innovations discussed in this chapter point towards both continuity and musical change in *orutu* content and performance practice in contemporary popular settings. It is also evident from the changes made to the *orutu* genre by the modernists, that the changes allow them to listen to and enjoy the music for contemplative reasons, not for functional meaning or societal context.

My personal view, however, is that some of the changes that have been introduced do not add value to the music. For example, the use of the keyboard to replace *orutu*, and the Western drum set which merely doubles the *ohangla* drumbeats, and the introduction of the metallic sound of the *asili* and other percussion instruments, do not blend well with the traditional instruments. If this continues, the genre will lose its essence.

The way forward is to establish a framework for innovating or changing traditional music, one that would maintain the essence of the traditional musical genres, but still preserve the music in contemporary terms. Artists should look for techniques of recontextualising traditional genres through the use of new technology that would not interfere with the style or idiom of the music, but would still appeal to contemporary audiences. This may bring about some state of equilibrium between the traditionalists and the modernists.

ENDNOTES

1. The Luo are a nilotic group found in Nyaza province along Lake Victoria in Kenya. They speak a language known as Dho-luo.

2. Editor's note: See Orawu in A Herbst (Ed.) (2005). *Emerging solutions for musical arts education in Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds, pp. 267–282 (previous PASMAE publication) for illustrations of these instruments.

3. Nyangile is a set of semi-round metal rings and a wooden sound box played in combination to accompany *orutu* performance).

4. *Ongeng'o* is a metal ring struck with an iron bar used to accompany both *orutu* and *ohangla*.

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The cultural marriage music of the Abaluhya: Song text as a mode of discourse

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, I discuss how the indigenous marriage music of the Abaluhya takes a special role in relaying messages to the bridal couple. Through song, performers acquire special licence to use some text, which in ordinary use of the language is prohibited by the norms of the community. Data were gathered during field research and then analysed. Each song text is written in the original language (Oluluhya), translated literally into English and its usage analysed. I have also briefly discussed the emerging trends and their effect on the indigenous marriage music of the Abaluhya.

Key words: Abaluhya, Kenya, indigenous music, marriage ceremony, culture

BACKGROUND

The indigenous music still plays an important role in the Abaluhya cultural marriage despite the ongoing process of acculturation, which I refer to as cultural disorientation. Some of the key factors behind the forces of acculturation are, for instance: urbanisation which has changed lifestyles of the people; the desire for modernity such as the use of electronic equipment which has replaced live group singing; and exotic religions such as Islam and Christianity which discouraged the use of indigenous music. According to Nketia (1972: 15) "this did not appear the suitable form of Christian worship the Westerners were accustomed to". Despite the forces of acculturation, the cultural marriage music of the Abaluhya continues to survive, although as an endangered form. It is not surprising to find this cultural music penetrating into modern marriage music at certain stages of the marriage process, against the wishes of the church. This is due to the value the Abaluhya attach to their song text as a mode of discourse. For this one can thank the few traditional master musicians who still cherish and practise this noble part of the Abaluhya culture.

THE INDIGENOUS SONG TEXT AS A MODE OF DISCOURSE

The song texts in the cultural marriage music of the Abaluhya convey some messages that are not allowed in ordinary use of the language by the community. For instance, marital sex education, criticism on marriage issues, advice against bad behaviour, and advice to abide by acceptable cultural values such as morality, hard work, kindness, respect, cleanliness, obedience, good cooking, childbearing and caring. Among the Abaluhya, song texts are used as a vehicle for carrying these messages to the couple in a polite manner. The same message would be difficult to relay in the ordinary use of language, because that would be against the norms of the society. In this case, the music provides special licence to use the text for educational purpose.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Participants

The Abaluhya community consists of 18 sub-ethnic groups and each one of

them has a varying number of traditional performing musicians (master musicians). I used a simple random sampling technique where the number of master musicians available was fewer than ten per each sub-ethnic group, and stratified random sampling where the number was more than ten per each sub-ethnic group.

For this chapter, the entire group of six songs, performed by all the (18) sub-ethnic groups, was selected. Each group repeated these songs, but with some variations to reflect the parties involved in the marriage, such as names of the bride and bridegroom, the clans and totems.

The data were gathered through participant-observation and open-ended interview approaches.

Analysis of the song texts

I have used the approaches of Wade (1976: 205) and Merriam (1964: 187) in analysing the way song texts are used in the cultural marriage music of Abaluhya. Each song is written in the original language (Oluluhya), translated literally into English and then interpreted. It is then analysed as applied in the cultural marriage music of the Abaluhya.

Title: *Mwana wa Mbeli (the first born)*

Language 1	Language 2
Mwana wa mbeli bayaye	*The first born bayaye*
Mwana wa mbeli bayaye	*The first born bayaye*
Mwana wa mbeli neshikhoyelo	*The first born is the pride*
Lera tsinguvo tsia mwa kula	*Bring the clothes you bought*
Mwana wa mbeli	*The first born*
Khufwale mwana	*We dress up the child*
Mwana wa mbeli neshikhoyelo	*The first born is the pride*

Climax

Oh Mwana wa mbeli	*Oh the first born*
Oh Mwana wa mbeli neshikhoyelo	*Oh the first born is the pride*
Oh Mwana wa mbeli	*Oh the first born*
Oh Mwana wa mbeli neshikhoyelo	*Oh the first born is the pride*

Interpretation of the text

The singers use simple text such as "Mwana wa meli neshikhoyelo" literally translated as "The first born is the pride of the family" in the song. The singers ask for traditional oil and clothes to dress the child. According to Mrs Obwatinya of Chekalini, the song goes beyond the literal meaning of the text. It is a challenge to the bride and groom to couple in terms of the primary essence of marriage which, like in many other cultures, is child bearing. The couple is given official permission for procreation, and the community has the traditional oil and clothes to dress the child. The couple is challenged to reward the community by producing children.

Title: *Nolangwa (when called)*

Language 1	Language 2
Nolangwa	*When called*
Eh	*Eh*
Omwana nolangwa	*You child when called*
Obolenje ndihano	*Always say I am here*
Nosuye	*If you refuse*
Eh	*Eh*

Omwana nosuye	*You child if you refuse*
Emikwajo chonyene	*You will be beaten*
Lwalelo	*Today*
Eh	*Eh*
Mukhana lwalelo	*The girl today*
Lwalelo olihano	*Today you are here*

Interpretation of the text

The soloist composes relevant text in the process of performance to advise the bride on how to behave as a married woman. Abaluhya culture expects the bride to be obedient and polite to the new family, especially the husband. She is further reminded to be aware of her new life and challenged to accept it. She is also cautioned against rude behaviour that can result in wife beating. In this, the girl is prepared, through song, to face the new life within cultural expectations.

Title: *Olando Mbe Mboele*

Language 1	Language 2
Olando mbe mboele	*Olando give me the rope to tie*
Mbe	*Give me*
Olando mbe mboele	*Olando give me the rope to tie*
Mbo mukoye mboele malamunda	*Give me the rope to tie intestines*
Olando inguvo niwina?	*Olando from where did you get clothes?*
Oh	*Oh*

Olando vilaro ni vya wina?	*Olando from where did you get shoes?*
Mbo mukoye mboele malamunda	*Give me the rope to tie intestines*

Refrain

Olando inda	*Olando with the stomach*
Weinda	*With stomach*
Olando inda	*Olando with the stomach*
Weinda ya raka makanda Etoli	*With stomach planted beans at Etoli*
Mboele mboele mbe	*Give me to tie give me to tie*

Interpretation of the text

In verse one, the bridegroom is literally asked to give the bride something to tie her intestines. In the next verse, he is sarcastically asked to explain from where he borrowed the clothes and shoes. In the refrain Olando is described as one who has a big stomach full of beans ready for planting at a place called Etoli. According to Mrs Phelesia (2004) and Pwonde (2004), a traditional musician, the song has deeper meaning than what is sung. In the first verse, the rope Olando is asked to provide stands for clan continuity through procreation and therefore he is challenged to take up his role in procreation activities. In the second verse, he is further challenged to prove his worth and avoid depending on a borrowed lifestyle. In the refrain, the big stomach full of beans stands for the ability to procreate, which is a virtue among the Abaluhya. In this case, through song, the bridegroom receives an outline of his primary responsibility.

Title: *Nohenga Omwana Mwoyo Kungalakala*

Language 1	Language 2
Nohenga khu mwana	*If you look at this girl*
Mwoyo kungalakala	*The heart is spoilt*
Mandenya khusala	*You want to vomit*
Omwana olitekha hena?	*Where will you be married?*
Refrain	
Wachelewa	*You are late*
Wachelewa	*You are late*
Mwana wachelewa	*Girl, you are late*
Mwana olitekha hena?	*Girl, where will you be married?*
Nohenga khu mwana	*If you look at this girl*
Najenda nakonga	*Walking proudly*
Khane tsifwo tsiaunya	*Yet she has bad manner*
Mwana olitekhahena?	*Girl, where will you be married?*

Interpretation of the text

This song is sung by the bridegroom's party while escorting the girl to her new house after the marriage process. In this song, there is deliberate use of words with a different meaning. For instance, this is time for a happy mood as the girl is escorted to the matrimonial house, and yet she is described as one who has bad manners, does not know how to take care of her personal hygiene, cannot cook well and is a witch. According to Mrs Livanse (2004), a traditional musician, the song is used for highlighting to the new member of the

community, the habits she must avoid in order to fit into the new family. In the chorus she is also mocked: "…it is too late for you to change, who can marry a woman like you with such bad manners."

Title: *Senje ndakhukaua (my niece I cautioned you)*

Language 1	Language 2
Senje ndakhukaya wakhaya	*My niece I cautioned you*
Omwana wa mama	*The child of my mother*
Senje ndakhukaya wakhaya	*My niece I cautioned you*
Khutstia khu mukora	*To marry a craftsman*
Senje ndakhukaya wakhaya	*My niece I cautioned you*

Interpretation of the text

The aunt to the bride encourages her to marry, because earlier advice for her to avoid marrying a craftsman was ignored. She is cautioned that retreat is not possible. According to Nanjala (2004), a traditional musician, the bride is cautioned that in marriage, not all is a bed of roses. She is challenged to adjust to the new lifestyle and to expect challenges.

Title: *Olando Mwene*

Language 1	Language 2
Olando mwene, Eh	*Olando himself,*
Nobura ewabwe, Eh	*If you pass at his place,*
Sukhuchela mulembe, Eh	*Can never greet you,*

Yahenya mino, Eh	*Has large exposed teeth,*
Singa mikomia, Eh	*Like bad bananas which have been hit by hailstones,*
Kamachina kakhuba, Uu! Uu!	*That have been hit by hailstones*

Interpretation of the text

The song ridicules the bridegroom, because he does not know how to greet the in-laws in the Abaluhya style. They sing that he has teeth like bananas hit by hailstones. The crowd laughs at him loudly "uui! uui!" The seemingly abusive language is aimed at communicating to him the values cherished by Abaluhya, such as greeting the in-laws and being friendly to new relatives. The message is conveyed through the use of harsh language, which cannot be relayed in normal talking.

New trends in the Abaluhya marriage music

With changing times, the indigenous marriage music of Abaluhya has faced changes in terms of sound structure and form. For instance, vocal polyphony was introduced through the adaptation, arrangement and harmonisation of indigenous marriage melodies, using European harmonic devices. In addition, the Western musical instruments that were introduced as accompaniment, for example, electronic guitar and piano, have created a new texture which appears to be popular among the youth.

As far as song text is concerned, there is a tendency to control its flexibility. The soloist no longer enjoys the freedom to compose the words to fit the occasion, such as names of the couple, the clan, totem or the village. This is due to the fact that some of the music is pre-recorded or written down and the performers have to use the text as it is. In this case the creativity of the soloist is limited, yet this was an important aspect of the indigenous performance technique.

CONCLUSION

The above discussion of the usage of Abaluhya marriage songs leads to the general conclusion that there are two basic uses of language in the process of marriage. Firstly, song text communicates important marriage values to the couple, according to the Abaluhya culture. During this occasion the musicians acquire special licence to use words not allowed in normal language discourse in public. But for the purpose of informally educating the couple about their new status, it is allowed only on this occasion. Secondly, there is a new dimension of using the text with an underlying meaning to give the couple a challenge to interpret the message. They are expected not to take the words (and life) literally, but give it a deeper meaning.

Finally, the researcher observed that due to the process of acculturation, these uses of the language are changing. This is due to the fact that contemporary marriages have guests drawn from different cultural backgrounds and therefore moderated language becomes necessary.

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A personal account of music education in Freetown: "You can play a musical instrument"

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ABSTRACT

Music education in Freetown has been dormant for a long period due to the fact that schools lacked qualified teachers to teach the subject. Further, there were no musical instruments whatsoever to enhance the teaching-learning process. Pupils were taught the theory of music with no practical exercise or activity within the school setting. As a result, they gave up on the subject because they were expecting to sing, dance or play a musical instrument. Parents were also disappointed with the fact that music teaching had no practical aspect and considered it a waste of time. In the informal setting, however, quite a handful of pupils with musical background had the opportunity to play indigenous musical instruments and also take part in singing activities. This chapter will briefly describe my experiences with brass band music in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and advocate for using this medium for music education. It also seeks to build the musical walls that have been broken down. This requires cooperation and support from various bodies.

Key words: bands, school bands, history, Sierra Leone, student attitudes

THE HISTORY OF SCHOOL BANDS IN FREETOWN

Music as a subject in schools is enhanced with singing activities. A choir is usually readily available for any school celebration. There was no motivation to explore other avenues in music until brass bands from the United Kingdom visited Sierra Leone. Long before school bands came into existence, the Military Band and the Sierra Leone Police Band had already existed, performing only for civic functions and sometimes for serenade during the Christmas season.

The Methodist Boys High School was the first school in Freetown to have a marching band. They made their first performance as far back as 1885 during their thanksgiving celebration, during which the whole school assembled at one point and the school band led the procession to the church. This event was celebrated during its centennial in 1995. The band was witnessed by many because it was the first of its kind. The band also accompanied the church service after which they led the procession to the school grounds where they dispersed. Nowadays, the band is usually made up of both past and present pupils. Students achieve recognition, the school spirit is fostered and good feelings are generated all round as the colourful group parades by. It is a cultural phenomenon peculiar to Sierra Leone.

According to school histories and conversations with elderly players, the second school to have a marching band was The Sierra Leone Grammar School. They had their first public performance in 1912. It was the beginning of an era. The little seeds sown by these two schools took root and flourished. It was only in 1989 that girls schools took up marching bands, and the Annie Walsh Memorial School was the first girls school to have a marching band. They did their best to secure a marching band in order to celebrate the schools' centenary. It was a very big occasion in the history of the country and for music education.

In Freetown, music education was dormant for a very long period, due to the fact that schools lacked qualified teachers to teach the subject and, moreover, there were no musical instruments to enhance the teaching-

learning process. There was no motivation to explore other avenues of music until brass bands from the United Kingdom visited Sierra Leone in 1992 and 1995 respectively. These brass bands were the *John Foster Black Dyke Mills* and *The Wallace Collection*. During their visit, they organised workshops for music instructors, gave a few brass instruments to various schools and also made an appeal to the governing school authorities to secure musical instruments for potential pupils because they discovered that most of these pupils had untapped talents.

This brought an awakening within the school's education system – with determination and cooperation, goals were achieved. It is interesting to note that every secondary school in Freetown and a few in the provinces can currently boast of a brass band (marching band), creating opportunities for pupils to discover and develop their talents. The marching band now forms a major component of the music education in Freetown.

BRASS BANDS IN SCHOOLS

The inclusion of the marching band in the school's curriculum posed many challenges and one might ask the question: What are the benefits?

Music teachers were faced with the challenge of acquiring skills necessary to play a wind instrument. Brass band teaching took place during extra-curricular activities. In most cases, professional brass players were invited to help in the teaching-learning process. But the pupils faced the challenge of learning to play an instrument with excitement.

How it all started

I was head of the Music Department at the St Joseph's Secondary School and also director of the brass band, so I shall use this experience alongside my interactions with other school bands. During my interview with band players, a question I asked was: "Why did you join the school band?" The general response was: "I love music." Pupils already have an innate interest and the music teacher needs only to open the doors of learning so that their interest may be fostered.

In order to find out what motivated pupils, I embarked upon a short research project as case study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The mainly qualitative research was conducted from January to April 2001. The reason this period was selected was because during this period, schools celebrate their anniversaries, and so have a march past or parade through the streets of Freetown. At the time I was head of the Music Department at St Joseph's Secondary School. There were about 40 pupils in this school band, and I interviewed 20 pupils. Questionnaires were given to those not interviewed.

In addition, information from other school bands was desirable. Therefore, 20 questionnaires were sent to each band. There were a total of 17 school bands. I received responses from ten bands. The responses I received were just enough for me to move on with my work. The total number of responses was 225.

Following this, I interviewed 13 band directors who were very positive. With regard to further information, I observed various band performances and observed their formation, interaction and comportment.

By means of the above interviews, questionnaires, field observations during that four-month period, interesting comments and perceptions emerged. As far as possible I will allow the "voices" of the pupils to speak for themselves.

Teaching-learning processes

For a start, interested pupils were invited to the music room so that they could have a feel of the different types of musical instruments. After a period of experimentation with the instruments, I had very interesting responses relating to the students' choice of instruments:

- "I love the cornet because it is small and looks easy to play."
- "I chose the side drum because of its rattling sound."
- "I just love the name 'baritone', so I chose the instrument."

- "I like the trumpet because it plays the melody."

Quite a few students had no choice:

- "I ended up playing the horn because it was the only instrument available at the time."
- "My instructor told me to play the saxophone."
- "The trombone was recommended to me because I was tall."
- "Woodwind players were needed so I was given the clarinet."

For the majority of the male schools bands, instruments are sometimes allocated according to physical appearances: tubas and double B-Flat basses are assigned to pupils who are muscular and well built; trombones are usually assigned to pupils who are tall.

The health of the pupils is also taken into consideration because marching bands require a lot of physical strength from the players, for example, marching for long distances during hot, sometimes unfavourable, weather. Generally, despite the excitement of wanting to play a brass instrument, pupils undergo a thorough health check. Pupils with physical disabilities might join the band for indoor performances.

From all of the encounters mentioned above, it was clear that pupils have talents and skills which are untapped. They need teachers who will motivate them and help them to discover their talents. Music as a subject should not be limited to the classroom; most of this discipline deals with musicianship and also group work (music-making).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

During my interaction with band pupils, I asked them why they became members of their school bands, and the most common reply was, "I love music." Most of these pupils were encouraged by relatives who knew the value and importance of music and the positive impact in the life of a child. Several pupils had personal goals such as, "I would like to become the best percussion player or the best cornet player." Such goals require commitment and hard work.

It is interesting to note the impact that the school band has made in the

lives of school children. Below are some of their responses:

- A percussion player of the Albert Academy School Band replied, "It has brought a deep sense of appreciation for different styles of music."
- A trombone player of the St Joseph's Secondary School Band said, "I am now associating myself with all sorts of people which makes me know more about life's issues."
- A drummer of the Sierra Leone Grammar School Band had an interesting reply, "The code of conduct in my school band has made me to be more disciplined and to obey authority."
- A cornet player of the Annie Walsh School Band replied, "I can now read music and play at least one musical instrument, an opportunity nobody had in my family."
- A trumpeter of the Prince of Wales School Band said, "My position as librarian has made me become more responsible and dutiful; also, I have had the opportunity of visiting many places."
- A saxophone player of the Methodist Boys High School Band replied, "Being a musician, it's so easy to find yourself in the presence of dignitaries. I wonder what else would have got me so close to our head of state."
- A tuba player of the St Edwards Secondary School Band said, "Now I've realised what team work is all about, one band one sound."
- A baritone player of the Government Model Secondary School said, "At the end of each term, I (the band) receive remuneration from the school and I feel so good to share it with my family."

Other positive results from band directors were:

- "The school band to a very large extent keeps its members out of mischief, especially outside the classroom setting."
- "They have acquired a sense of discipline, practising a great deal to master their skills. They have annual brass band competitions to look forward to and also meeting entertainment demands from the public."

- "The practical aspect of music (brass band, choir, etc.) is taken into consideration for test assessment."
- "Outstanding school band pupils receive part scholarships from their various school bands. Families of such pupils are very much impressed and they support their child's activity in the band."
- "Pupils now realise that with their skills, they can generate income for themselves and, as a result, they take their band activities very seriously."
- "Some pupils from the male school bands have secured part-time jobs in hotel bands (trumpeters, trombonists and saxophonists)."

ATTITUDES ENCOUNTERED

In all areas of life people have their likes and dislikes but it is very difficult to come upon an individual who doesn't appreciate music or something that has to do with music. Shakespeare wrote, "The man that hath no music in himself is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils … let no such man be trusted." I expect an entire class to become members of a band but I wanted to establish why certain pupils were not interested in the school band.

In answering this question, the background of some pupils and the role of their parents contributed much. A pupil who has no musical background might still have an inclination towards music – be it the choir or marching band. Possible answers to the question of what drives pupils' interest in the school band are evident in the following:

- A pupil (a Muslim) at St Joseph's Secondary School wanted to become a member of the school band. When she mentioned it to her parents, they told her that marching bands are engaged in Christian activities so she must think of something else. Such a remark seems unreasonable. Why did they send their child to a Christian school? The fact that she is a member of the school automatically qualifies her to take part or represent the school in any activity – sports, music, quiz competitions or debating. I see such parents as narrow-minded, as children are not given the opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities.

Education must be balanced. Some parents have no idea what impact music groups have made in the lives of their children.

- Several pupils commented that instruments are difficult to play. This is naive, because if their fellow pupils can play them, they can do likewise. Not all band members play wind instruments. Producing sounds and playing a melody requires great skill and technique but the percussion section comprising bass drum, side drum, cymbals and other hand instruments can be handled easily. Each instrument in the band is as important as the other. The trumpet player is as important as the cymbal player because both have significant parts to play, thus enriching the sound of the band.

- A pupil of the Methodist Boys High School Band felt that members of the band discouraged him because he was weak in his academic subjects. Pupils who can't make it academically often seek something else to compensate for their weakness in class work. When such pupils join the band, some of the band members tell them that they are too stupid and music needs *intelligent* people. Band instructors should discourage such disparaging remarks. In fact, band members are in a good position to help their fellow pupils.

- The majority of pupils just feel they could never play the instruments, without even making an attempt. Such feelings are negative. Pupils need to be encouraged both to participate and to develop their musical abilities. The same applies to any musical instrument – it only requires time, patience, hard work and dedication to succeed.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

One of the most common problems that instructors encounter during the training process is continuity. Pupils who have been well equipped with playing skills sometimes fall back. They can't give any valid reason as to why they can no longer stay in the band. A few excuses were, "I want to concentrate on my academic work" or, "Brass band takes so much of my time". Because of this, the school saw to it that any pupil who wanted to be part

of the band was obliged to have an approval from their parents. Thus, we had to continuously train pupils so that the band had back-up players. For example, if there are four trumpet players, there should be four recruits on the trumpet understudying the principal players. They sit in during rehearsals and observe all that's going on. Pupils who can no longer keep their commitments are asked to inform the school (instructor) so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Training for pupils during the normal day-to-day lesson is demanding and time is a constraint. In my experience, brass band tuition took place during extra-curricular activities, after school and weekends; this kind of schedule is mostly for beginners.

Before the inclusion of brass instruments in the school's curriculum, pupils had the opportunity to play the piano or indigenous instruments. Most of the pupils who grew up in the provinces were taught how to play some of these indigenous instruments in an informal setting, coupled with dances. The piano is not an instrument that is commonly owned or that pupils even have access to; a fact which discouraged many pupils.

The brass band brought about a revolution in the school's education system. It was proven that most pupils who are not academically gifted powered the band with their practical skills. They were versatile, playing at least two musical instruments; pupils easily became teachers as they helped weaker pupils master their skills.

Since pupils have different learning capabilities, some acquire the skills and techniques in a shorter time than others. It is also interesting to note that female pupils are more enthusiastic than male pupils, but the boys stay longer in the band. Boys in most cases see the brass band as something to hold on to even after schooling. It keeps them together because they share something. Most of the female pupils quit the bands after taking their final exams. All of a sudden life has new meaning to them, they begin to take life more seriously and start building a career. A few reported that the school band activities affected their relationships, so they had to leave.

Equipping a school band with performing skills is very challenging.

Pupils have to work at least five to six days a week. Because of the cost and delicacy of the instruments, pupils only encounter the instruments in school. Only a few can boast of owning a trumpet or clarinet.

TIPS FOR TUTORS

Tutors are encouraged to:

- Ask the pupils in the band to name colleagues or friends who have shown some inclination towards music.
- Personally see those pupils who have shown interest. Be enthusiastic but don't plead. Some pupils will wait until they have a chance to "size up" the tutor before they commit themselves.
- Arrange a short private audition for every new member. This allows the tutor to assess the pupil's abilities but it is also a chance to meet each pupil personally.
- Make the first rehearsal a successful and pleasant experience. Accomplish something the first day, even if it is only playing a simple melody in unison. Be enthusiastic about the band. This is a prime requisite for a successful rehearsal.

The music director should be clear in his or her own mind about the reasons for seeking pupils for the school band. It is not to build a little "empire" for himself/herself; rather, it is to have a group of sufficient variety and size to provide a satisfying musical experience. It is also a good idea for tutors to keep in touch with past pupils. They can also help to pass on their expertise to the new members and also perform with the band whenever possible.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SCHOOL BANDS

School bands provide a direct route for projecting music within the school at large and for fulfilling a role in community service by performing at formal and informal public functions. The rationale for schools to have a band was initially for educational reasons but now this rationale is wider.

School bands are now used for entertainment and, as a result, generate

income for the school. They perform on many occasions in the community – church services, funeral processions, wedding receptions, birthday parties, civic functions, picnics and other light engagements that they can handle. An event the public looks forward to is when bands serenade during Christmas time. They love to hear the carols at night in the open air. Thus, the band does not concentrate on marching music only. They have to expand their repertoire to meet the musical demands of the public. Pupils now encounter different ways of music-making. Above all – they enjoy playing popular songs.

On the other hand, this demand poses a challenge to the tutors because they have to find or even compose pieces for the band. The band as a whole has to maintain the discipline of excellence. They have to practise to feel good, look good and be good. Although the pupils are taught to read sheet music, they are also encouraged to play by ear, especially local tunes or folk songs.

Successful music-making in whatever form will always attract potential players. Nearly all pupils love music and they might never have found a point of contact if it had not been for music. They might never have known the joy of making music with other people if they had not joined a band.

For the public at large, the band is sometimes their only contact with the school. Band pupils and bandsmen receive recognition, school spirit is fostered and good feelings are generated all round as the colourful group parades by. It is a cultural phenomenon peculiar to Sierra Leone. The streets are filled to capacity with people of all sorts – past and present pupils, parents and children, traders, street kids, all cheering the colourful groups as they pass. It gives the band members much joy, making them proud of their school. I personally have doubts as to whether this kind of school band activity takes place in other countries in the sub-region. Marching bands have now become a fine public relations medium for schools.

Schools with bands support each other (musically) when they have their annual thanksgiving ceremonies, speech day and prize giving, sports meetings and even when there are bereavements. They turn up with their respective school colours and instruments to grace the ceremony. Such occasions are always a time to look forward to as the spirit of excellence

envelops the entire ensemble – thus creating a competitive atmosphere.

This season for band performances is usually during the dry season commencing the last week in January to the first week in May. There is a thanksgiving procession every Sunday starting not later than 2:00 pm. The bands lead the procession to and from church, followed by the pupils. The normal day-to-day traffic for road users is affected during such an occasion because they march round specific routes in the city, after which they disperse inside their respective schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The Ministry of Education

This governing body should ensure that music is treated with equal importance and valued like any other subject. Why music has lost its place in our education system is a question that the ministry should take into consideration. It is their duty to provide qualified tutors to teach the subject, making it useful and meaningful to the pupils, equipping them with both theory and practical skills. We are living in a world where entertainment is playing a significant role in our lives and I believe giving pupils this opportunity at an early age will equip them to meet the musical demands of the public.

Heads of schools

They should also show interest in the musical activities of the school: the choir, marching band, dancers, indigenous ensemble, etc. They need to know what is lacking and how they can enhance music-making within the school.

Music instructors

The majority of music teachers are not practising musicians. It is not a matter of what you want to learn but of what is required. Music teachers must have in mind that they have chosen a profession that is challenging because it requires a wide spectrum of abilities. Successful music teachers need more

than innate musicianship, more than "a way with youngsters", more than good training for the work they undertake. Above all, they need the imagination and intelligence to apply their talents creatively to the practical teaching situation.

Music is not for the unimaginative, the lazy nor the faint of heart. Music involves creativity, improvisation and applying practical skills in *everyday* musical activities. A music teacher who is a practising musician will have an edge over his/her pupils because in most cases, all they need is motivation, helping them to see beyond the classroom, thereby whetting their musical appetites.

Music plays a vital role in the lives of school children. In this regard, schools must provide the right kind of music education that will enhance the social life of pupils. The upsurge of interest in music (especially marching bands) may be because of personal enrichment and satisfaction. Children learn by discovery and it is the duty of the school (instructors) to create the appropriate learning environment. Through these experiences, children would become aware of the elements of music and the principles of its compositions will develop an understanding of its expressive qualities.

Parents

Parents can contribute to the music education of their children mainly in the informal setting. They can set the pace, which tutors can later develop. Teaching them folk songs, singing together, listening to recorded music and introducing them to the playing of musical instruments, are all activities that they will readily apply in the formal setting.

Children need encouragement from the home because music plays a very important role in everybody's life. Parents must allow their children to become part of any musical activity and not decry it as a waste of time. Children are by nature active, inquisitive and creative. Education must promote the development of these qualities. I believe that music must be included in the curriculum of younger children because it will enhance the development of musical skills and the building of concepts about music.

Franklyn Johnson-Williams

REFERENCES

The information on which this article is based is captured in the author's thesis representing ongoing research. The information was gathered by means of personal experience (brother played at the centenary festival of the first school band in 1995); questioning and interacting with current band members; and interviews with elderly band players. To date there are no other published resources available on school bands in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

The *segaba*: An indigenous form of music education[1]

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ABSTRACT

This essay examines the organology and playing technique of the segaba, *a single-stringed, bowed and tuned musical instrument that is indigenous to the southern African region. It outlines the painstaking procedure that is followed in the construction of the instrument. Although the* segaba, *a resonated zither, is gradually fading into oblivion, it is still played in some parts of the sub-continent, in countries such as Botswana, South Africa and Namibia. It is an added advantage for someone who successfully learns how to perform on the* segaba *to eventually learn how to construct the instrument.*

Key words: Botswana, musical instrument, organology, playing technique, segaba, zither

INTRODUCTION

It is early morning on 21 August 2001. The setting of this interesting episode is the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone, Botswana. The author of this paper is checking in for a flight to Johannesburg, South Africa, en route to the Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE) Conference in Lusaka, Zambia. As he places his luggage on the electronic scale, the lady behind the check-in counter asks, "Are you checking in the walking stick too or are you taking it with you on board?" The walking stick she was referring to is the *segaba*. This was an interesting revelation to me: without the resonator and the bow, the *segaba* resembles a walking stick buttressed with a metallic strip of wire. This is particularly so if it is held in one hand at the end with the tuning peg, and the other end pointing down. After a humorous chat with the lady, the *segaba* was handed over to the cabin crew for safe storage in a cupboard on the aircraft. However, this was not to be the only interesting observation made about the instrument that day.

On boarding a connecting flight to Lusaka, a member of the cabin crew after taking a bewildered look at the *segaba* asks curiously, "Is this your traditional weapon, Sir?" The author mirthfully responds: "Oh no!" Another interesting revelation: that the *segaba*, still without the resonator, does bear some resemblance to the bow. Someone with a background of musical bows would probably have thought of something along those lines and not a weapon.

At the conference the *segaba* continued to inspire awe in those who saw it. As it turned out, everybody was seeing it for the first time. Requests to demonstrate how the instrument is played came from almost everyone who saw it on display.

The *segaba* is quite fascinating. As a documented testimony to this, Kgalemang Tumedisho Motsete (Motsete, n.d.) in one of his compositions, pays tribute to the *segaba* in the following lines:

Diletso tsa Batswana	*The musical instruments of the Batswana*
Ditenkane le meropa	*Thumb pianos and drums*
Lesifa le nkokwane	*Musical bows*
Diphalwa ke segaba	*are outdone by the segaba*

In spite of its simple appearance, the *segaba* is by no means a simple musical instrument to play. This is a fact that is acknowledged by Brearley (1996). Like any other instrument, the technical ability and proficiency of the player go a long way in influencing the quality of the music that can be produced on the *segaba*. A news reporter writing for a local newspaper states in an article on the Soweto String Quartet, that "a string quartet sounds like art music, but violins come from the same root as our *segaba*" (Kethamile, 2001: E4).

In the sections that follow, the *segaba* is described in detail. The chapter also discusses the origins of the instrument, its structure as well as its function.

THE *SEGABA*

To someone with no prior contact with it, who has not seen the instrument before, the most probable question to ask for a start would be, what is a *segaba*? It is a traditional musical instrument of the Batswana.[2]

The *segaba* consists of a flattened, yet curved, rod of wood from which the bark has been removed. It is fitted with a string wire and a resonator, usually a five-litre tin can. A wooden tuning peg is inserted in a hole piercing the lower end of the rod, which rests on the player's hand, while the other end, fitted with the resonator, is placed on the shoulder. The string is wound around the tuning peg and is secured at the rod's upper end. On average the instrument is 100 cm long and 6 cm wide. It is played by bowing.

The description most befitting the *segaba*, according to the Von Hornbostel and Sachs system of classification (in Myers, 1993: 455), places the instrument

under simple chordophones or zithers: "The instruments consist solely of a string bearer, or a string bearer with a resonator which is not integral and can be detached without destroying the sound-producing apparatus." There is, however, a difference of opinion over the exact classification of the *segaba*. For instance, Norborg (1987) concurs with Von Hornbostel and Sachs that the *segaba* is a zither, whereas Brearley (1996) calls it a fiddle. In an attempt to clarify the confusion that surrounds the classification of the *segaba*, Phuthego (1998) explains what makes the *segaba* fit within the zithers under the string instruments.

The *segaba* is known by other names, for example the writings of Kirby (1968) feature the names *sentinkane* and *segankuru* as found among the various Tswana groups of southern Africa. Norborg (1987) lists *dinudi*, *siwumba*, *setinkane*, *segaba* and *sebinjolo* as some of the local names for the trough zither. According to Marcuse (1975) the *segankuru* is synonymous with the *sefinjolo*. The Ju'hoansi of Namibia know it as *n!aoh* (Mans & Olivier, 2005), the Mpondo call it the *isigankuri* (Rycroft, 1966; cited by Brearley, 1996) while the Zulu call it the *isicelekeshe* and the Damara call it the *!gawukhās* or *!gapukhās* (Mans, 2006, personal communication). Dargie (1986) has come across the name *ikatari* among the Xhosa boys.

Origins and distribution of the *segaba*

An account by Kirby (1968: 215) shows that distribution of the instrument was quite widespread in the southern African region at the time and one wonders if this still remains the case to the present day. Kirby writes that, at the time it had just been introduced into the Union of South Africa and goes on to suggest that it may have come from north of the Limpopo River: "The Venda, Chwana [sic], Sotho, Swazi and Zulu all use it, and it has also been acquired by the Xhosa and even by some Bushmen" (ibid., 215).

In Botswana, the *segaba* is currently found in many parts of the country, notably the districts of the Kgalagadi, the central, the north-west, the south-east, Kgatleng and the south. The *segaba* is not only restricted to Botswana, it is also found in other parts of southern Africa. Norborg (1987: 249) writes, in

reference to the *segaba,* that "outside Namibia and Botswana trough zithers of the kind dealt with here can be found in Lesotho, Mozambique, the Republic of South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe".

Components of the *segaba*

The main components of the *segaba* are: the rod, the tuning peg, the string and the resonator. The bow is considered as a component since without it the *segaba* cannot be played properly. The bow is, therefore, described with other components of the *segaba*.

The rod (trough)

It consists of a rod of debarked wood. Some of the suitable wood for making the rod of the instrument is derived from indigenous species of trees such as *mophane* (*Colophospermum mopane*), *monokana* (*Ozoroa paniculosa*), *moretlwa* (*Grewia flava*) and *mosalaosi* also known as *morolwana* (*Melia azedarach* L).

The tuning peg

The tuning peg, known in Setswana as *tereka,* is made from the same variety of species that are used to make the rod.

The string

A steel or copper string is preferred. The Setswana term for string is *lethale*. The use of the copper wire is quite widespread; however, some performers prefer the steel wire.

The resonator

The resonator is a tin can, usually of five-litre capacity.

The bow

The bow, called *kopana* in Setswana, is made from a thin, fresh and flexible *mosalaosi* (*Melia azedarach* L), *mogonono* (*Terminalia sericea*) or *moretlwa* (*Grewia flava*) branch, which is placed in hot ash and then curved before it dries up.

The curved stick is held in position by a piece of wire or tough string so that the curve is maintained even after the wood has dried. The hair that is stretched between the two ends of the curved stick to complete the bow is derived from the tail of a cow or horse. However, the hair of a wildebeest (gnu) is preferred because it is tougher and lasts longer.

Function and use of the *segaba*

According to L. T. Matlapeng (personal communication, 15-02-2005), a renowned performer on the *segaba* and maker of fine instruments (*digaba*), the instrument is played for nothing but entertainment. The *segaba* was once very popular as the herdboy's companion. The herdboy would play it throughout his stay in the veld, tending cattle. Norborg (1987: 248) states that "the instrument is usually played by young lads and meant for their own and other's entertainment".

Figure 1: *The* segaba *and the bow: the resin used on the friction bow is deposited at the end of the rod, close to the tuning peg*
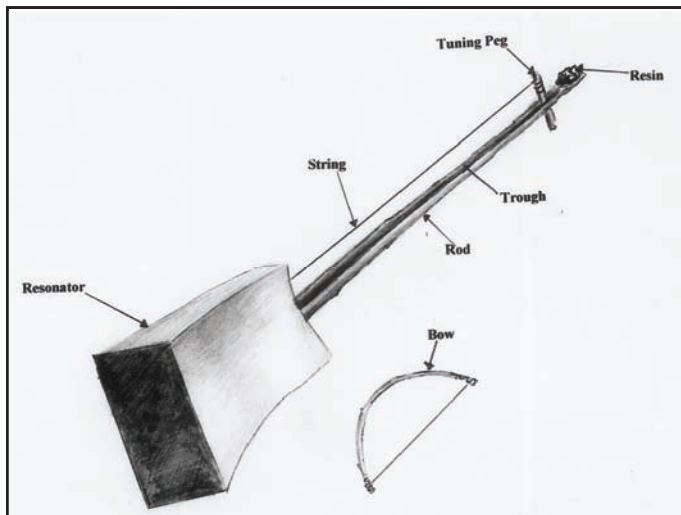
Construction stages in making the *segaba*

Identifying the type of wood

Different species of wood are used to make the *segaba* rod. The common characteristic about most of the preferred species is that they are fairly light. These include *mosetse* (*Cussonia spicata*), *monokane* (*Ozoroa paniculosa*), *mosalaosi* (*Melia azedarach L*), *moomane* or *moratletla* (*Maerua schinzii Pax*). However, the *mophane* (*Colophospermum mopane*), in spite of it being a relatively heavier wood, is known to have been used by some makers of the instrument.

Cutting the wood

When the craftsman selects and cuts the wood, the consideration of the shape and size of the rod is fundamental. It should, as far as possible, be straight. It will normally determine the size of the rod and therefore the overall size of the *segaba*. However, if the wood is too long or too thick it may be cut to a shorter length and whittled down to a thinner rod. A saw or an axe may be used to cut the wood, but it is the former that is preferred since it makes a neat cut that will not spoil the fragile wood. Any branches will be cut away neatly by means of a saw or an adze (*petlwana*).

Processing the wood

As soon as the wood has been cut, it is put in a fire made in the open or in a shelter. The fire has the dual role of burning off most of the fresh bark and evaporating the sap in the wood. The reduced moisture content helps to protect the wood, as it will then not be the ideal medium for termites that might eat away at the wood. Whilst the wood is in the fire, it should be carefully tended so that it is evenly burnt without being destroyed by the fire. The firing process is optional and it is seen by some makers of the *segaba* as being too tedious and unnecessary. Matlapeng does not normally fire his rods (personal communication, 22-06-2005). Instead he prefers to put the wood out in the sun to dry. This takes two weeks.

The dry wood is then completely debarked and immediately worked. At this stage the wood will be made smooth by cutting away any remains of the smaller branches.

Making the rod

The rod is made lighter by carefully gouging out its centre. This was demonstrated by Matlapeng, who also explained that the first stage in gouging out the rod is to drill a series of holes very close to one another (personal communication, 22-02-2005). The holes create an extensive area of weakness throughout most of the entire rod. A *petlwana* is then used to remove the part of the wood in between the holes as well as around the holes until a "dugout canoe-like" form is achieved. A file is then used to smooth the surface of the wood inside the gouge. The file is also used to smooth the wood outside the gouge after the *petlwana* has been used to remove all bits of bark and points where branches used to grow. A hole is made through the trough at one end of the rod.

Figure 2: *Carving out the* segaba

Making the tuning peg

A branch of a tree such as *mophane* (*Colophospermum mopane*), or any of the species used to make the rod, is driven through a hole in the rod to create a tuning peg. The thickness of the peg is determined by the maker of the instrument, and it should be strong enough to pull the string when tuned. Once the peg is fitted securely, a length of string, longer than the rod, say 120cm long for a rod that is 100cm in length, is fitted to the peg and then to the other end. The string around the peg is held firmly in place by a groove on the peg itself. The string around the tuning peg should be short so that the vibrations occur along the length of the string towards the resonator where the sound is immediately amplified.

Processing the tin to make the resonator

The tin can resonator known in Setswana as *phomphokgo,* a name that suggests the resonance of the tin can, would normally be prepainted. The disadvantage with the paint is that it can dampen the sound made by the vibrating string. As a measure taken to improve the resonance and to amplify the sound, the tin can is fired. The "new" tin can is placed on hot embers until the flakes of paint peel off. This will result in the tin can turning black. The top of the can is completely removed and the tin can is crushed on the sides towards the opening so that it can firmly hold the end of the rod that is inserted into it. The tin can is left to cool before it is crushed and affixed to the rod. The resonator gives more sound projection and improves tone quality.

Constructing the bow

The friction bow consists of a flattened curved stick of barked wood, strung with a length of hair from an animal's tail. It is about 20–35cm long across the curve.

How to extract the resin

Resin is used to protect the hair from wearing thin and breaking as it is rubbed against the string to produce a good tone on the vibrating string.

Several species of tree provide sources of good resin. One such tree is the *moroka* (*Commiphora angolensis Engl*). Amongst the exotic species, the eucalyptus may be tapped for resin. To extract resin (*borekhu* in Setswana), a convex cut is made across the stem with a sharp knife, removing the bark and some of the tissue of the stem. The viscous resin is allowed to ooze out slowly. The soft resin is then removed from the stem and stuck onto the end of the rod of the *segaba*, so that the performer has it within easy reach if they need to apply it to the hair of the bow. The tapper may decide to keep the resin for some time and may, therefore, store it in a container.

While in storage, or even on the end of the rod, the resin may dry up. To make the resin supple, water may be added. Beeswax can also prolong the lifespan of the bow hair. Cobbler's gum is also particularly good when mixed with the juice from the cactus plant.

PLAYING TECHNIQUE

The *segaba* is played by bowing. The sound is produced by rubbing or scraping the string with the bowstring. The resin is usually applied to the string shortly before playing, so that the friction from the bowing action does not break the string. This creates the ringing tone of the vibrating string. The bow is held in the right hand by right-handed performers. Left-handed performers hold the bow in the left hand. The string is made to vibrate by rubbing the bow against it in a circular motion or across it as well as along it. The performer then varies the tension of the bow with the thumb, the index finger or the middle finger, depending on what position they are playing in. This alters the pitch of the string and, by so doing, it is possible to isolate certain partials of the fundamental tones for melodic effect. Sounds can be prolonged by making the movement along the string last longer. The various positions in which the *segaba* can be played, together with the technique for the right-handed player, are described below.

Figure 3: Playing the segaba *in position 1*

Below is an excerpt of a *segaba* tune that L. T. Matlapeng likes to play in the first position.

Ka Bidikama Le Tsela[3]

The right hand

The bow is held between the index finger and the thumb. The index finger is used to increase or decrease the tension in the hair of the bow. This is a very important aspect of the right-hand technique.

The left hand

Position 1

The index finger grips the tuning peg above the rod while the middle, ring and little fingers grip it below the rod, and the thumb is used to stop the vibrating string.

Position 2

The middle finger takes a grip on the upper part of the rod whilst the ring and little fingers grip it below. The index finger and the thumb alternate in stopping the vibrating string. This position is more towards the resonator than position 1. The distance of position 2 from position 1 equals the entire distance of position 1 from the tuning peg, plus a third.

Position 3

The rod is held between the ring and little fingers while the thumb, index and middle fingers alternate in stopping the vibrating string. This position is the same distance from position 2 as position 1 is from the tuning peg.

The *segaba* is traditionally a solo instrument, and it has been typically played by men and boys only until recently. The performer accompanies his or her own singing on the *segaba*. However, in recent times, girls have developed a liking for the instrument and are keen to learn how to play it. One opportunity that is available for anybody to learn how to play the *segaba* is the annual Botswana Music Camp that has been held regularly since 1986. There is no discrimination on the basis of gender as to who could take part in the *segaba* sessions at the Camp. An experienced *segaba* player leads the learners in interactive sessions of *segaba* playing for a period of one week. The Camp is held in a particular venue during the first week of December every year.

CONCLUSION

As the title of this chapter suggests, learning to play the *segaba* is an indigenous form of music education, since it develops skills that are crucial to musical training. Learning to play the *segaba* is quite challenging. The playing technique is not easy to grasp; it develops over time with commitment to regular practice. For a learner to succeed they must make the instrument their second nature. The music of the *segaba* is typically learned by rote, so there is a great deal of memorisation and internalisation to be done by the learner. Being able to perform on the *segaba* is an invaluable skill.

An equally invaluable skill is the craftsmanship that goes into the making of the *segaba* as described in this chapter; identifying the right type of wood, selecting the right part of the tree, processing the wood, making the bow and identifying the right type of hair for it and preparing the resonator so that it gives maximum resonance and amplification of the sound. Most performers on the *segaba* make their own instruments according to their own specifications and needs. The only way of ensuring that the skill of making the *segaba* is preserved is to encourage those who are interesting in learning how to play the instrument, to also learn how it is made.

The *segaba* is yet to be given due recognition in terms of instrumental instruction in music education programmes in our schools. The confusion surrounding the identity of the instrument as expressed by those who saw the *segaba*, and specifically by people in Botswana, as given in an account at the beginning of this chapter, is a testimony to the fact that some alienation exists between us and our indigenous musical culture. The solution to this problem lies in introducing the teaching and learning of indigenous musical instruments in our schools. The Botswana Music Camp experience is there for us to learn from. A competent *segaba* player need not be a member of the teaching staff in a school, but anybody who can share the skill, including people from the community who would not normally be able to read any form of notation, but are still valuable resources.

Mothusi Phuthego

ENDNOTES

1. Acknowledgement: The author is grateful to Monicah Kabelo of the Botswana National Museum Herbarium for providing the scientific names of the tree species that provide the wood for making the *segaba*, the bow, and that produce the resin that is rubbed onto the bow.

2. Batswana is a collective term that refers to the people who live in Botswana. They speak Setswana.

3. The melody is repeated over and over again, to accompany the performer's singing which may consist of a few repetitive lines or verses.

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CHAPTER **15**

Oja (Igbo wooden flute): An introduction to the playing technique and performance

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ABSTRACT

Increasing interest in African music, musical instruments and musicians in recent times has constrained more focused research on the performance and teaching of African traditional instruments at various levels in different parts of the world. Greater involvement by Africans in their culture as owners in the definition and construction of knowledge on African music theory and practice has greatly authenticated data on African music.

Although much data exist on African music and musicians, very little relates to actual performance/playing techniques of the various African instruments. This chapter looks at the playing techniques and performance norms of a well-known musical instrument in Igbo land of Nigeria, called oja. *The chapter focuses on the possibility of teaching* oja *in schools and colleges as a concert instrument, through practical cum pedagogic process of instruction. Data for this presentation were derived from the writer's years of experience as a player/performer of* oja, *as well as that collected from intensive research on the instrument over several years.*

Key words: *oja*, Igbo, wooden flute, playing technique, performance, instrument

BACKGROUND

Among the Igbo[1], traditional music is a significant part of the cultural life of the people. There are abundant musical types and species of types as well as instrumental resources and large numbers of traditional musicians. Very many of the musicians are quite proficient in the musical arts and are known as master musicians. Studies of *ese* and *ukom* master musicians by Nzewi (1977) and Uzoigwe (1998) respectively, provide adequate definition and roles of such master musicians as well as cultural/musical contexts for proper identification of a master musician in the Igbo cultural milieu. Musical instruments in Igbo land range from those that provide supporting roles in an ensemble to those that are used as master instruments. Again Nzewi and Uzoigwe's studies of *ese*, *mgba* and *ukom* are reliable documentation that present relevant materials and information on examples of master instruments in Igbo land.

While Igbo music employs a large number and variety of musical instrument resources, it appears that very few such musical instruments have attracted in-depth research studies comparable to that on the Shona *mbira* by Paul Berliner (1993). The few remarkable studies that provide reference materials are again those on *ese* (set of five drum row, with four of them tuned), *mgba* (a set of nine tuned drum row) and *ukom* (set of ten tuned drum row) by Nzewi and Uzoigwe. Another example, though not on a specific instrument, is the study by Echezona on Igbo musical instruments in Igbo culture (1963). These studies provide historical perspectives on the instruments, structural features, cultural roles as well as performance contexts and performance techniques of the instruments. Nzewi also developed new performance notation for modern concert *ese* drums (1990) as a process of continuum of African traditional music in contemporary art music.

While research studies already conducted on some Igbo musical instruments are commendable, they seem to have concentrated on drums (wooden and membrane). Available literature on Igbo musical instruments provides evidence of neglect or lack of research on those other instruments that richly contribute to Igbo traditional musical art. Some such instruments

have merely been mentioned in such studies as the belaboured classification of Igbo musical instruments or on discussions centering on types of Igbo musical instruments. In such studies, one or two paragraphs have been given to each of the instruments and only one or two sentences in some instances. In the few examples, such writers have not gone beyond "one glance" general descriptions of the instruments and identification of the contexts in which they are used. In some instances, such studies have other primary concerns but give a chapter to the description or classification of traditional musical instruments (Igbo, Nigerian or African). In general, most Igbo musical instruments have been neglected in musical research.

One instrument that has suffered such neglect by scholars is the *oja*, an Igbo wooden flute. *Oja*, the most common, well-known and often used aerophone in Igbo land, appears in almost all musical ensembles of mixed instruments (Nketia, 1974: 113) that are not specifically for the women, as well as in masquerade groups. Makay (1957: 22) reports that *oja* is a whistle flute, almost as ancient as the slit-drum in origin.

In her classification of Igbo musical instruments, Lo-Bamijoko devoted a short paragraph and a half to the structural features of *oja*. Hers is a "bird's eye" description of the instrument and types she has come across. She is, however, unequivocal in acknowledging that *oja* is the most common of the wind instruments (ibid., 1987: 30). In his one short paragraph devoted to *oja*, Nzewi (1991: 66), classifying Igbo musical instruments along cultural codes, described *oja* as an Igbo notched flute commonly used in pairs but that a single player is often used as melodist. He ends his presentation with a sentence on the number of finger holes and melodic range of the instrument. Akpabot (1986: 16) made a passing contribution on *oja* in his discussion of Nigerian musical instruments and their functions. Discussing flutes and horns, Akpabot described *oja* as a three-stop flute found among the Igbos, chiefly used to accompany dancing.

Echezona's definitive catalogue on Nigerian musical instruments serves more as a pictorial guide to the appreciation of the structural and aesthetic features of different Nigerian musical instruments found in various Nigerian

culture areas. He provides some working definitions of the instruments and their classification. He included *oja* in his End-Flute Group of instruments. These he described as cylindrical tubes, usually open at both ends, sounded by blowing across the upper edge, which is usually bevelled (1981: 161). He concludes with the number of stops and the playing position. Following the definition are pictures of various types of *oja* from different parts of Nigeria.

As instrument, it is fundamentally employed for performance-composition of melodies, as well as simulation of texts in music and dance performance situations. It provides lyrical melodies that contribute immensely to the overall timbre and aesthetics of Igbo music. In some musical performances *oja* is effectively employed for non-verbal communication with ensemble members as well as the audience. This could be in the form of cues, musical signals or mere encouragement of dancers and players to a more creative performance. It may also be in the form of acknowledging the audience's appreciation of a performance. In some instances, *oja* is employed as a master instrument that conducts and marshals or determines a musical event or performance form. This is found in some masquerade performances such as *Ojionu*. But, *oja* performs both musical and non-musical roles in Igbo land. Its use extends beyond the musical. It is employed in non-musical events and contexts as a talking instrument. As such, it encodes significant messages within non-musical contexts. In such instances it conveys relevant messages to cognitive members or initiates in a ceremony. It is, particularly, used for salutations and praise on these occasions.

There is a great number of performers on *oja*. Known as *"Ogbu Oja"* or *"Onye Oja"*, some of them are proficient in playing the instrument and are known as master *oja* players. The writer belongs to this group of *oja* players and has employed both traditional and classical approaches to the performance of the instrument. This work is the outcome of the researcher's experiences and research on the instrument over the past twenty years.

In preliminary research (1997), I presented an introduction on *oja*, focusing on the structural features, cultural roles and playing techniques, as well as a modern approach to *oja* performance arising from my performance

approach on the instrument. Since this preliminary work, further fieldwork has been carried out on the instrument's technology and construction with a number of instrument makers, on performance norms and techniques, cultural roles and musical contextual functions. This is in addition to exploration of classical techniques and idioms of modern concert performance on *oja*. The latter were experimental and developed in the context of international *oja* workshops and concerts.

There is evidence from the survey of existing literature on *oja* that, although the instrument has been recognised as commonly utilised, ubiquitous and effectively employed for musical and non-musical purposes, very sketchy research work has been conducted. Such neglect gives the erroneous impression that there are no theoretical underpinnings for the construction and use of such musical instruments in Igbo culture. It also denies scholars' indigenous knowledge of these instruments, as well as information on the cultural roles and their potential in modern musical arts. An instrument of such cultural importance as *oja* requires more than mere mention in scholarly works. In the writer's view, a detailed study of the instrument is long overdue.

The need to document and explore unique features of Nigeria's musical instrument heritage is critical and has been emphasised by many Nigerian writers. Almost all African societies run the risk of cultural erosion that could gradually lead to extinction of some cultural practices, including the playing of some musical instruments such as *oja*. Cultural diversity, one of the dominant features of Africa, is therefore endangered. There is the possibility of Africa becoming a monoculture if cultural erosion is not checked. Constant contact with other stronger and enticing cultural practices often lead to abandonment of some aspects of one's cultural practices, including aspects of musical arts. This has been the experience of Africa in contemporary times. As such, the loss of Africa's cultural heritage has been on the increase in modern times. Movement of African youth away from traditional cultural practices has been on the increase. There is a danger, therefore, of losing some of Africa's arts if nothing is done to preserve them in written form. Full-scale

research documentation on *oja* is therefore urgent to avert possible extinction of the instrument or loss of data on it. Considering its dual roles in society, it is necessary to conduct proper research on *oja,* not only to preserve it as part of Igbo cultural heritage but also as source material for education on the instrument. Proper understanding of structural and formal theoretical merits of traditional Nigerian musical instruments has been argued as a key to learning and playing such instruments.

There is, therefore, the need to provide detailed documentation on *oja* arising from authentic field research as well as performance knowledge of the instrument from a master *oja* player to enable in-depth understanding and performance of the instrument from the Igbo perspective. The writer is currently carrying out such documentation in a separate work.

OJA IN TRADITIONAL MUSIC CONTEXT

A pictorial catalogue of Nigeria's musical instruments (Echezona, 1981: plate 1) shows that *oja* is found in many cultural areas of Nigeria other than the Igbo land, with some minor organological variations. This instrument, which is usually carved out of wood, is normally between 17 and 30cm long and between 3 and 5cm in diameter. It comes in different wood colours and weights. It also comes in different body carvings that enhance the aesthetic quality of the instrument. Quite often *oja* is carved to have two faces – the "front" and the "back" faces. The front face is sometimes marked X. At times the front face is perforated at the upper part and covered with fibre that produces a nasal effect when the instrument is blown. Although sound is produced from both faces of the instrument, to produce the actual sounds of the instrument the performer plays the instrument from the back face. The sounds are also sonorous when played from the back face. When the two faces of the instrument produce congruent sounds, this would be the result of structural/organological features peculiar to the instrument.

In the Igbo traditional musical context, there is no distinction between the performer and composer of music for *oja*. Quite often the performer engages in performance-composition (Nzewi, 1997). This entails creating and

recreating melodic lines in the context of performance as prompted by the event, although a body of known and learnt themes forms source materials for compositions and performances. In modern times, *oja* players also recompose existing gospel tunes, popular tunes and other folk music repertory within the instrument's pitch range. A person may have learnt by series of personal efforts or may have been guided by another composer-performer in the performance of *oja*. On the whole, personal efforts and creative skills count most in the performance of *oja* music. Undertaking the dual roles of a performer and a composer simultaneously demands an in-depth knowledge of the techniques of sound production and melodic or melorhythmic compositions appropriate for different occasions.

Among the Igbo, it is possible to find *oja* performed in pairs, or even in a group of three or four, but it is most common to use *oja* singly in ensembles. In such ensembles it could combine melodic compositions with simulation of texts. In the former the performer produces melodies that enrich the texture of the ensemble music. This may be in the form of short melodic fragments or extended passages that are used as themes for further compositions or are repeated with variations. In this instance the *oja* could play embellishing melodic lines or re-compositions of melodies to thrill a listening audience. Themes are developed and performed to exhibit the craftsmanship and expertise of the performer to the admiration of the listeners. Compositions or performances of this nature feature in a music situation that motivates and enhances the celebration of musical artistry for sheer artistic/aesthetic purposes. Non-contextual solo performances also arise from this type of composition where a performer shows his or her manipulative and compositional skills on the instrument. Employment of *oja* in ritual and religious music has been noted in Igbo land also. In such instances the instrument simulates, codes and sometimes marshals the proceedings through its melodic and melorhythmic calls and passages. It could also give repeated simulation of the praise names of the ritual priest and other participants in the event. In such high socio-religious events the *oja* player keeps strictly to the event sequences and musical requirements.

MODERN APPROACH TO *OJA* PERFORMANCE

To assist interested persons from any of the Nigerian sub-cultures to play the *oja*, a chart has been produced which enables a player to find the pitches on the instrument. It is not intended to be a chart on *oja* scales, but to indicate finger placement on the finger holes. This is constrained by the absence of a single tuning technique, as well as exact pitches on different finger holes of the instrument. While similar fingering is used for all the instruments, different pitches could sound from different finger holes. This does not, however, exclude entirely the possibility of finding two or more *ojas* that match in pitch. Discrepancy in pitch production results from different makers' use of different sizes of finger-hole metal openers and different types, quality and weights of wood. Different periods of wood seasoning and inaccurate measurements for different sizes of *oja* contribute to some pitch discrepancies. Where it is possible to find two or more *ojas* that match in pitch, it is possible to play music written on one pitch level or combine them to play different lines that harmonise. Where this is not possible, two or more *ojas* can be combined on the basis of notes that can sound together from the instruments. This presupposes that *oja* permits the use of modern staff notation for composing and documenting music for it. Being a "definite" pitch instrument, it is certainly possible to identify pitch equivalents on the modern staff notation. The writer intends to draw the attention of readers to note that staff notation has been used successfully for the composition and documentation of musical passages for the instrument. Examples are those of Nzewi and Onyeji that have been performed in Nigeria, South Africa and different countries in Europe (see examples 1–2).

PLAYING *OJA*
Holding the instrument

Proper articulation of sounds on the instrument demands that the thumb and index fingers of the left hand be used for the side holes, while the index finger of the right hand is used for the posterior hole. The instrument rests between the thumb and index finger of the right hand. The player holds the instrument

lightly to enable flexibility of the fingers on the pitch holes. Holding the instrument tightly hinders rapid movement of fingers. To ensure the instrument is properly held, one can move the fingers rapidly and if they move freely, then the instrument is properly held.

Figure 1: *The position of* oja *on the lips*   **Figure 2:** *The position of the finger on the pitch holes*
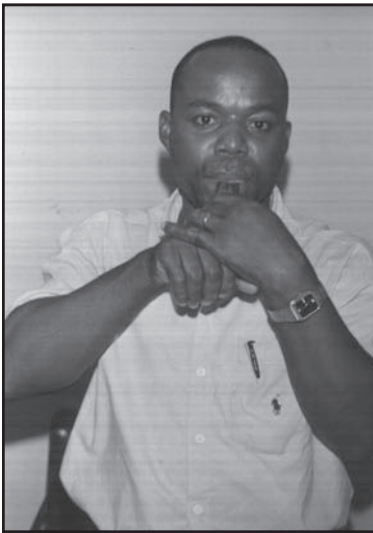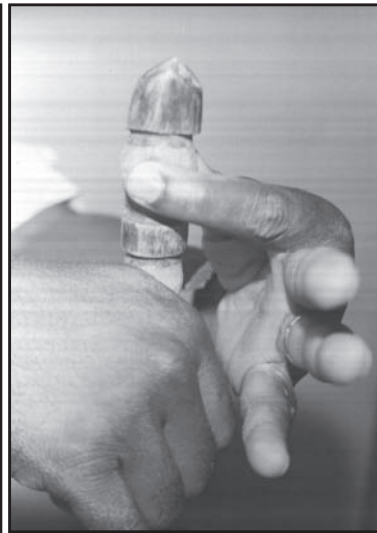
Blowing the instrument

Sound is best produced on the instrument when the air column is tongued into the bevelled opening of the instrument. This is done as in the Western trumpet. Every *oja* player knows that saliva from the mouth of the player gives resonance to the sound produced. This places enormous demand on the player. Water can reduce the demand of saliva on the player. For this purpose a cup of water is kept close to the performance stand in which the instrument is dipped from time to time in the course of the performance. This gives the instrument sonorous sound quality. However, this is not possible if the performance is not done in a fixed position. In traditional context, this is not the practice as players are quite mobile during performances. During such

enduring performances, the player may feel slightly dizzy or weak after a long performance. There is need to take a lot of liquid before, after and, if possible, during performances to make up for lost saliva. On the whole, a player requires some amount of energy to maintain a long performance.

The instrument permits different playing positions. It is a small instrument that can be played standing, sitting or while moving. It is important for the player to find a convenient playing position that will enable creative performance of the instrument.

Pitches on the instrument

The *oja* I play has seven main pitches that can be obtained from the pitch holes. They are as follows:

First pitch   Second pitch   Third pitch

Fourth pitch   Fifth pitch   Sixth pitch
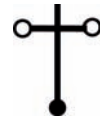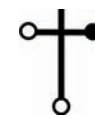
Seventh pitch
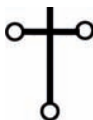
The open circle is for the open pitch hole while the black circle is for the closed pitch hole.

Pitch equivalents of my *oja* on the staff notation are: F G A B-flat C D E-flat. These pitches are exclusive to the instrument I use. The fingering chart will

enable one to produce pitches exclusive to the instrument one is using. The advantage is that the chart is not key-based and can be used for any *oja*.

The ability to produce clear pitches is important. So too is owning an *oja*, to ensure frequent practice. Through enduring practice one will be able to master rapid finger changes to produce different pitches of various note durations at different tempos. After mastering the production of the pitches independently, students may attempt short exercises that will lead to the performance of melodies on the instrument. Some exemplary exercises are provided here.

Exercises for the instrument

Pitches for the exercise are drawn from the *oja* used for this discussion. When players find their own *oja* pitches, the examples may be used.

THIS STUDY IS TO BE PLAYED AT DIFFERENT TEMPOS FROM SLOW TO FAST
TO GAIN SPEED ON THE INSTRUMENT

Study No.1 for Oja

Christian Onyeji
2005

Playing tunes on the instrument

Two compositions for the instrument have been supplied to enable learners to practise the performance of longer melodic passages. The examples are by Meki Nzewi and the author. Where possible, a player could attempt composition, relying entirely on his/her ability to make tunes on the instrument without a score. Using the examples supplied, a player could compose some tunes for the particular instrument he/she is playing.

Cho Cho Cho

Meki Nzewi

IMPLICATION FOR SCHOOLS

The need for intercultural studies has been stressed in the 21st century as a means to globalisation, cultural understanding, appreciation and world peace. The role of music in this regard is very significant. Proper knowledge of musical traditions of other cultures and possible performance of instruments from other cultures impact directly on the interest of school children. Teaching the performance of *oja* in schools in other cultures of the world will not only enable school children to perform the instrument; they will, in addition, know the musical tradition in which the instrument is used and so appreciate the culture more deeply. This description is an attempt to introduce the instrument for teaching and learning in schools outside the cultures in which *oja* is played.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter attention has been drawn to the neglect of most Igbo musical instruments in research studies. Existing literature on *oja* in particular, has been found to be sketchy and inadequate for the all-round knowledge and practical understanding of the instrument. To alleviate this situation, an attempt has been made to discuss the performance of *oja* in Igbo tradition as well as in the modern classical approach. In order to interest potential players to learn the *oja*, introductory studies are given in the hope that this would make a contribution to personal knowledge and practical understanding of the instrument beyond Igbo land.

ENDNOTES

1. Igbo is one of the major tribes in Nigeria occupying the southeastern geographical part of the country across the Niger River. The word *Igbo* identifies the people, the language as well as cultural practices of the geographical component of Nigeria.

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Study and performance technique of African instruments and their building technology: A case study of the "Igba" single membrane drum

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ABSTRACT

The membrane drum is encountered in almost all music cultures of Africa. The study and use of the membrane drum has been so widespread that it is now one of the most popular African musical instruments in the world. This chapter firstly describes construction and categories of membrane drums. It explains how African indigenous instrument technology in most cases tries to retain the raw timbre of the instrumental sound, which is achieved by the fairly crude finishing in the construction of the instruments. This results in the instruments exhibiting some rough cluster harmonics when played. Importantly, the chapter then discusses contemporary developments in single membrane drum performance which has advanced beyond traditional playing. The development of a notational system and the composition of classical drum music pieces has developed a creative continuum for the drum music of Africa and has made it available as a possible instrument of study anywhere in the world.

Key words: membrane drum, Igba African classical drumming, modern classical drum music, notation

INTRODUCTION

The drum is found in most music cultures of Africa. It belongs to the membranophone class of instruments. This means that it requires a vibrating membrane, stretched over a hollow shell which could either be made of wood, earthenware or metal. When struck, the vibrating membrane reverberates the air column inside the hollow shell to produce musical sound.

Over the years, researchers including Kirby (1934), Jones (1959), Wachsmann (1965), Ames & King (1971), Anderson (1971), Koetting (1970), Nketia (1963) and Pantaleoni (1972) have studied and written on the drum music cultures of Africa. This has popularised African drum music in the Western world. More recently, the playing of African membrane drums is perceived as an exotic pastime, and drum instructors spring up in large numbers in most major cities of Europe and America. This interest has also led to the increased construction of synthetic drums by many of the instrument-producing companies of the world.

The drum has been incorporated into many popular music productions in the West, and popular musicians in Africa are introducing more indigenous African instruments in their music. In the classical music genre in Africa it is a different case. Modern classical music in Africa has been thought of in terms of European classical music, musical instruments and voice. The few written works by Nigerian composers, for example, are essentially European in conception and content, except for insertions of identifiable folk tunes and "African rhythm" motifs. African musical instruments, when used, are for effect or accompaniment to voices and/or European instruments. This has led to the birth of a classical music totally African in conception and delivery.

TYPES OF DRUMS FOUND IN AFRICA

There are different types of drums found on the African continent, but basically drums fall into two categories, the single and double-membrane drum categories. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes, "they may be conical, cylindrical, with a bulge in the middle or a bowl shaped top, cup

shaped, bottle shaped, in form of a goblet or vase, or in the shape of an hour glass, the frames may be rounded or square" (Nketia, 1979: 86). There are drums played with sticks and those played with the hand, and also a combination of the stick and the hand.

Each drum has its own unique tuning system. The single membrane drums could either have an open base, or a sealed base. Those with a sealed base are usually tuned to a specific pitch. The double membrane has both ends covered with sonorous skins, and they include the Yoruba tension drum family.

THE DRUM AND COMMUNICATION IN AFRICA

In some music cultures of Africa, there are drums that are speech surrogate instruments and are used for communication. They imitate the tonal inflection or the language of the societies that use such drums. Kirby (1934: 37) notes that the people of the Limpopo province of South Africa used the *ngoma* ritual drums during certain parts of the *Vhushu* (menstruation ceremony of the girls) as a signal to warn men away from the women, who were naked. He further stated that the *ngoma* were beaten to summon the initiates to the *Domba* ceremony (where young people were taught everything pertaining to sex) and to transmit topical messages across districts. Buchner (1887) reports that the people of Douala, Cameroon, transferred the conventional rhythmic characteristic of words (speech rhythm) to drums, which they used for delivering speeches and for conversing. The Mandingo of Kujar communicate instructions to wrestlers and dancers using skin drums. According to Nketia (1975), in Ghana the Ashanti court minstrels recite traditional praise poems, while the drummers of the talking drum similarly drum appropriate eulogies or messages for the occasion. The Ngwa Igbo have developed a specialised art of drums versus verbal language discourse which is the primary medium for acting out the Okwukwu canonisation cosmic drama (Nzewi, 1977). In his book *Sweet Mother*, Wolfgang Bender notes that the special construction of the Yoruba talking drums "allow[s] the drummer to imitate the speech melody of the Yoruba. Yoruba is a tone language and comes close to singing when only

spoken" (Bender, 1991: 94). He further states,

> Each city king of the Yoruba called Oba, had his own drummers .... The
> traditional drummer, for instance, announced approaching visitors. Thus the
> Oba could hear, even in the most distant chambers, who was standing at the
> gate. (Bender 1991: 94)

In the south-eastern parts of Nigeria, the wooden slit drum or *ikoro* (as it is
called locally in that area) also serves as a means of communication. It is used
to send urgent information to the entire community. An example of this could
be the death of their ruler, when the village has been attacked, declaration of
war against a rival community or simply to call the villagers together for an
important meeting. The *ikoro* as a musical instrument is capable of transmitting
melorhythmic[1] patterns, each of which implies specific popular meaning, and
is understood by the people of the community where it is in use.

In the traditional environment, these categories of transmitted information
were limited to what was necessary and relevant to the survival, administration
and enlightenment of a community (Nzewi, 1984: 322). Each member of the
community assimilates this encoded information through the course of his or
her life in the community:

> Verbalised texts are encoded as melorhythmic patterns, which follow the tone
> and rhythm of verbal language spoken by the audience. The knowledge of the
> phonetic base of a language is the prerequisite for the understanding of the
> logogramic coding system. (Nzewi, 1982: 322–23)

There are certain recognisable thematic statements that are an inherent
part of the musico-social life of the community. Every adult in the community
understands what these thematic statements mean, and thus understands
whatever message the *ikoro* carries. An example of this is the phrase *"agwo n'
n' akirika"*, which literarily translates to "there is a snake in the thatched
rafters". This means that there is imminent danger about to befall the
community. Basden (1966) explains that in the ecological environment at the
time of his research (1912), the sound of the *ikoro* drum was estimated to carry
over five miles.

Musical role of the drum

The drum is used in both instrumental and dance music ensembles. Drums are used more often than other classes of instruments, and drumming constitutes the principal medium of instrumental music in Africa (Euba, 1990). The drum, when encountered in ensemble music, could play a range of ensemble roles, which include the master instrument role, the rhythm of dance role or the pulse instrument role. As a master instrument, it is employed to direct and guide other instruments in the ensemble. In dance music ensembles, it guides the rhythm of dance, which punctuates and directs the dance structure in the music. As a pulse instrument, it provides a deep, constant and consistent uncomplicated rhythmic background that is the heartbeat of the ensemble.

Drum music in tradition

In Africa, the drum is used to play either sacred or secular music. There are drums that are only played for certain religious worship or ritual ceremonies. The participation in such music may be limited strictly to the initiated. In such cases, the drums are also sacred, and are employed for use only during those worship occasions. An example is the pot drum, *iya* or *apesi*, of the *"omololu"* family. It is generally used in a set of five instruments for the worship of the god Orish Omolu in Yoruba land (Echezona, 1981).

In traditional secular music, the drum is employed in event music and music event situations. An example of event music is the music for traditional wrestling contests, while music events could be the celebration of a new planting season. In most music events, participation is not restricted to a particular group or gender, but everybody is allowed to be a part of the music process, whether as dancers, spectators, instrumentalists or actors. Event music on the other hand could be restricted to either members of a certain age, gender, religious or social group.

The drum is used in dance music, purely instrumental music and vocal-instrumental music.

Modern developments in the playing of the single-membrane drum

The developments in the playing of the Igba single-membrane drum have not quite gone beyond the way it is played in tradition. What we have tried to do is to find a way to teach the compositional principles and theoretical content of African (drum) music-making in a modern educational environment. The methods of sound production on the drums are still very much the same. A modern notational system is in use and will assist in the discussion of drum music-making to the different cultures of the world, with regard to the global village nature of the world at present. The notational system has also helped in the composition and reproduction of new and old drum music pieces in a modern classroom setting. A direct product of this developed notational system and playing technique is the African Modern Classical Drumming. Amplification of the instrument has become necessary for large public performances that previously would have been carried out in a small village setting. The single-membrane drum is now incorporated in some Western music ensembles and popular music.

THE *IGBA* AND AFRICAN MODERN CLASSICAL DRUMMING

Classical drumming is a derivation of drum playing in tradition, adapted to suit a modern concert audience. The drum is a melorhythmic instrument. This means that drum music-playing is a process of deriving a rhythmic essence melodically, which is a melorhythmic principle (Nzewi, 1974). At the Ama Dialog Foundation[2], we envisioned the possibility of a uniquely African modern classical music, which would be an authentic continuum of the peculiar compositional idioms, instrumentation and presentational conventions of African traditional music heritage. In the same vein, a consistent scientific-analytical research of the theoretical content of the traditional music of Nigeria, as well as the exploration of the latent phonic potentials of the musical instruments, became imperative. Thus came the ability to overcome the jargon of standardisation of instruments as a handicap to the development of indigenous modern classical music for traditional musical instruments.

Modern classical music implies a written music repertory which, like indigenous practices, incorporates elements of dance, theatre, poetry and the visual arts. Our research enabled us to devise a notational system that would take account of the peculiarities of traditional musical instruments such as the drum, which is conceptually a melodic instrument in African musical thought and practice (Nzewi, 1997). Thus, we now write modern, uniquely African, classical music for solo drum, or in concert with any other instrument. The written compositions represent an indigenous modern continuum for African traditional music genius. For our compositions, we favour any single-membrane drum, with a height of up to 60cm and a surface diameter of a minimum of about 30cm (e.g. a *djembe* or the *igba*).

Playing the drum

The player is required to sit on a stool with his or her back straight, trap the drum firmly between the thighs with the membrane surface of the drum slightly tilted forward, away from the drummer, such that the open end of the drum is under the drumming stool. A belt around the waist is used to hold the drum steady while being played (O. Nzewi, 1999: 18). The actual playing of the drum requires the movement of the wrist and not the entire hand. The palms are cupped slightly and strike the surface of the drum to produce the deep tone. The fingers are held together lightly, striking the surface to produce the high tone. A ring is worn on either the third or fourth finger, and is used to strike the wooden body of the drum to simulate the sound of a wooden knocker while being played.

The pieces

Compositions are usually in compound or simple time, and make use of regular bar lines. A line is drawn from one end of a plain sheet to the other, to give a one-line stave. Musical writing is on each of these staves. The deep tone is scored under the line, while every other tone is written above the line. Bar lines are drawn on these staves. See Figure 1. A tie is used to achieve a

musical note longer than a dotted crotchet. A key to the notation and symbols is written at the bottom of the first page of the music score sheet. The notational value of each note is determined by the value of its stem (that is why the longest single note value is the dotted crotchet, this allows for the symbols to be used in place of the black head of each note). The form could be binary, ternary or free.

Figure 1: Classical drum score

Drum Lessons No.1
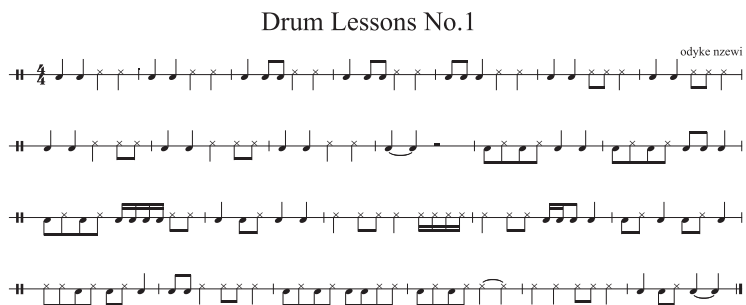
odyke nzewi

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The notation

With regard to the history of the notation of African drum music, it will be noted that early researchers were basically interested in developing a notation that would aid them in the transcription and analysis of drum music encountered in a field research situation. An example of drum music notation already in use includes the Time Unit Box System (TUBS), which is an attempt to bypass the problem of the inadequacies of the Western notation in representing non-Western music. In 1962, Philip Harland began to develop the TUBS for teaching purposes at UCLA African study group, a performing ensemble at the Institute of Ethnomusicology (Koetting, 1970: 125), which was later fully developed by Koetting. In Koetting's TUBS example of the notation of the three against two (Figure 2) in African rhythm (popularly described by scholars as "cross rhythm"), the notation can as well be represented in our developed notation as in Figure 3 (below). This would be easier to understand

and interpret globally. Similar notations to the TUBS have been traditionally used to notate rhythmic patterns in places such as Java, India, China and Korea. A. M. Jones used the graph system in notating Ewe master drum parts. Moses Serwadda and Hewitt Pantaleoni have described a tablature system for notating African dance drumming rhythms (Pantaleoni & Serwadda, 1968: 47–52). In his book, *Yoruba Drumming*, Euba makes use of the conventional rhythm notational system that we advocate, while introducing a symbolic tone representation approach similar to what we have developed (Euba, 1990: 471–472). It will be noticed in that publication, that Euba's notational system is restricted to a stick drum, whereas our notation system for classical drum, applies to any given membrane drum type, and includes technique of sound production. When discussing the "free stroke", we note two basic free strokes in the playing of a membrane drum – the deep free or open stroke, and the high free stroke – in contrast to the one free stroke, the deep stroke, discussed by Euba. It could be argued that the limitations of the earlier notational systems for the African membrane drums might be because they were intended mainly for transcription and analysis of materials gathered in the research field, rather than for compositions and performances. Our notation makes use of the conventional Western note value system to allow for easy interpretation and understanding. It allows for easy reading and understanding of the composition in any part of the world where conventional Western music is studied. The notation requires a player's ability to read music, as the key at the bottom of the score sheet explains what each symbol or sign stands for. The symbols represent the tonal and other sonic possibilities on the drum, as well as other special effects. It came about as a result of some 25 years of research by Meki Nzewi, whom I assisted, and was conceived for compositional purposes, although it is also very convenient for analytical purposes and classroom exercise. It takes into account a representation of the dynamics of drum music performance in tradition. Thus, the notation tries to capture the full sonic and visual peculiarities of a performance situation on paper, for a concert audience.

Figure 2: *Time Unit Box System notation*
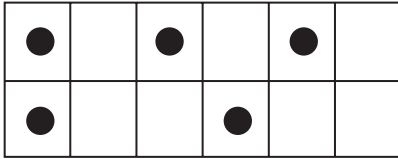
Figure 3: *Our developed notation*
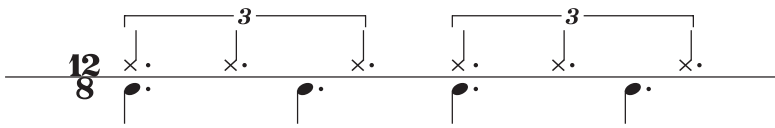
These visual and presentational nuances include the stamping of the feet with rattles around the ankles, snapping of fingers, clapping and so on. Also represented are special sonic effects such as reverb on two tones, glissando, drum rolls and crushed notes. There are four primary tones on the membrane drum: the deep tone, the high tone, the slap and the struck drum body tone. As was noted earlier, there are specific symbols used to represent these different tonal possibilities on the drum.

We will now take a brief look at these symbols:

Deep tone. Striking the centre of the drum surface, with palms of hands slightly cupped, results in a rich deep tone. When the hand bounces off, an open deep tone is produced. When the vibration is stopped by holding down the hand on the drum, a muted (dull) deep tone results. This is effective as a final note stroke. The symbol will then carry a mute sign on top.

High tone. Striking the rim of the membrane of the drum, with a single finger, or fingers held together. This produces a high clear vibrant (open) tone when the stroke is free, and muted high tone when held down.

$\overset{S}{|}$ *Slap*. Holding the fingers together and slapping the membrane of the drum gives this sharp crushed sound.

$\uparrow$ *Knocker*. Striking the wooden shell of the drum, with a special metal ring, worn on the index or middle finger. One can harmonise with other drum tones sounded simultaneously.

Special phonic effects

$\overline{\overline{|}}$ *Foot rattles*. Rattles worn around the ankles resonate when feet stamp in musical time to simulate dance.

$\overset{\frown}{|}$ $\quad$ $\overset{\frown}{|}$ *Clapping*, of two types, the normal clap and hitting open palm over semi-clenched fist.

$\overset{\sim}{|}$ *Glissando*.

$\overset{\sim}{\ast}$ *Reverb on two tones,* such as high and deep.

$\ast$ *Roll*

These are the common symbols used in combination when composing for the single membrane drum.

TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENT TECHNOLOGY OF THE *IGBA* SINGLE-MEMBRANE DRUM AND THE EFFECTS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY
The wood

The Igba single-membrane drum is basically made out of wooden shell, skin and pegs. The shell is usually carved out of a solid log of wood. Preferred trees include the pear, *ufie* (*Pteropcarpus osun*), oil bean, *obeche*, *okwe* (*Ricinodendron heudelotii*) and *gmelina*. Some of these trees are soft wood, like the *gmelina* and *okwe*; others like the *uffie* and oil bean are hard wood. When soft wood is used to make a drum, there is the tendency for the wood to crack

easily from the open end of the drum, which affects the sound of the drum. Hard wood can stand harsh weather conditions and handling without cracking. Drum-makers prefer the soft wood because it is easier to work. The hard wood is more durable but quite difficult to work. When the tree is felled, it is cut into the desired height in the forest, to allow for easy conveyance to the place where the drums will be made. The inner layers of the drum are dug through with the help of a digger, to create the hollow inside of the drum (left rough for desired timbre). The outer bark is then scraped with a sharp machete. The shell is shaped to the desired form for aesthetic appeal and then left to dry. The wood then shrinks to its last possible limit. If the drum is not properly dried and skinned, there is a tendency for the wood to shrink further, and affect the rim. This will definitely affect the look and sound of the drum adversely.

The skin (membrane)

A variety of animal skins are used for the membrane of a drum, including antelope, goat, donkey, horse or cattle. The main factors taken into consideration are the tenderness and elasticity of the skin. The most preferred is antelope skin, because it possesses the desired qualities of both tenderness and elasticity. The tender skin enhances high sonic performance while the elasticity guarantees longevity of the drum. The skin of female animals has an edge over that of the male, because it is tender. Unfortunately, owing to the small size of the antelope, the hide can only be used for making small drums. The skin of impala or cattle is the next best choice (Alumona, 1997). After skinning, the animal hide is soaked in locally made depilatory for the removal of the hair/fur. The pod of a species of wild melon, known locally as *ahuenyi*, is pounded in a mortar, and mixed with ash in a paste to make the depilatory. This is used as potash to soften the skin. The skin is then soaked for three days in a solution of water, the wild melon paste and ash, after which it is removed and the softened hair scraped off with a spatula or similar scraper. In a case where the hair has been removed from the skin before storage, the skin is then sprinkled with water, to make it wet, before being used to skin the drum. A healthy animal produces a good skin for

drum-making. An animal that dies of a sickness yields an inferior skin for drum-making, and this impairs the sound quality of the drum. This also happens where the drum-maker uses chemical depilatory because it is faster and easier.

The pegs and ropes

Traditionally, bush ropes and pegs were used for fastening the skin to the drum. The type of bush rope that is used in tying the skin around the wooden frame is chosen from ropes that are fibrous and tough in nature like the *anyo* (Alumona, 1997). The pegs, which are driven between the ropes to add tension to the skin covering of the drum, are shaped from the same trees from which the shell is carved.

Making the drum

To make the drum, the treated skin is spread over the opening at the top of the wooden shell. A string of the bush rope is tied around the top rim and the skin spread on the drum. The edge of the skin is tucked in and folded up to cover the first bush rope tied, then a second bush rope is used to tie around the skin covering the first rope, ensuring that the second is directly on top of the first, which is in turn covered by the skin. The first rope then acts as a bridge to prevent the second rope from slipping down. A third rope is tied further down the body of the drum, to hold the tension pegs. Other smaller ropes are tied vertically connecting the upper and lower ropes. The pegs are then driven into the lower rope, pushing the skin down, and pulling the vertical ropes taut until the desired pitch level is attained.

Modern technology in drum construction

For more modern drum-makers, the process is similar. The major difference is in the choice of metal rims and threaded metal pegs in place of the bush ropes and wooden pegs. A fairly thin cane is fastened around the top rim of the wooden shell, and the wet skin is placed over the top of the shell and the outer edges of the skin, rolled tightly around the circumference of the cane.

Then a flat metal ring about half an inch wide is used to hold down the folded skin, around the rim, with the cane and skin wrapped around it, acting as a base for the metal rim on the wooden shell. The metal hooks with threaded ends are then hooked on the flat metal ring around the rim, and the threaded end, passed through small metal loops attached to the body of the drum below the rim, with the aid of screws. Knots are then screwed onto the threaded end of the hook. As the knots are tightened, the hook pulls down the flat metal ring, applying tension on the skin to make it taut.

CONCLUSION

The drum in general and the single membrane in particular, has over the years been a much-discussed instrument in African music. Over time the construction technology and playing techniques have evolved to accommodate modern trends both in building materials, technology and mode of presentation. The need to advance the playing of the African drums beyond the traditional milieu, while still retaining compositional principles and performance ethics, has led to the development of a notational system and Modern African Classical drumming.

Modern African Classical drumming is an attempt to establish a creative continuum for the African drum music culture. It provides the tools for effective teaching and learning of the drum music of Africa and provides a theoretical base for drum music learning around the world. The African drum thus has attained new roles and meaning in modern music creativity, education and performance as a master instrument. With the development of the standardised classical drumming technique and the notational system, the African membrane drum can now be studied and played as a modern classical instrument of specialisation at any level. The drum has gained so much popularity in the world that leading musical instrument companies in Europe and America now build *djembe* drums with synthetic shells and membranes (velum). These instruments lack the unique vibrancy of the traditional prototypes, although some modern industrialised instrument builders take special care to make use of original building materials and

technique, and produce instruments to a traditional standard. Finally, the indigenous musical instrument technology in Africa derives from a scientific knowledge system that researched both materials for making music instruments, and how the sound produced (such as raw harmonics, non-pure overtones) affects the human mind and body.

ENDNOTES

1. Melorhythm is the deriving of a played rhythmic essence melodically.
2. The Ama Dialog Foundation is a culture research foundation in Nigeria that has been involved with developing a creative continuum for some of Africa's viable cultural arts heritage.

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CHAPTER **17**

A hands-on approach to the teaching-learning of
uhadi

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author outlines steps that are followed in the collection of tools and materials for the construction and teaching of uhadi *(a musical bow with calabash attached resonator) to my Ethnomusicology Course One students at Walter Sisulu University. Further, this chapter discuss aspects of the teaching-learning process within the framework of the traditional meaning of this instrument, beginning with the display of the raw materials used in making the instrument. The teaching process, including the learning of a song accompanied by* uhadi, *and a demonstration how materials are used for construction. The following methods of teaching* uhadi *are discussed: (i) the blending of indigenous and Western techniques; (ii) holistic approach; and (iii) theoretical and philosophical knowledge.*

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of an African instrument to an African student at tertiary level is as challenging as giving Western instrument lessons to an adult. It requires extraordinary approaches to equip the students with a solid groundwork as most of them, unlike children who are curious and who are not afraid of experimenting, are slow learners. The teaching is generally conducted by rote as well as from transcriptions of traditional music in staff and tonic sol-fa notation.

Since 1991, the author has been teaching music students of Walter Sisulu University[1] (WSU) how to make indigenous African musical bow instruments like *uhadi* (a bow with a calabash attached as a resonator), *umrhubhe* (a bow without a resonator) and *isankuni/igqongwe* (a bow with a one-gallon oil tin as a resonator). In addition, the author has been teaching these students how to play these instruments solo, by rote, or through instrumental and vocal music like *inxembula* or *ingqangqolo* respectively, in ensemble.

Existing publications on the Nguni *uhadi/ugubhu* musical instrument are about the construction and playing techniques, but none exists on the actual teaching of how to play the instrument. Perhaps this is because none of the researchers played it at the time of investigation. Kirby (1968: 193–202) documented this instrument as far back as the early 1930s and also in the 1960s. His publications are not about the methods of teaching how to play the *uhadi* chordophone. They are only observations of playing techniques of the *uhadi* musical instrument as performed by somebody else. Rycroft also made similar observations to those of Kirby in his publications in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Lastly, Dargie is not that different from the other two researchers in his publications of the 1980s and the 1990s, although he has used the services of Nofinish Dywili of Nqoko village in Lady Frere, South Africa, to demonstrate the playing techniques of *uhadi*. But there is definitely a paucity of literature on the teaching of *uhadi*.

The other indigenous technique applied in addition to the rote method is empirical observation. Neuman (2003: 8) observed that empirical refers to "observation that people experience through the senses – touch, sight, hearing,

smell and taste". Sarantakos (2002: 463) remarked that "empiricism is a school of thought stressing the significance of experience as a source of all knowledge". Van der Merwe (1996: 283) commented that "empirical observation is prominent, because researchers need to study actual cases of human behaviour if they are to be in a position to reflect on the human condition with more meaning and clarity". Morris and Levitas (1984: 107) have observed that "in the traditional way of life children learn by experience". Clearly, therefore, this method based on empiricism is designed to enable students to have practical experience in making their instrument and also in playing the instrument to perform music associated with the culture that uses this instrument. Also considered is "legitimate peripheral participation". Hanks argues that this "denotes the particular mode of engagement of a learner who participates in the actual practice of an expert, but only to a limited degree and with limited responsibility for the ultimate product as a whole" (cited in Lave & Wenger, 1999: 14).

Lastly, the inductive method of teaching and learning is also employed in the teaching of this instrument. Duminy (1989: 83) has observed that the inductive method embraces the didactic principle of "proceed[ing] from the known to the unknown". Here "new subject matter should, as far as possible, link up with things which are already known" (ibid.). This means that tonic sol-fa and staff notation will be used in the teaching of the instrument, as in our region, most students come to the university already familiar with the former. From this pre-existing knowledge, they can therefore proceed towards reading notation and playing the instrument.

COLLECTION OF *UHADI* CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL

On every first day of the first semester in the ethnomusicology class, students are asked to collect construction material in the rural areas and in town. These include items such as calabashes that are used as resonators when playing the instrument; a wire called *indondo* which is gold in appearance, to make a bow for *uhadi*; another wire that has a silver colour for tightening the bow firmly to the calabash; and the sponges to secure the

staff or stick firmly to the calabash.

Two weeks into the term at WSU, a bus from the university takes the students to the forest, not far from the university campus, to cut staves suitable in thickness for *uhadi*. All the students, from first year to the third year, go to the forest for their staves at the same time. It is a trip that senior students do not use as an excursion only, but also as a moment of showing off their technical skills in building the instrument.

Students are also advised to bring tools to use in the construction of *uhadi*. These are appliances such as a camping axe, cane or corn knives; a hatchet and/or bow saw for cutting the staves; small knives for removing the leaves from the staves and smoothening the ends of the staves; pliers for cutting the bow wire and the wire that is used for tightening the stave firmly to the calabashes; a hacksaw to remove the top side of the calabashes; a 200g ball-peen hammer and/or small claw hammer and small nails (about 30mm) for nailing and opening small holes in the calabashes. Figure 1 is an example of the tools required for building *uhadi*.

Figure 1: *All the tools that are used in the building of the* uhadi
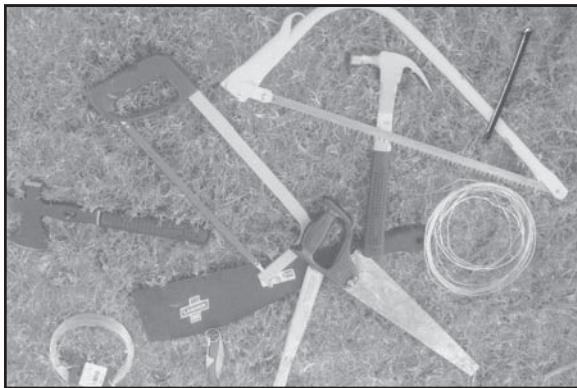
In the forest, students are shown the size of the staves suitable for the *uhadi*. The length of the stave is about 1m long, although there is no specific

requirement. Students are also advised to cut more than one stave, in case one breaks during construction. They are asked to remove leaves from the staves while they are still in the forest, because leaves can make the site of operation dirty if they are not swept away immediately after they have been removed from the staves.

Figure 2: The students in the forest

CONSTRUCTING *UHADI* MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

When the students have returned from the forest with the staves, they are shown how to make *uhadi*. This is achieved by bending the staves, as indicated in Figure 3 below, and keeping them in the same position by means of a wire called *indondo,* which is also used to make African bangles. In the past the string was made out of the bushy tail-hairs of a horse.

Figure 3: *Two students building an instrument*

The next step is to make an opening at the top of the calabash with a hacksaw. The hacksaw is preferable because the calabash is a delicate plant that breaks easily when it is dry. The opening of the calabash should be so small that only one hand fits in when one tries to reach the inside of the calabash, as demonstrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: *Inserting a hand into the calabash*

Students are asked to arrange themselves into groups of two and make four small holes at the bottom side of the calabash with a 30mm nail and a hammer. Two strings, smaller and shorter in size than *indondo*, cut from the silver wire, are inserted through the small openings at the bottom of the calabash from inside as shown in Figure 4. In the past, strings were taken from a strong grass called *incema* or *imizi*.

Each string is bent and passed through two holes of the calabash and thrust through the sponge as two strings to secure the staff outside firmly to the calabash. In the past the sponge was made of a pad called *inkatha* from the same *incema* or *imizi* grass, which was woven into one long string that was folded into a pad. In fact, in the past no foreign object was included when building *uhadi/ugubhu*. The string that was used to secure the staff firmly to the calabash also came from *incema/imizi* grass.

When the construction of the musical instrument is complete, the lecturer plays it to check whether the calabash resonates well and the sound of the instrument drones or buzzes nicely. The lecturer plays a few examples again to stimulate curiosity. After this demonstration the lecturer grades the instruments made by students and then allocates marks according to appearance, resonance and neatness.

INDIGENOUS AFRICAN AND TRADITIONAL WESTERN PLAYING TECHNIQUES

The introduction of a song for the first time involves a kind of mnemonic that has two phrases to aid memory, which the students are taught to recite and clap at the same time. The mnemonic is introduced together with the rhythmic patterns of *uhadi* through the rote learning method. This includes reciting and clapping the mnemonic. The emphasis is on the learning of the rhythmic patterns of *uhadi* by rote. The staff symbols have no meaning at this stage. The following is the mnemonic that is introduced to students:

Tip ti rii - ti rii ti - i - tara , Tip ti rii - ta ra ta - a - ta raa

After they have mastered the mnemonic pattern the lecturer introduces a diagram or a staff symbol for a group of semiquavers or four quarter-pulse

notes, ♩♩♩♩ . Students are asked to clap the rhythmic patterns and if there are no volunteers, the lecturer shows them how it is done. The sol-fa notation and the time names are also introduced:

sol-fa   {: d, d, d, d, ‖

staff

time name   ta-fa-te-fe

Lastly, semiquavers that are frequently grouped together with quavers or dotted quavers with time names, sol-fa notation and pulses are also included. Some are similar to those of *uhadi* rhythmic patterns. This is meant to acquaint them with the complex rhythmic patterns of *uhadi*.

staff				
sol-fa	{:d .d ,d ‖	{:d ,d .d ‖	{:d .,d ‖	{:d ,d.– ‖
pulses	½ + ¼ + ¼ =1	¼ + ¼ + ½ =1	¾ + ¼ = 1	¼ + ¾ =1
time name	ta - te - fe	ta - fa - te	ta -e fe	ta - fa e

Then students are introduced to the rhythmic patterns of *uhadi*.

Tip   ti   rii - ti   rii   ti - i   ta   ra, Tip   ti   rii - ta   raa   ta - a   ta   ra

*   *   *   * *   *   -   o   o   *   *   *   o   o   o -   o   o

* = Stopped note
o = Open note

Students are encouraged to bring tape recorders into the classroom in order to record *uhadi* rhythm and the mnemonic when they have individual lessons. Recorded music reminds them when they have forgotten the rhythmic patterns of *uhadi*, especially when they are practising on their own in their halls of residence or at home. They are also encouraged to listen to recorded *uhadi* music, especially music recorded by researchers such as Hugh Tracey

and David Dargie. Listening to recorded music will not only boost their repertoire, it is also a potent form of learning itself, and is also closer to the traditional way of learning aurally.

For the first sight-reading and performance lesson, students arrive in groups, because the lesson is about the handling techniques and initial stages of performance that do not require much ear training. Students are taught as a group so that they can quickly learn the rhythm correctly from other fellow students. Sometimes it is easier to be taught by one's fellow students than one's teacher. This is also an acknowledged learning method – peer-learning or learning in "communities of practice", on which Lave and Wenger comment that it is "participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their communities" (Lave & Wenger, 1999: 98). They further observed that in a community of practice the person has "been correspondingly transformed into a practitioner, a newcomer becoming an old-timer, whose changing knowledge, skill, and discourse are part of a developing identity – in short, a member of a community practice" (ibid., 122).

After the students have been shown the handling techniques they are acquainted with the art of playing. This begins with the holding of the instrument with the left hand, a technique that takes some time for the students to master. The second challenging activity is holding the instrument without the support of the body. A third aspect involves the stopping and opening of the string with the forefinger and thumbnail of the left hand, as shown in Figures 5 and 6. Also see Rycroft (1975: 76).

Figure 5: Stopped *Figure 6: Open technique*

Lastly, students are shown how to play *uhadi* by bouncing the stick against the string with the right hand. When they have mastered all these techniques they are introduced to the actual playing of the instrument and are asked to play the given *uhadi* rhythm with the aid of the mnemonic.

The next lesson is the introduction of the voice section where students are taught the technique of playing and singing at the same time. The voice part is always introduced with sol-fa notation because many students come to this university knowledgeable about tonic sol-fa. Two students are taught at the same time. This helps a great deal because one student plays the instrument while the other sings. This they do until they are both able to play and sing at the same time. Example 1 is an *uhadi* song, *Inxembula* (the ugly one), which is introduced to the students to perform.

The final lesson on *uhadi* performance involves the production of overtones or harmonics. This is achieved by twisting the left hand forward and backward so that the open side of the calabash is half opened by moving the instrument farther and closer to the chest of the performer. This is the most difficult technique because the instrument should be moved freely without leaning against the chest.

Second-year students are always asked to teach the first-year students under the supervision of the lecturer. This approach is rewarding to the student teachers, because it makes sure that the second-year students practise their lessons first before they teach the new students. The second-year students improve their own performance of *uhadi* as they teach it to the new students. In addition, it ensures that they also know how to teach that instrument. The best method of knowing the subject is to teach it.

Students do not only learn staff and sol-fa notation, they are also introduced to the mnemonics, learning devices such as *Tip, ti rii, ti rii, tii, tara* for quarter pulses of *uhadi*, to improve their memory and to develop their own teaching and learning devices in future.

Example 1

Inxembula (*Traditional)*

Ye - wu ye ha yan - gen 'in - xem - bu - la
(Translation: here comes the ugly one)

U No - ma - dam - be yan - gen 'in - xem - bu - la
(Translation: Here comes Nomadambe the ugly one)

Hay' a' - man - ka - za - na nga - ma hu - le
(Translation: some women are men's ladies)

* The key of the song depends entirely on the fundamentals of the specific uhadi. The melody
  in staff notation is in D Dorian to avoid the use of many ledger lines.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH IN THE TEACHING OF *UHADI* INSTRUMENT

The technique of teaching *uhadi* is hands-on. It is also holistic because students get the chance to mix and communicate with members of the communities, and discover more about the instrument as they buy calabashes. Some students come back with different names that are used to make *uhadi*. For example, members of the communities asked the male students what they were doing with the calabashes because only women play *uhadi*. This meant that they learnt more about the social context of the instrument that it is traditionally performed by females.

Some students return full of confidence after the communities have sung praises, approving and appreciating the role that the music department plays in promoting African culture by teaching indigenous knowledge systems. Students learn a lot in the exercise of mixing with the members of the various communities. They learn skills such as negotiating and commercial skills, as they become involved in negotiating prices for the calabashes. Human relation skills are also acquired, as the students have to demonstrate good conduct and show respect with long traditional introductory remarks characterised by greetings.

Theory and philosophy

In our department, the practical teaching of *uhadi* is conducted concurrently with the development of theoretical and philosophical knowledge. This means that practical lessons are combined with structural and aesthetic tuition. When students collect calabashes in the rural areas, they are also asked to gather as much information as possible on *uhadi*. They are given tips as to how and what questions to ask from the communities. At the same time they are referred to the library to read up on the origins, distribution and the social context of the instrument. Characteristics such as the original structure of *uhadi* are also explained to the students.

Students learn that when playing *uhadi*, the accompaniment does not come from the performer only. The audience also participates aesthetically as they react to the performance with actions, such as tapping their feet, shaking

their heads or making exclamations – all characteristic of musical performance in an African context. In the words of Chernoff (1986: 68): "In an African musical event, everyone present plays a part … and music-making is … a matter of expressing the sense of an occasion". In fact, in African societies, music is a community activity as it "invites us to participate in the making of a community" (ibid., 23). The performer may own the instrument or compose the song, but the composition belongs to the public. This has been an African practice from time immemorial.

Students are also taught that *uhadi* is performed to celebrate life, and when it is played it is associated with something connected with life. Rycroft (1975: 70, 72) has commented on *ugubhu/uhadi* music that was played to celebrate *ukomula* (Zulu), *ukuthomba* (Xhosa) or the coming-of-age ceremony of a young girl in her mid-teens. This is an example of a celebration of life.

In the lyrics of the song *Inxembula* (Example 1), two lines are about *Unomadambe* who enters the room. There is no evidence that the third line is related to the first two lines because it is about women who have no morals. At the same time, it might be that the song refers to Nomadambe as one of those women, and the name *Inxembula* is meant to despise her actions, meaning her low morals. Even if the song was about Nomadambe, the fact remains that the music is about life. For a man and a woman to have an affair is just part of life. Another argument could be that the words of the song were triggered by *uhadi* music and, in the words of Chernoff (1986: 92), the "scene" that is being pictured by the song came to her mind the moment she played that song for the first time. But to the other performer, an audience in this case, the structural form of the music could depict something different. For instance, one of the characteristics of *uhadi* music is that it is cyclical in structure, and there are no hard and fast rules for starting and ending the music. In this case *uhadi* music could represent the day with the sun rising and setting at no exact but relative time. The rising of the sun is followed by the busy day that is full of life, activity and vitality, and that is reflected in the performance of *uhadi* and the singing, with the audience that is also participating. Even if there is no audience in that particular rendition the

performer visualises the audience.

Further, the music does not end at the conclusion of the performance. Again in the words of Chernoff (1986: 155), it creates space for the audience to digest the music while the performer has ended the rendition: "At an African musical event, we are concerned with sound and movement, space and time, the deepest modalities of perception." After the performance, the music continues to ring in the minds of the audience. It remains there until another performance, just like the sun that has set in the west only to rise in the east. In traditional cosmology, the sun did not set, really, but created the space for the night. The cyclical structure of the song during performance is like the movement of the sun in life.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, sending the students to find tools for construction materials and being given the opportunity to go to the forest and see the actual trees that are used to make *uhadi*, and to actually make the instrument, is a hands-on experience. Students are not just provided with the tools to make the instrument in the classroom. They are asked to find the materials for making the instruments. Again, students do not just watch while the lecturer is making *uhadi*, they are involved in this activity from the outset. This approach is unique in its design because of the element of excursion to the forest to select the particular trees to make one's music instrument, following instruction from the lecturer.

Uhadi is an African chordophone instrument that looks so easy to play perhaps because of its appearance. Students were always confronted by the problem of combining simple and compound times with singing when performing *uhadi* pieces. In this particular *Inxembula* song the problems the students had were solved by the lecturer asking the students to work in groups of two and take turns in either playing the instrument or singing. One sings while the other is playing the instrument. In the *Inxembula* song both the instrument and the voice involve one pulse, half pulses and quarter pulses during performance. Sometimes the voice catches the rhythmic patterns of

the instrument, especially the quarter pulses, during performance.

The philosophy behind playing *uhadi* is very important to the students because it helps them to develop as broad-minded human beings who understand that everything is created for a purpose in life. It also trains them to concentrate and listen critically when they are performing or participating in the performance of *uhadi* music that depicts aspects of indigenous knowledge systems.

Lastly, in the new South African Government programme of Arts and Culture, students are expected to promote their own culture or indigenous knowledge systems, and indigenous African instrumental technology is a life-long area of concentration in the primary and tertiary schools. The learning of *uhadi* is an exemplary form of doing this.

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The substance of African Divine Church choral music

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ABSTRACT

The African Divine Church (ADC) is an independent African church in Kenya, whose chief ingredient is using African melodies in the worship process. Widely spread in the western part of Kenya, it derives its musical characteristics from the Luhyia musical traditions and melodies. This chapter looks into the musical characteristics of the ADC choral music. Musical elements such as melody, rhythm, tempo, song text, harmony, instrumentation and structure are discussed, with the aim of identifying the musical substance of the congregation's worship experience and the philosophical underpinnings of their music.

Key words: church music, worship music, African Divine Church, performance style, pedagogic practice in church

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Aesthetic judgement should rely on knowledge and acceptance of the cultural reference system from which the art emanates … thus in judging the aesthetic value of something within a culture, we must accept the cultural reference system from which it emanates. (Jackson, 1985: 49)

The early missionaries came to Africa with the notion that African music was secular and pagan. They advocated their own forms of worship as prescribed by their churches of origin, wanting Africans to follow suit. With this they forbade the use of African music in church. "Thus (they) banned drumming and dancing from the church, paralyzing the whole structure of the performing arts" (Turkson, 1992: 78). This evoked some sense of restlessness among the Africans even as

[A] prominent composer like Ephraim Amu was expelled from the Basel Mission not only for advocating the use of African music in the church but for wearing kente cloth to church service. (Turkson, 1992: 78)

As a result, a group of discontented Africans broke away from the mainstream churches, founding independent African churches. One of these was the African Divine Church (ADC). This church in Kenya was established in Western province with a predominant Luhya influence. The ADC members wanted freedom to worship in a manner familiar to their cultural orientation, since "it is impossible to imagine that African peoples could assemble and part solemnly without singing and dancing in honour to God" (Mbiti, 1970: 218). This church made use of Luhya traditional music to worship God, using their traditional musical instruments, rhythms, language, performance styles, dances and even melody, coming up with a unique artform in a eurocentric church setting. ADC music has grown over the years, but retains a distinctive Luhya idiom. The theological emphasis of the music lies in the gospel message of repentance of sin, salvation and looking forward to a better life in heaven with God. It is not only performed as part of public church worship, but can also be heard in a different context, during the annual Kenya Music Festival in the category of African Folk Songs with Sacred Texts.

As a church performance, music of the ADC is basically a choral performance, with an aesthetic quality embedded in traditional Luhya inclinations. Both "[y]oung and old alike [have] witness[ed] and re-affirm[ed] the acceptance of values through active participation" (Jackson, 1985: 63) in this music.

To address some of the aesthetic aspects of the music, the author poses the question: What is the purpose and the meaning of the music?

PURPOSES OF DIVINE CHORAL MUSIC

"In tribal Africa … art [music] has no purely aesthetic status in the Western sense, its purpose is chiefly religious, socio-political, or functional" (Lenon, 2000). In this respect music performed by the members of the ADC undertakes both a religious and functional aspect. Like any other African musical performance the context is of paramount importance. As is obvious, the purpose of this music is to praise a supreme being, God. In addition to that, this music seeks to bring together the faithful of similar beliefs. Social interaction takes place in an orderly fashion during its performance where skills are exhibited and learned. The nature of its performance enhances the involvement of all members who engage themselves in responding to the call sections of the music.

The substance of divine choral music

The meaning of this music can be perceived in its content, which will be addressed here as the substance of this music. "It has also been claimed that what all aesthetic objects share is … the quality of beauty" (Sheppard, 1987: 2). The beauty of the ADC choral music is embedded in its musical characteristics as construed by the church membership.

Musical structure

The musical structure is basically dialogical, for congregational involvement. This dialogical character is often found in African song, and might be considered symbolic of African societies. Mixed structural form is prevalent

as one song may be a mixture of call response and call refrain, with sections of refrained chorus, while others may just be made up of one form. For example:

Song 1

Call	Ah ndolanga	*Solo: Oh I see*
Response	Ndolanga	*Chorus: I see*
Call	Mwami ndolanga	*Solo: Lord I see*
Response	Ndolanga, Mwami yesu wikhaye khuindebe khumalesi.	*Chorus: I see, Lord Jesus, sitting on the throne exalted*
Call	Ah ndolanga	*Solo: Oh I see*
Response	Ndolanga	*Chorus: I see*
Call	Yesu ndolanga	*Solo: Jesus I see*
Response	Ndolanga, Mwami yesu wikhaye khuindebe khumalesi	*Chorus: I see, Lord Jesus, sitting on the throne exalted*

Song 2

Call	Asikae atiti, asikae atiti, asikae atiti, libukana lilailwa	*Solo: In a short while, in a short while, in a short while, the church will be enraptured*
Response	Oh lilailwa, oh lilailwa, oh lilailwa, libukana lilailwa	*Chorus: Oh it will be enraptured, oh it will be enraptured, oh it will be enraptured, the church will be enraptured.*

These responsorial structures enhance social interaction in the process of music-making. The soloist plays a significant role in the entire performance. She/he must have a profound knowledge of the theological background in order to select appropriate songs. She/he must have a good repertoire of songs at her/his disposal. The solo voice must be powerful enough to be heard at a distance without amplification. It is worth noting here that singers sometimes use thermos flask casings to amplify their voices since much of their singing takes place outside church buildings. Pitching is relative; the range comfortable for the congregation's response is the determining factor which the soloist needs to establish. The soloist must also be skilled at improvisation. The songs above are short and require alternative words by the soloists as the response maintains their lines. It is this improvisation that elongates the songs with sessions of vocal silence against continuous instrumental performance.

Song length

The songs are short and cyclical in nature, lending themselves to repetition, which is a basic structural feature of African songs (Agu, 1999: 48). During repetitions, dynamic levels may remain constant in the choral sections, but the soloist stresses with urgency, plea and other vocal interjections. Repeated texts serve to emphasise the words and register them in the minds of the listeners. If singers and musicians feel that the congregation members are enjoying the song, it is lengthened. The singers and musicians are thus in charge of the song's length, even though they may attribute it to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Song transition

The linkage of one song to the next is executed in various ways. Sometimes one song may move smoothly to the next without any instrumental interlude. This happens in cases where the songs can be sung in the same key and have a similar tempo. In some cases there is an interlude of hand clapping or pure instrumentation as the soloist prepares to lead the subsequent song.

Melodies

There are several types of melodies. Those composed by some members of the congregation, deemed spiritual, follow the theological basis of the church, in both Luhya and Kiswahili language and the Euro-American form of hymns. Melodic contours of the Luhya songs in the ADC, like other African melodies, follow the speech contour. Inasmuch as the prevailing songs are in the Luhya language, there are a few that are performed in both Luhya and Kiswahili. These songs have recently been borrowed from other ADC congregations and tend to be common to a number of church congregations in the country. The hymns are distorted rhythmically and in terms of tempo to suit the ADC's taste. The melodies are duplicated at the octave above or below for both the male and female singers and are learnt through observation and imitation.

Two of the songs in Luhya language have been transcribed below. The first song has a small melodic range. The solo part has a range of a fourth, between E and A, while the response range is between D and C without the note B, making it hexatonic.

Itaa Yanje

Unknown
Transcribed by A.N. Masasabi

Solo

I - taa ya - nje,__ je - su i taa ya - nje.

Chorus

Hal - le - lu - ja, i - taa ya - nje,__ je - su i

taa yan - je, i - taa ya - nje,__ ye - su i - taa ya - nje,__

Bu - la - rau bwa - nje__ ye - su bu

Ye - su mwa - ni wa - nya - sa ye i - taa ya - nje.

la rau bwa - nje.

Hal - le - lu - ja, Bu - la - rau bwa - nje__ ye - su bu - la - rau bwa - nje, bu

la - rau bwa - nje___ ye - se bu - la - rau bwa - nje,___

ye - su nwa - na wa__ nya - sa ye, bu - la - rau mwa - nje.

Yananga

Unknown
Transcribed by A.N. Masasabi

Solo: Ya - na - nga, ya - na - nga mwa - mi wan - je, ya - na - nga, ya - na - nga mwa - mi wan - je.

Chorus: Ya - na - nga, ya - na - nga mwa - mi wan - je, ya - na - nga ya - na - nga mwa - mi wan - je

Ya - na - nga, ya - na - nga mu - kho - le - le. Ya - na - nga, ya - na - nga mu - kho - le - le

Ya - na nga, ya - na - nga mu - kho - le - le, Ya - na - nga, ya - na nga mu - kho - le - le

Song texts

Song texts are very essential in the performance of choral music, since meaning is manifest through them. The gospel message of evangelism is fundamental, with reference to some life challenges. The following songs exemplify some of the inherent messages:

Solo: Itaa yanje, yesu itaa yanje.

Solo: You're my light, Jesus, you're my light.

Chorus: Halleluya, itaa yanje, yesu itaa yanje.

Chorus: Halleluya, you're my light, Jesus, you're my light, You're my light.

Yesu mwana wa nyasaye itaa yanje.

Jesus, you're my light, Jesus, son of God, you're my light.

AND

Solo: Yananga, yananga mwami wanje, yananga yananga mwami wanje.

Solo: He called me, He called me, my lord, He called me, He called me, my lord.

Chorus: Yananga, yananga mwami wanje, yananga yananga mwami wanje.

Chorus: He called me, He called me, my lord, He called me, He called me, my lord.

Solo: Yananga, yananga mukholele.

Solo: He called me, He called me To work for him.

yananga, yananga mukholele.

He called me, He called me To work for him.

Chorus: Yananga, yananga mukholele.

Chorus: He called me, He called me To work for him.

Yananga, yananga mukholele.

He called me, He called me To work for him.

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Tempo

The tempo is relatively fast to propel a forward motion in dance. There is a large drum that sets the performance pace and acts as a drone upon which improvisation takes place. This tempo enables the members to dance as they move from one place to another, and in questioning members it appeared that it makes sense to them. Different responses included: "It makes the performance lively and we can enjoy the dance"; "That is just how we do it here"; and "It signifies urgency in spreading the gospel in a bid to save souls".

Instrumentation

The ADC makes use of a set of drums and metal ring to accompany vocal music. The drum set is made up of three double-headed drums of different sizes. They are cylindrical in shape. The rhythms played on them are actually the *isikuti* drum rhythms. The *isikuti* is a traditional Luhya drum that had been forbidden in church by the missionaries when they came into Kenya. The largest is called *isikuti isaza* (the male *isikuti*). The medium size is called *isikuti ikhasi* (the female *isikuti*), and the smallest is called *isikuti mwana* (the child *isikuti*). Representing the family unit, their rhythms are as follows:

What is given above is just a basis upon which improvisation takes place. The metal ring plays a continuous crotchet pulse.

Performance style

In traditional societies, "religious singing is often accompanied by clapping and dancing, which express people's feelings of joy, sorrow or thanksgiving"

(Mbiti, 1992: 67). Further, Turkson (1992: 70) points out that dance has always been an important feature of worship in syncretic churches (of which the ADC is one). In the ADC, the dancing is not synchronised. Each member dances at his/her own tempo in response to any of the accompanying rhythms. Dancing involves the movement of the head, legs, shoulders and hand clapping, and can be quite energetic. As the members dance, they move from place to place with an emphasis on evangelism. Such processions are indeed a common African practice, as can be seen in the literature:

> *There is not always a correlation between the pace of the music and the pace of the procession; indeed each might move independently … the pace of the procession may be set by the spectators who cluster around the performers and move along with them, or a member of the performing group itself. (Nketia, 1974: 233)*

The procession begins with prayers. It is led by one member carrying the ADC flag with green, white and red colours. The flag colours are also picked up in the dress of the procession, consisting mainly of long white robes. The flag-carrying member is followed by the pastors, prophets and other elders, then the song leader. Other members then follow. Pauses for prayer and praise intersperse the processions that always end in a church.

Singing occurs in church, using natural the voice, leading some members of the congregation into a trance-like state. It is believed that

> *"people allow dance to draw them into a state of trance, which might be interpreted as possession by spirits, or they use dance as a means to emotional release." (Youngerman, 2006)*

In such states God may speak to one or more members of the congregation, giving words of prophecy or words of encouragement and healing. The possessed members speak in tongues under the influence of the Holy Spirit. This is considered a very important aspect of their worship experience; it serves as a climax to their worship.

The above description illustrates the meaning of worship music within the ADC congregation. It is upon the basis of the above aspects that they select songs and enjoy participation.

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Mhande, a Shona (Karanga) rain-making dance. Lessons in Zimbabwean traditional dances for generalist primary teachers – the Morgan Zintec College experience[1]

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ABSTRACT

Initially conceived as a workshop, the author's goal was to provide an opportunity for conference participants to experience, in a practical and hands-on-fashion, Shona traditional music and dance. This chapter searches for new approaches rooted in tradition but which focus on dance research and education. Through reflection on my own musical traditions, readers will be challenged to think of ways in which insights from this chapter may apply to their own teaching situation.

**Key words:** Shona, Zimbabwe, dance, *mhande*, religious practice, *bira*

SHONA SOCIO-CULTURAL HISTORY – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The vaShona or maShona are the principal occupants of present-day Zimbabwe. *Shona* designates an aggregate of mutually intelligible Bantu languages and dialects stemming from a similar cultural background. Six main dialects make up the language – *Kalanga* to the extreme west, *Karanga* to the south, *Korekore* north, *Manyika* and *Ndau* to the east and *Zezuru* the central districts. Little information on maShona historical origins can be gleaned from either oral tradition or written records. The latter source, dating from the 10th century as chronicled by the Arabs, are the earliest, while Portuguese writings on the same subject appear from the 16th century onwards. A tendency to record only events of interest places some limitations on these as sources of both primary and secondary data. However, historians note the period from around the 10th century as marking the occupation of the modern-day Zimbabwe state (Beach, 1994; Bourdillon, 1987; Mudenge, 1988). The emergence of successive powerful empires with a capital at the present Great Zimbabwe monument from around the mid-13th century, provides evidence of a complex political, economic and social system of early Shona. Archaeological evidence suggests 1200 AD as marking the start of work to construct the stone walls that may still be seen today, thereafter continuing for the next two hundred years. At its peak around 1350, it is believed an estimated 10 000 people inhabited the ancient city. The Munhumutapa, also referred to as the Mutapa Dynasty, established from around 1450 to 1650, followed by the Rozvi Empire, 1684–1830, represented the pinnacle of one of the most advanced civilisations of that period in southern Africa (Mudenge, 1988). Early Shona society evolved as a patriarchal society of herders, miners, farmers, smiths and soldiers with a king as both a religious and political leader. Social relations through a totem (*mutupo*) defined the parameters of group settlements from the smallest unit, the family (*imba, mhuri*), to neighbourhood (*mana*), followed by village (*musha*), then region (*dunhu*) and (*nyika*) chiefdom. Shona values were and are still characterised by a reverence for social events, especially ritual ceremonies organised by the chief. Music and dance assumed and retain an unusual significance in these events, even to the present day.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN MUSIC AND DANCE

Religion among the Shona, as in other parts of Africa, permeates all life. At the centre of human existence is a belief in the spirit world. A supreme God is credited with all creation. *Mwari*, *Musikavanhu* (maker of men), *Nyadenga* (owner of heavens), are among some of the names by which he is known. Human and nature spirits are acknowledged as influential to the living. Attached to these beliefs are practices, ceremonies and rituals where music and dance play a significant role. Birth of a child, death, puberty and the coming of seasons are among celebrated occasions where music and dance play a prominent role[3]. Asante (2000: 20) notes that throughout Shona history, the High Priests of *Mwari* have been very important communicators with the Great King of the Sky. Music and dance enable the possession of a medium (*svikiro*, *homwe*) by a spirit (*mudzimu*), thereby creating a devotional frame of mind and making contact with *Mwari*. The spirit will offer advice and take requests. The Shona conception of the relationship between spirit worlds is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: *Illustration of Shona conception of the relation between man and the spirit world*
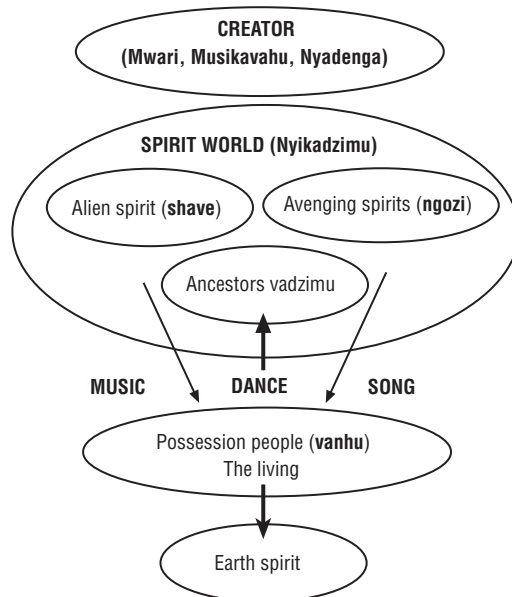
Music is an important tool of the religious observance. It enables a medium (*svikiro*) to become possessed by an ancestral spirit of the family, clan (*mudzim*), or ethnic unit (*mhondoro*). Once they have settled on their medium, spirits communicate on a range of issues such as causes of illnesses and natural disasters. A special ceremony called *bira* (singular) or *mapira* (plural) is a traditional, and perhaps the most meaningful, religious practice of the Shona belief system. This is an all-night formal ceremony held in a *banya*, a special hut built for the spirits, or at other places such as a forest, hills or mountains that spirits are believed to inhabit. *Paraushanga* is the special rain-making ceremonial site, determined by the traditions of the particular area. In some instances the site could be the burial grounds of previous rain spirit mediums, *manyusa*.

Three major ceremonies that are marked by *mapira* centre firstly on the arrival of the rainy season (*munakamwe*), secondly, the period after harvests (*mapa*), and thirdly, the pre-planting period (*matapona*). The chief initiates these rituals in liaison with the *mhondoro* spirit. Drought or excessive rainfall calls for an intervention. Hence, the performance of rain-making ceremonies (*mukwerera*). Special beer, *doro* made from *rapoko*, and a number of sacrificial animals that include oxen and goats, are provided for the occasion. For the right experience and ritual performance, music and dance are important functionaries.

THE PRACTICE – A DESCRIPTION OF *MHANDE* DANCE

The following section provides detailed information on the *mhande* dance, with the purpose of aiding school instruction.[4]

Mhande is a rain-making dance originating in the southern province of Masvingo. While the original religious cultural context of the dance has gradually become less prominent, its function of social and recreational value has ensured its survival. The dance steps and the songs have remained in their original classical form. Attire has also retained a traditional look, although animal skins are now being replaced by cloth, especially in black and white.[5] An ensemble of two drums adequately provides the needed

accompaniment. Additional rhythm is provided by the sound of leg rattles tied to the lower leg, as the dancers move to the pounding of the drums.

The drumming is important to induce possession and control its course, making the performance functional. Axelson (1971: 8), a scholar of Shona music, noted that "the most typical functional role of music in Shona society is when it is practised in the rituals of traditional religious activities". Dance is an absolutely necessary ingredient of the performance. The interdependence amongst the arts that include movement, song, drama and drumming, indicate a holistic approach to the event. Spiritual conviction is therefore expressed in dance by almost all participants who, when inspired, will jump into centre of the circle and display their creative skills.

A comprehensive discussion of all aspects of this dance is a task of forbidding magnitude. Nevertheless, this chapter will attempt to address certain specifics of the *mhande* performance and its applicability to African musical arts education.

Background information

The following model was used to gather information and provides readers with the contextual details.

Name of dance	*Mhande*
Ethnic group	Karanga
Cultural region	Masvingo province – Bikita, Chibi, Gutu, Mwenezi, Zaka, Shurugwi, Zvishavane districts
Function and purpose	Spirit possession, *mukwerera/mutoro*, rain-making, recreation
Participants	Adults – men and women. Children take part at the periphery.

Scheduling	Spring – Chirimo; September – Guyana
Costumes, attire, material traits	Black and white cloth, ritual axe (*gano*), knobkerrie (*tsvimbo*), headgear (*ngundu*), bangles (*ndarira*), beads (*chuma*), lion skin
Instruments	Drums (*gandira*) (*hadzi* – female and *rume* – male); leg rattles (*magagada, magavhu*); hand claps
Songs	1. Havo ndibaba 2. Tovera mudzimu dzoka 3. Dzinmwa munaSave 4. Tora vutabwako 5. Dziva remvura 6. Choenda Machakaire 7. Ndaniwa nemvura

Dance pattern (using "rhythm count" notation)

Phase 1   *1 2-e 1 2 3 4- e 1 2 3 -e   1 2-e 1 2 3 4 -e   1 2 3 - e*

Mnemonics   *ki da-e   ki da ki da- e   ki da-da- e   ki da-e ki da ki da-e   ki da da-e*

Count repeatedly into a cycle, standing in a line/single-file formation – snake symbol. Follow the count with left, right, left, right leap and drag feet backward on 123 repeat left, right, left, right, drag feet backward on counts 12345 (repeat pattern in circle formation).

Phase 2   *1 - 2 1 - 2 1 - 2 - 3 1 - 2 1 - 2 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5*

Mnemonics   *ki - da ki - da-e - e - e   ki - da ki - da-e - e - e - e*

Drum pattern	*play with both hands continuously in counts 1 2 3, i.e. edge (e), centre (c), centre (c)*					

Mnemonics   *ki -nda-nda ki-nda-nda ki-nda-nda (e-c-c, e-c-c) – repeat*

Box notation   *play with both hands continuously on the edge (e) and at the centre (c)*

edge (e)	e			e		
centre (c)		c	c		c	c

Hand claps   *ta - ta - ta te - ta te - ta   ta - ta - ta   te - ta te - ta*

Count   *1 - 2 - 3 1 - 2 1 - 2   1 - 2 - 3 1 - 2 1 - 2*

The circle is the major formation of the dance when performance is in context. However, the introduction of formations that suit the proscenium stage is now a common feature of choreography.

Importantly, the main movements are recognised by the community and symbolise past and present.

ENDNOTES

1. Editor's note: The editor was unable to establish contact with the author to verify sources and methods. The article has been edited in language only, with no changes to the dance description.
2. Acknowledgement: The original and more comprehensive research report on *mhande* dance was carried out for the ethnomusicology course with Prof. Meki Nzewi for the BMus Hons degree at The University of Pretoria, 2004.
3. Mbiti (1975) provides detailed discussions of the wider subject of African Traditional Religion.
4. Detailed description of dance requires notation, but dance notation systems that evolved for Western type dances are often not suitable for transcribing or notating African traditional dances as the movements, body language and cosmology differ. Therefore

Laban and Benesh movement notation are inadequate for analysing and recording movements in traditional dances. To overcome this shortcoming, Rhythm Count was developed from local experience over the years of traditional dance revival by dance companies, choreographers, educators, teachers and academics. So far, it has been used effectively side-by-side with traditional mnemonics. Isibor, in her study of the aesthetics of Shona dances, describes the system as "a step-by-step analysis of each movement, counted rhythmically using numbers in consonance with the rhythm from the drum, ngoma and singing" (ibid., 2002: 34). The method is used to record dance movements in order for the dancer or choreographer to be able to recognise and perform the dance movements. The method appears to serve a purpose, but further research into notation of dance is much-needed.

5. This practice has its roots in the past as trade with the east coast from around 5th century onwards had witnessed the introduction of linen by the Arabs and Portuguese.

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