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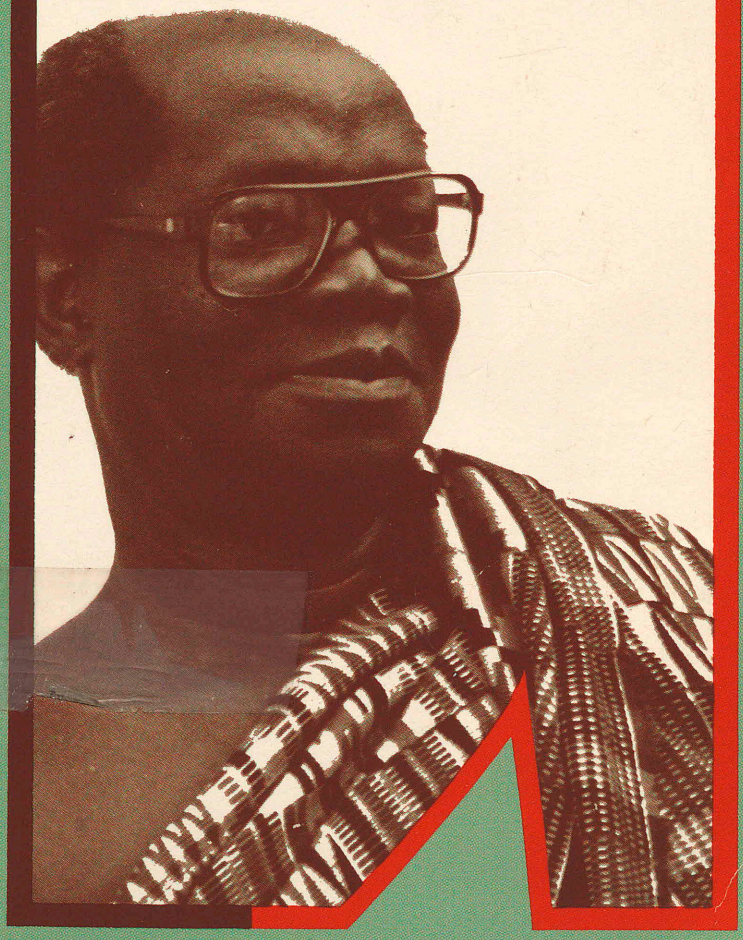
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AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY:
CURRENT TRENDS

VOLUME I

STSCHRIFT

PRESENTED TO J. H. KWABENA NKETIA

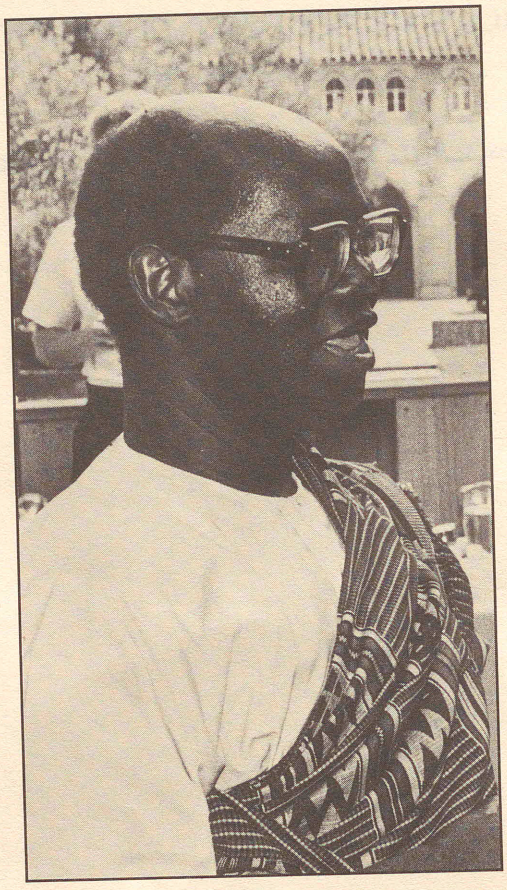


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AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY: CURRENT TRENDS

Volume One

A *Festschrift* Presented to J. H. Kwabena Nketia



AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY: CURRENT TRENDS

VOLUME I

A *FESTSCHRIFT* PRESENTED TO

J. H. KWABENA NKETIA

Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, *Editor*
and
William G. Carter, *Associate Editor*

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PREFACE

In April 1985 the editors met Michael Lofchie, Director of the African Studies Center, UCLA, for lunch and proposed a *Festschrift* for Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia. We felt it especially *a propos* that this festival writing be sponsored by the Center as it was under its auspices that Professor Nketia received his initial invitation to teach in the United States and, subsequently, it was at UCLA that he was appointed to the senior faculty of the Music Department and the Institute of Ethnomusicology.

Director Lofchie was enthusiastic in his support and quickly pointed out that Professor Nketia was not only greatly respected, but was regarded in the warmest personal terms as exemplified in the statements that precede each article. And in light of Nketia's standing within the field of African scholarship and the breadth of his contributions in African Studies, Lofchie suggested a joint publication with the Center and Crossroads Press. Through him the proposal was presented to the Editorial Board of the African Studies Association. We are grateful to Michael Lofchie for his leadership, guidance, and steadfast encouragement throughout the preparation of this volume.

We are indebted to John Distefano, Former Executive Secretary of the African Studies Association, for his unselfish patience and advice through the planning process and the attendant mechanisms required for publication. He and his staff at UCLA provided valuable time and energy to this project while preparing to relocate the ASA offices. We are most appreciative for this display of genuine commitment and support.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions and unfailing support of the Editorial Board of the African Studies Association and its present Executive Secretary, Edna Bay. Publishing a volume of musicological essays requires a unique commitment.

We take this opportunity to thank the anonymous referees who assessed the submissions and returned them in a timely manner. Your advice and recommendations were seriously considered in every detail.

Many individuals have assisted in the production of this volume at every stage of its development. We sincerely thank the UCLA African Studies Center staff: Deborah Wilkes, Publications Coordinator, Eddie Huckaby, Donna Jones, and Jean Moncrief.

And for the great care he took in preparing the transcriptions and other illustrative material, we acknowledge David Ocker.

And for his advice and concern at a very critical time in his personal life, we thank posthumously Roger Wright of the UCLA Music Department.

And to those contributors who appear in this volume, we are grateful for your patience and your generosity in making this celebration a memorable one in the life of Professor Nketia and for the cause of humanistic understanding. We have judiciously and cautiously exercised the editor's pen so that your scholarship and individuality have been preserved.

Should there be errors, we beg your indulgence while accepting the full responsibility commensurate with our role and function.

PART ONE

J. H. KWABENA NKETIA: THE MAN AND HIS WORKS

J. H. KWABENA NKETIA:
A BIOBIBLIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT

BIBLIOGRAPHY

COMPOSITIONS 1942–1965

TRIBUTES

J. H. KWABENA NKETIA: A Biobibliographical Portrait

Born June 22, 1921, Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia was an only child whose father died during his infancy. He was reared by his mother and maternal grandparents in Mampong, one of the premiere states of Ashanti.

His grandparents became Presbyterians during his seventh year and he began his formal education shortly thereafter in a mission school sponsored by this denomination. His mother did not convert to Christianity until he had become an adult. Her continued adherence to traditional customs and ways of life provided for Kwabena Nketia an intimate exposure to a broad range of musical practices and styles in Akan life.

Throughout primary and middle school years in Mampong, Nketia showed exceptional talent and sensitivity to music, dance, poetry, and the dramatic arts. These initial interests led to a career in which the performing arts have served both as an expressive medium and as an intellectual fulcrum for his interest in humanistic scholarship. This dual commitment to the arts became more crystalized in a formal way during his studies at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong, and under the mentorship of the musical theorist and organist, Robert Danso.

On January 6, 1951, Kwabena Nketia married Lillie Agyeman-Dua, a well known and greatly respected young teacher of the royal lineage of Mampong. She too has had a stellar career as a radio host (for the programs "Women's World" and "A Time with Children"), producer, and Assistant Controller of Programs for the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. From this union four children were born who today have achieved their own recognition and standing in the fields of law, the professoriate, and the business community.

The following bibliographic essay is designed to give a comprehensive description of J. H. Kwabena Nketia's contributions and leadership in academia. Not only are his major works cited but they are chronicled in terms of the contexts and situations from which they have sprung—contexts which, in many ways, are atypical of those of Western scholars. It is hoped that in this way the diversity which characterizes his production will be appreciated for the unity of purpose which motivated them and continues to support their viability as landmarks in African musicology.

There are original works in English and Twi (Akan) addressing topics in musicological research and methodology, African musical theory, linguistics, sociology and so-

cial studies, African history, anthropology and educational theory and philosophy. There are descriptive narratives, collections of prose and poetry, a play, chamber compositions for solo voice and instruments with piano accompaniment, choral settings, and settings for flute consort.

What is the common thread that holds these multifaceted interests together? How has this apparently disparate array of approaches had a substantive impact on the disciplines of musicology and the universal study of mankind?

ENCOUNTERS IN ACADEMIA AND THE WORLD OF MUSIC

J. H. Kwabena Nketia, former Director of the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana and Professor Emeritus, UCLA, is currently Chair and Andrew Mellon Professor of Music at the University of Pittsburgh. To those who have followed his career, this appointment to a distinguished chair in the United States marks the culmination of the international recognition given to his achievements in African musicology and his contributions to the field of ethnomusicology.

Although Kwabena Nketia emerged in the international world of musical scholarship in the 1950s, it was not until the early 1960s that institutions in the United States began to draw on his knowledge and experience, for by then the work of some "non-western scholars" such as J. H. Kwabena Nketia, to quote Bruno Nettl, "had become perfectly acceptable to Western ethnomusicologists," even though there were still doubts as to whether "investigation of one's own culture is ethnomusicology at all" (*Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* 1964:70). Nevertheless, the Society for Ethnomusicology elected Kwabena Nketia as a member of their Council in 1966, Director-at-large in 1968, and First Vice President for a two year term, 1972–73.

As far as his potential contribution as a teacher and lecturer is concerned, the African Studies Program at UCLA was the first to officially recognize this and to take the initiative in bringing him to the United States in 1963 to teach a summer course on the music of Africa. Subsequently conferences and other engagements brought him back to the United States every other year, culminating in his appointment as Professor in the Music Department of UCLA in 1968. Four years later he was invited to Harvard University as the Horatio Appleton Lamb Visiting Professor of Music (1972) and ten years later to the University of Pittsburgh as Visiting Andrew Mellon Professor of Music (1982).

The work of J. H. Kwabena Nketia also began to attract the attention of American publishers from 1959 onwards when his articles appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* and *New World Writing* #15 (New American Library). The publication of his article on "African Music" in the newsletter of AMSAC (American Society of African Culture) was followed by his article in *Ethnomusicology* (1962) on "The Problem of Meaning in African Music," while the African Studies Program at Northwestern University accepted his work, *African Music in Ghana*, for inclusion in their African Studies series in 1963. The Negro Universities Press, a Division of Greenwood Press, reprinted his *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People* in 1969, while his paper on "The Present State and Potential of Music Research in Africa" presented as part of the inaugural lecture series organized by the Graduate Program in Music of the City University of New York appeared in *Perspectives in Musicology* published by W. W. Norton (1972). It was after this event, that he was invited by the Music Editor of Norton Publishers to write a general introductory book, *Music of Africa*, a work which earned for the author an ASCAP Deems Tay-

lor Award in December 1974, and which has subsequently been published in German, Italian and Chinese. His articles have also appeared in *The Black Perspective in Music* and the *Journal of the Music Educators National Conference*. He is listed in a few American reference books such as *Contemporary Authors, Bibliographical Dictionary of Afroamerican and African Musicians*, and *Who's Who in American Music*.

It is not generally known that Kwabena Nketia is also a composer. His combination of scholarship and creative work was formally recognized by three American institutions in the 1970s. Brockport College of the State University of New York invited him to their Keyboard Festival held in 1978 from October 26 to 28, arranged for a couple of his piano pieces and a short elegy for cello and piano (*Antubam*) to be performed during his lecture, and for his *Suite for Flute and Piano* to be performed as an item in the main evening concert of the Festival. The University of Pittsburgh which runs an annual Jazz Seminar presented him with a plaque and certificate in recognition of his "outstanding contribution to the understanding of African Music, and to the field of Ethnomusicology" (1979). The Paul Robeson Cultural and Performing Center at Central State University (Wilberforce, Ohio) also presented him with a plaque and certificate of recognition in the same year.

It is of course not only in the United States that he has gained recognition. In his own country he is a Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences and a recipient of the Grand Medal of the Government of Ghana (1968), while in the United Kingdom he is Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, a position which has enabled him to keep in close touch with current trends in British anthropology. He was a Commonwealth Fellow in Australia in 1969 and ten years later, a Visiting Professor at the University of Queensland in Brisbane (Australia). In 1981 he was awarded the IMC/UNESCO Music Prize for distinguished service and leadership in music. He is currently a member of UNESCO's International Commission for the Scientific and Cultural History of Mankind, and a Member of the Board of Directors of *Music in the Life of Man: A World History* being prepared for UNESCO by the International Music Council.

A number of questions come to mind when one looks at such highlights in Kwabena Nketia's career, questions such as: What does Nketia represent in the world of music and musicology? What kind of intellectual stimulus or challenge does he bring as a scholar or teacher to those who come into contact with him personally or through his writings? How did he rise above the level of "informant"—the traditional image and role of the African in scholarly research—to that of an interpreter? How has he related to the intellectual climate and development needs of his country as he pursues his academic goals?

While answers to some of these can be found in the testimonies of those who have had contact with him as colleagues or students, or as persons who have met him at conferences, symposia and lectures, others can be inferred not only from his publications, but also from the circumstances of the personal energy and drive that progressively led him towards a scholarly career when there was no such tradition in his family or the rural environment in which he grew up as a child. Moreover his publications reflect not only the results of his own field research and his thoughts on issues of particular interest to him, but also his responses to the pressures and challenges of the environment in which he worked or participated in programs at home and abroad during the formative period of his career (1942–52), the period of intensive field work and community service (1952–61), and the period of his active role as educator and interpreter of African cultural values in music (1961 to the present).

THE FORMATIVE PERIOD OF HIS CAREER, 1942–1952

Kwabena Nketia's scholarly and practical interest in the traditions of his own society began in 1942 when he was appointed to the faculty of the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong, to teach music and Twi (Akan)—a language widely spoken in Ghana, and which was reduced to writing in 1838 by scholars of the Basel Mission. Kwabena Nketia received his basic education and teacher training from 1937 to 1941 at this college founded in 1848 by the Basel Mission. In addition to his teaching duties, he worked as an assistant to the Chief Editor for Twi appointed by the Government Department of Education. It was the duty of the editor and his assistant to examine, edit and write reports on all manuscripts in Twi submitted for the imprimatur of the Department of Education before they were published. The aim was to check on the content, style and educational value of works presented to the Department, as well as the level at which they could be used, and ensure, through the imprimatur process, that the standard orthographic conventions for the language were observed.

In retrospect, J. H. Kwabena Nketia believes that the literary and scholarly interest he developed very early in his career was stimulated to a large extent by this experience, for the more he became acquainted with the range and quality of the materials that were sent in, the more he felt the need for indigenous creative models of prose and poetry. This led him to transcribe the texts of the songs he knew from childhood and to use the experience in making a larger collection of Akan songs which could serve as literary models and as sources for his own compositions. An anthology of over a hundred such songs collected by him was subsequently put together with a critical introduction in Twi on the formal characteristics of the songs and other information he collected in the field. This manuscript (completed in 1944 and published five years later by Oxford University Press) came to the notice of Professor Ida Ward, Head of the Africa Department of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London when she came to Ghana at the invitation of the colonial government to investigate into some dialectical problems in Akan and suggest appropriate changes in the orthography of Twi. On her recommendation, Nketia was awarded a two year Government scholarship to study modern linguistics at the University of London in the Africa Department of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Because he was also a musician and would have preferred a scholarship award in music, he seized the opportunity while in London to expand his knowledge of Western music which he believed was necessary to complement his background knowledge of African traditions. He took private piano lessons, advanced lessons in harmony and counterpoint which he had studied in Ghana, attended symphony concerts at Albert Hall as well as piano recitals and chamber music concerts at Wigmore Hall. He joined a choral society as well as an international club and a student organization. This enabled him not only to get free tickets to concerts, but also to meet some of the artists, composers and promoters of concert life in London.

For a while it seemed to some of his friends that he was spending more time on music than on linguistics for which he was sent to London. But this was not quite the case, for he managed to develop and sustain a dual interest in music and linguistics by devoting time not only to his course work but also to independent research into his own language, using himself and other Asante speakers as his data source. He produced a manuscript on the phonetics of Twi, using the models of Ida Ward and Daniel Jones of the British School of Phonetics.

On the completion of his course in linguistics and related studies in social anthropology, he was offered a three year appointment (with the concurrence of the Government of Ghana) as an Assistant in the Department of Africa so that he could take part in the language training of young British cadets about to be sent as officers to British colonies in West Africa. Although this appointment was full time, he seized the opportunity to do further studies at the University of London and enrolled at Trinity College of Music (London) and Birkbeck College to do a three year degree course in music, English and history, having previously matriculated for such a course through private studies in London.

It was at this time that the University of London established a Chair in General Linguistics at the School of Oriental and African Studies and appointed John R. Firth as the first Professor of Linguistics. This event led to the development of a British School of Linguistics which gradually differentiated itself from the Sussurean tradition and the work of other European schools such as the Prague School, and also from American linguistics. When Professor Firth became aware of the work of Kwabena Nketia through his colleagues in the Africa Department, he encouraged him to enroll for the new certificate course in the Phonetics of English which he had established and also attend his graduate lectures so that he could have monthly tutorials with him on linguistic analysis, the sessions to be based on Nketia's essays previously submitted to him for his critical comments. Thus he had the unusual opportunity of doing intensive studies in different subjects on both undergraduate and graduate levels simultaneously. What is more, he found time for everything he set out to do. Indeed working several hours a day on different projects became a habit that continues to characterize his work today. It is probably the answer to the question that people often ask him: "How do you find time to do all these?"—a question he often answers with a chuckle.

In retrospect Kwabena Nketia believes that it is the experience he had in London that initially gave him his interdisciplinary perspective as well as the orientation that enabled him to develop interest in analytical procedures, skills in the systematization of materials and the formulation of theoretical observations—skills he has applied to musical materials. He claims also to have learned a lot from his British student friends in London, for he read about whatever they brought up outside his field, at their informal discussions over a cup of tea, that he felt he needed to know, whether it was the work of Ayer, Rudolf Carnap or Bertrand Russell. He enlarged his knowledge of the literature of Western music in the same manner, for he believed very much in the stimulus one gets from independent study.

When Kwabena Nketia returned to his position in Ghana, it became evident that he needed a much greater outlet for his research interests than the Training College could provide. It was important nevertheless that he should be there at that particular time not only to teach music and English, but also to follow up the work on Twi orthography done by Ida Ward five years before. Accordingly he was assigned to the Language Bureau and charged with the responsibility of implementing the recommendations of Ida Ward, basing his revisions of existing Twi texts on the decisions taken by an Advisory Committee of which he was secretary.

In the two and a half years in which he served in this capacity (1949–1952) he revised the *Twi Spelling Book* (which contains all the lexical entries in Christaller's standard *Twi Dictionary* first published in 1881) and the entire set of six primary school readers. He also served on the Presbyterian Literature Committee, editing manuscripts and translating a few pamphlets in English for publication—works such as "The Story

of Healing'' and ''The Story of Flying'' which involved finding or creating Twi equivalents of Western scientific terms. In addition to his collection of Akan songs, he wrote a number of supplementary readers in Twi for schools—books of original stories, anthology of short stories from traditional history, an edition of folk tales, an original play in Twi, an anthology of original short poems and a book of narrative poems, including an adaptation of a story from Chaucer's works which he had to read when he took the course in Middle English required of all those taking the three year degree course in English language and literature.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in his own country he is regarded as a writer by those who go through the school system, and as an expert on Akan language and culture, for anyone who teaches Twi at the secondary or tertiary level is supposed to have a good knowledge of the customs and institutions of his society, since this is part of the language syllabus. In addition Kwabena Nketia is also widely known in Ghana as a composer, for the period 1942–1952 when he wrote books in his own language was also the period in which he wrote many of his choral pieces and solos with piano accompaniment which are broadcast quite frequently by the Ghana Broadcasting and Television Corporation.

THE PERIOD OF INTENSIVE FIELDWORK AND COMMUNITY SERVICE, 1952–1961

The major turning point in Kwabena Nketia's career came in 1952 when he was offered an appointment as Research Fellow in African Studies in the Department of Sociology of the new University College of the Gold Coast established in 1948 on the campus of Achimota, and which was to become the University of Ghana, Legon, in 1961. This appointment, which was full time, had the same terms and conditions of service as those of the teaching faculty. As African Studies was then not a separate area of instruction, Kwabena Nketia could spend the next ten years doing full time research. He had the option of deciding what he wanted to do—to continue his work on language and oral literature or folklore, or to work on music and dance or any combination of these since subjects are often integrated in the expressive cultures of Ghanaians.

Since Kwabena Nketia had already done ten years of work in the field of language studies, he decided, contrary to the expectations of those who knew his work in linguistics, that he would go back to the music research he began on his own in the 1940s, for he believed that music would give him the greatest scope for studying the expressive cultures of his people and for realizing his interdisciplinary background and interest. It could provide a point of entry into the study of customs and institutions if he wanted to focus his attention on cultural studies. It could lead him into the study of oral literature which was of particular interest to him. There was also much that he could investigate in the technical areas of music studies as well as much that he could learn about the musical traditions themselves in respect of their history and ''semantics'' or their modes of expression and presentation, values and meaning in social life, for as he saw it, in real life experiences music is like a bridge—a bridge to the supernatural, to human beings and their emotions, feelings and sense of tradition. He felt, therefore, that the time had come to expand what Ephraim Amu was able to do in the 1920s and 30s when he laid the foundation for the courses in African music that were given at the Presbyterian Training College Akropong, and which formed part of his own academic preparation. The challenge of developing his own theoretical framework and research methodology in the field of

music research also appealed to him, since he had quite clear ideas about what his goals were to be.

As far as the historical and the "semantic" areas of musical studies were concerned, he felt that he would be able to harness social anthropology and linguistics to the service of African musicology. Accordingly he planned and implemented research projects that would enable him to do precisely this, for the environment in which he lived and worked had made him conscious of the problem of meaning in African music. When his *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People*—the first major project in which he developed his methodology for building interdisciplinary bridges—was published, it was precisely these goals and the relationship between linguistic analysis and translation evident in the work that caught the attention of Professor J. R. Firth, his mentor. This led him to make the following comment in his 1956 article on "Linguistic Analysis and Translation" in *For Roman Jakobson* (Mouton Press):

> Linguistics analysis coupled with translation offers a vast field for linguists and social anthropologists. The building of the bridge between the language under description and the language of translation will call for highly trained workers in both these disciplines with all their techniques. Quite soon we may expect scientific workers from the less developed communities, working on their own languages using English as the language of description and of translation. In a recent work on the *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People* by a young West African scholar, a good deal of modern linguistic analysis is stated as a basis for the translations given. . . . The author devotes a section to the language of the dirge under four headings: "Prosodic Features," "Vocabulary," "Collections," and "Sentence Structure," and an interesting statement of the musical features corresponding to the verbal linear units (p. 137).

He quotes relevant passages from the Introduction and Conclusion of the work that deal with the scope, methodology and linguistic approach to the translations.

In addition to writing other monographs such as his *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana* (1963) and several articles in this period (1952–61), Kwabena Nketia always kept the practical implications of his research for cultural development in Ghana in mind. He gave talks on radio and television and published articles in local newspapers and magazines whenever he was invited to do so. He did not have to worry about publishing in refereed journals, for the evidence of his scholarship was always clear in what he wrote and not in where he published. Instead of writing original Twi books as in the previous decade, his strategy in this and the following decade was to prepare annotated texts of traditional song types, drum language and poetic recitations which he recorded at the courts of Akan chiefs for use in language and literature courses in Twi.

Because this was a period of general cultural awakening in Ghana as well as a period of transition from colonial rule to independence, he took an active part in the cultural movements of that period and the work of the Arts Council of Ghana aimed at reinstating the traditional arts in contemporary life. He also became involved in the reorganization of the protocol for ceremonial functions of the new State of Ghana. He was able to bring the talking drums, traditional drum orchestras and horn ensembles to play ceremonial music and fanfares and to substitute these for the traditional Western military fanfares.

Kwabena Nketia did not confine his research and studies to Ghana. He visited Nigeria and other West African countries, and in the next decade, also East African

countries while on a consultant mission for UNESCO and the Government of Tanzania. He made good use of the University of Ghana's generous provision of study leave and free summer passages to the United Kingdom for library and archival research in order to keep abreast of scholarly writings on music and to read papers at conferences, particularly those of the International Folk Music Council, and later conferences of the International Society for Music Education and the International Music Council.

Since his academic background and experience were largely British and European, he accepted the award of a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in 1958 to spend a year in the United States. What the Foundation appeared to be particularly interested in at this time was not just his scholarship which seemed to be evident but his creative potential as a composer. Arrangements were, therefore, made for him to study advanced composition at the Juilliard School of Music and also at Columbia University with Henry Cowell. He decided on arrival that he would also take the organology course of Curt Sachs whose works he had read but whose use of the term "primitive" he had found distasteful. Meeting him in person and hearing all the unwritten rationale behind his interpretations made all the difference to Kwabena Nketia's understanding and appreciation of the particular phase of the history of ethnomusicology Curt Sachs represents.

Because he wanted to work with Melville Herskovits whom he had met in Ghana and also with Alan Merriam whom he was eager to know better after meeting him at a conference in Liege, he arranged to spend one quarter at Northwestern University to continue his studies in composition and audit courses in the Anthropology Department. Herskovits dealt with acculturation, while Merriam ran through all the basic topics in ethnomusicology in the one quarter seminar, supposedly for the benefit of Norma McLeod and himself, the only two people in the seminar.

In addition to formal courses, the Rockefeller Foundation arranged a number of visits and cultural experiences for Kwabena Nketia so that he could meet some of the ethnomusicologists whose works he had read and a few other American composers. He met Milton Babbitt and Mieczyslaw Kolinski in New York, visited Indiana University, Bloomington, where he had interesting discussions with George Herzog and saw the Archive of Traditional Music. His tour took him to the University of Illinois at Urbana, principally to see the School of Music and its Percussion Ensemble, and the laboratory of Harry Patch. He was sent to Princeton to meet Roger Sessions and then to the Institute of Ethnomusicology at UCLA where he had what he describes as "a delightful two weeks with Mantle Hood." Kwabena Nketia states that "he did not find a unified American School of Ethnomusicology during his visit, but a number of distinct interests and approaches with varying emphasis on music and culture." He also found "different analytical methods with varying emphasis on classification, and approaches to history and change." What the majority of the scholars he met had in common, and which they shared with scholars elsewhere, was "a strong commitment to studies that integrate music, society and culture from different conceptual and analytical perspectives, a commitment that enabled them, in spite of their differences, to share in the knowledge and insight gained by individual scholars working on different musical materials and cultures at home or abroad." The environment in which Kwabena Nketia worked in Ghana and the approaches it suggested had led him to a similar commitment in which the renewal of shared cultural experience and the building of interdisciplinary bridges were primary

goals of research, goals which raise methodological issues whose solutions may be determined by factors relative to one's background.

On his return to Ghana, Kwabena Nketia continued with his field research and writing along the lines he had previously explored, since it appeared from his encounters in the United States that what was needed was not a re-orientation but the identification and clarification of issues that an "insider" might take for granted. His monographs on *African Music in Ghana* (1962), *Folk Songs of Ghana* (1963), and a number of articles, including descriptions of his own approach to field studies and processes of contextualization, were written during this period which was largely a period of transition between active fieldwork and the subsequent assumption of administrative and teaching responsibilities in an organized research unit established at the beginning of the next decade. As far as his creative work was concerned, the most important change was a shift from his previous concentration on vocal music to instrumental music. However, as he was interested in writing new music that would be understood and appreciated by his own people rather than the Western world, he was very selective in the application of the compositional techniques he had acquired.

THE PERIOD OF ACTIVE EDUCATOR AND INTERPRETER OF AFRICAN CULTURAL VALUES IN MUSIC, 1961–PRESENT

When Kwabena Nketia was appointed Research Fellow in 1952, one of the expectations of Kofi Abrefa Busia, the Professor and Head of Department of Sociology who hired him, was that he would develop African materials and theoretical perspectives to a level that would permit the establishment of a separate Department for courses in African music and related arts at the degree level at the University of Ghana. Although such courses could have been instituted in the 1950s, it was not until the early 1960s that serious consideration was given to this, for until then the University of Ghana was a college in special relationship with the University of London and could not initiate degree courses or change the syllabuses of existing courses without some discussion and prior agreement of the appropriate bodies of the University of London, since the degrees that were awarded in those days were in fact degrees of the University of London. This constraint was accepted in order to ensure that the standards of the new College were comparable to those of older established universities and that the degrees it awarded subsequently as a full-fledged University would have the respect it deserved in academia.

The establishment of an Institute of African Studies in 1961 which was greatly expanded in concept and scope the following year provided a basis for such formal courses in African music. A Music and Related Arts section of the Institute was created alongside sections for African languages, history, social studies, and government and politics in Africa, each with full-time faculty. Kwabena Nketia assumed responsibility for the development of the Music and Related Arts section.

In addition to the inclusion of music as one of the options in the interdisciplinary graduate degree courses, a special two year diploma in African musicology was instituted for those who already had diplomas (or their equivalent) in Western music. Facilities for undergraduate studies were also provided almost immediately through the establishment of a School of Music, Dance and Drama with Kwabena Nketia as Director. To enable the school to benefit from the research of the Institute, it operated under the aegis of

the Institute except that it had a separate subvention from the Ministry of Culture who regarded it as part of its national development project for the arts. In addition the training of a National Dance Company was assigned to the Institute by the Government of Ghana, a project which enabled the Institute not only to recruit Ghanaian choreographers and traditional dance teachers and dancers, but also a team of master drummers and musicians drawn from the major ethnic groups in Ghana. Thus what one could only see by going out into the country could now be seen on campus. Needless to say the training program and the rehearsals of the Company attracted a lot of passers-by—as they still do—while the sound-scape of the campus changed considerably, for the drummers played for the dancers every working day, since they were full-time employees of the Institute. It also affected the cultural orientation of the University, for the music of academic processions formed during commencement could be provided, not by the Police Band as in the pre-independence period, but by the master drummers and flute ensemble of the Institute. The program also made a great impact on the country as a whole as the company performed in different parts of Ghana.

Three years after the Institute was set up, Kwabena Nketia succeeded Thomas Hodgkin as Director of both the Institute and the School of Music and Drama as well as the Dance Company, a position he held for fifteen years until he retired. Because of his interdisciplinary background, he could relate to the work of the different sections of the Institute as well as to the research projects of individual Research Fellows. This partly accounts for the variety of topics in cognate fields that appear in his bibliography, topics based on data accumulated from his fieldwork and other sources which are peripheral or extrinsic but contextual to music. These include his articles on "Worship in West African Religions," "Prayer at Kple Worship," "Historical Evidence in Ga Religious Music," "The Techniques of African Oral Literature," "The Linguistic Aspect of Style in African Languages," "Surrogate Languages of Africa," "Traditional Festivals in Ghana and Community Life," "African Traditions of Folklore," "The Creative Arts and the Community," and "Universities as Centers of the Creative Arts."

Kwabena Nketia responded in a similar manner in his creative work to the needs of the School of Music, Dance and Drama. Instead of writing extended pieces, he wrote short pieces for the *atenteben* (bamboo flute) ensemble as well as a few Western instruments. These pieces embodied African rhythmic and melodic usages that his students needed to master. It was for the same reason that he prepared the booklet *Preparatory Exercises in African Rhythm* (1963) and also wrote *Music, Dance and Drama* (1965). "The Interrelations of African Music and Dance" (1965) and other essays, as materials for course work in African area studies in the performing arts had to be provided from local resources.

During Kwabena Nketia's period of office as Director, the Institute played host to the International Folk Music Council when it decided to hold its first conference outside Europe and the United States. The Institute also hosted a number of American study groups and institutions that came to hold their summer sessions in Ghana.

A number of Western musicians, scholars and graduate students who came to Ghana in this period were affiliated with the Institute in order to facilitate their fieldwork and the opportunity of working with the master drummers and other musicians and dancers. It was during this period that Mantle Hood went to Ghana as Visiting Professor and made his film *Atumpan* with the help of the diploma students of the Institute. Another eminent musicologist who visited the program was Klaus Wachsmann. Because of his experience in Uganda, he insisted on going on a tour of northern Ghana

with the Diploma students to observe live performances and look out for traditional musical instruments and musicians. He found this fascinating and rewarding as his seminars which took place as they went along could always be based on what they observed together.

When the Institute was formally inaugurated by Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana on whose initiative a much bigger Institute than the University envisaged was established, he suggested, among other things, that it should establish relations not only with scholars in Europe but also with scholars of African descent in the Caribbean and the Americas in order to stimulate cross-fertilization of ideas and exchange of materials on topics of common interest. Kwabena Nketia tried to pursue this in his section of the Institute by (a) recruiting Afro-American teachers of music, dance and drama to the Institute and the School for short periods, and (b) establishing links with the Caribbean through the Institute of Jamaica and the African-Caribbean Institute. Among those who spent time in Ghana or visited for short periods are Maya Angelou, novelist and poet; Olly Wilson of the Department of Music at the University of California at Berkeley, who spent his one year Guggenheim Fellowship in Ghana; Eileen Southern who participated in a conference on African and Afro-American Music; Scott-Kennedy, Professor of Speech and Drama at Brooklyn College, New York; William Carter, then on the faculty of the Music Department at UCLA; and Neville Dawes, Director of the Institute of Jamaica.

Because similar programs were developed in the other disciplines, the Institute of African Studies became a base for international scholarship in African studies, a situation which stimulated the thinking and orientation of its African faculty, for often what visitors, especially Black Americans, wanted to know was not what they could find out from the works of Western scholars, but what Africans had to say about their own societies and cultures that was different or reflected insights that come from the analysis of experience, a viewpoint that had long guided Kwabena Nketia's own approach to the study of the music of his environment, and which seemed to have attracted a good deal of attention outside his own country. This is why in this period, besides receiving Western musicians and academic visitors, he participated actively in conferences and other activities abroad. As a result of this he was able to meet not only a large number of scholars outside the field of ethnomusicology but also renowned musicians whom, as an ethnomusicologist, he would never have met or come to know personally. In addition to those he met in the United States in 1958–59, he had the privilege of meeting several others in Europe and elsewhere, including Yehudi Menuhin, Ravi Shankar, Dallapicola, Kabalevsky, Zoltan Kodaly and Carl Orff who took personal interest in his research work and aspirations for music education in Africa.

Kwabena Nketia's contributions abroad were not confined to those he met at conferences or during lecture tours. He served on the Executive Board of the International Folk Music Council from 1959–1970, and the Board of Directors of the International Society for Music Education from 1967–1974, acting as Vice President of that Society from 1968–1974. He has also been a member of the Scientific Board of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation since its inauguration in 1963, and an active participant in the work of the International Music Council (UNESCO) since 1962 when he was elected for a four-year term as an Individual Member, and a member of the Executive Board from 1971–1977. He was elected an Individual Member for the second time in 1978 and Member of Honor the following year, a position which virtually made him a life member of the organization.

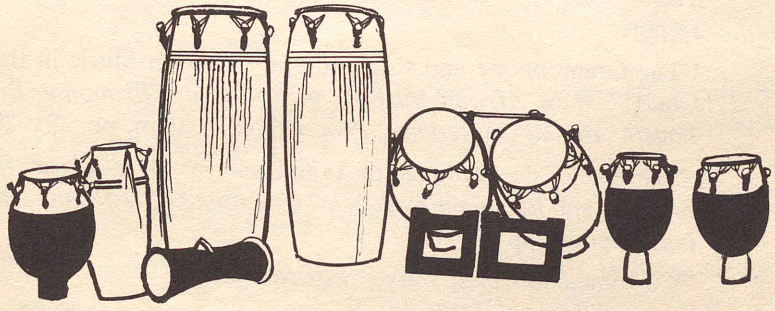
Participating in the activities of all these international music organizations has encouraged Kwabena Nketia to reflect on the international dimension of his studies and to bring an African perspective to discussions of common problems. It has also enabled him now and then to go beyond the narrow theoretical confines of ethnomusicology which tend to focus on anthropological issues (such as the concept of music as culture, cognitive foundations of music, interrelations of music and other aspects of culture) rather than on the practical realities of the world of music or problems that have become the major concern of so-called sociomusicologists. In this regard the pragmatic outlook of the International Music Council has been of particular interest to Kwabena Nketia because of his inclination to relate to development issues in his own country. Accordingly, investigating into the practical issues of music and musical life or music and national cultural policies as well as the role and status of the musician in Africa today in both traditional and contemporary settings, problems of promotion, preservation and presentation, changing patterns of performer-audience relationship, new concepts of patronage, the role of the mass media, the legal protection of traditional and contemporary music and similar topics of contemporary relevance, or investigations into the provenance of music and modes of expression in terms of ethnic, national, transnational and international dimensions form part of his agenda for African musicology, for these cannot be ignored by the African musicologist sensitive to the transformations that are taking place in Africa today in both rural and urban areas.

The mode of operation of the International Music Council has also been important for Kwabena Nketia, for it is through the council that he has been able to relate in practical terms to the African region as a whole on an ongoing basis. He has been Chairman of the African Regional Secretariat of the Council ever since it was first established in 1972, and also Chairman of the African Music Rostrum organized in cooperation with URTNA (Union of African National Radio and Television Organizations). The Rostrum meets every other year at the meeting of the General Assembly of URTNA (which is held in different African countries) to listen to tape recordings of music submitted by African radio stations in order to select materials in different categories determined before hand for recommendation for broadcasting by Radio stations in Africa as well as members of the European Broadcasting Union and Radio organizations in other parts of the world participating in this exchange program. Materials presented at the Rostrum by each country are generally not available commercially.

Kwabena Nketia's involvement in such programs has of course not diminished his research interest or detracted from his primary role as a scholar. As one reads his recent articles (1980–86) one is struck by the increasing attention he seems to be giving to methodology and theoretical issues—articles such as "The Juncture of the Social and Musical: The Methodology of Cultural Analysis" which deals with the anthropological nexus, "The Aesthetic Dimension in Ethnomusicology" which reviews basic approaches to the subject and the methodology they imply, "Universal Perspectives in Ethnomusicology" which reviews the comparative approaches that have evolved thus far and the follow-up that may be considered, and "Integrating Objectivity and Experience in Ethnomusicology" which validates the experimental approach to music research.

Perhaps what Kwabena Nketia is doing in the reflective phase of his career is nothing more than making explicit what has been implicit in his writings and lectures, or sharing insights derived from his own field experiences as well as his encounters in academia and the intellectual and practical world of music. One gets the impression, however,

that he does not just reflect on the past even in his historical reviews (such as his recent reviews of African musicology) but also looks forward to the task ahead, for often what a teacher or scholar accomplishes is not just what he is able to do himself but also what he is able to stimulate or achieve in the work of responsive colleagues and others who come into contact with him. One can say that he has not only been building or suggesting—interdisciplinary bridges and bridges of understanding. In his role as interpreter, he has himself been a bridge, both in academia and the intellectual world of music, between Africa and the West. With the publication of the Chinese version of *The Music of Africa* and growing interest in Japan in African and African-derived music, perhaps he might also become a bridge between Africa and Asia in our contemporary world of music.



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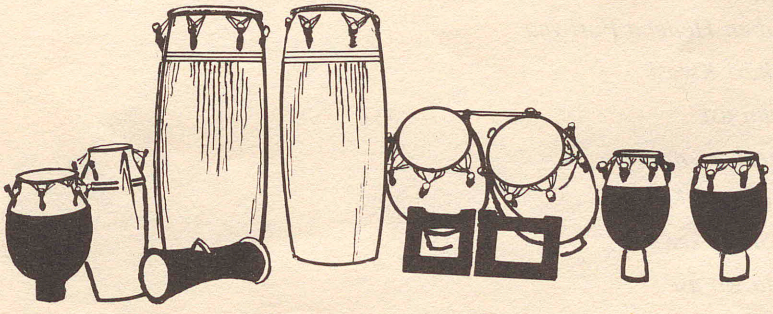
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COMPOSITIONS 1942–1965

CHORAL WORKS

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2.	*Monkamfo no*	(SATB)
3.	*Hann no bɛda adi*	(SATB)
4.	*Onyame ɔbɔadeɛ*	(SATB)
5.	*Nsuro*	(SATB)
6.	*Nante yie*	(SATB)
7.	*Mmɔborɔ Asɛm*	(SATB)
8.	*Yɛn Agorɔ yi*	(SATB; also TTBB)
9.	*Baamo*	(SATB; also TTBB)
10.	*ɔyamuɔnwonofo nko myi dɔm*	(SATB; also TTBB)
11.	*Nkyirimma hyɛ bi (Edeɛn na me man hwehwɛ no me hɔ)*	(SATB)
12.	*Akura akyere Agyinamoa*	(TTBB)
13.	*Buronya aba*	(SATB)
14.	*Deɛ ɔman wɔ no*	(SATB)

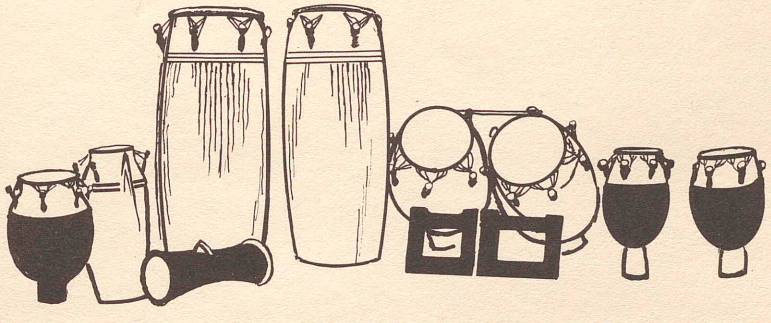
SOLO SONGS WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

15. *Wonya amane a na wohu wo dɔfo*
16. *Yaanom montie*
17. *Onipa Dasani mayeyi ni?*
18. *Onipa bɛyɛɛ bi*
19. *Maforo pata hunu*
20. *Mmerɛ nyina nsɛ*
21. *Mpere nto Akyamfoɔ tuo*
22. *Merekɔse Hwan ni ?*
23. *Mo Agya no a ɔɔkɔ*
24. *Dwaben Heneba Foriwaa*
25. *Kaakari Kwasi*
26. *ɔkwan asi*
27. *Nnansa ne nnɛ*
28. *Kwasi Boɔ Mo*
29. *Wo ho te sɛn?*
30. *Mɛda wo ase*

31. *Aprannaa sa me*
32. *ɔbarima Nifahene*
33. *Obi reba a, mane me*
34. *Me wura, gya me kwan*
35. *Asuo, meresen*

INSTRUMENTAL WORKS

36. *Three Piano Pieces*
    Volta Fantasy
    Contemplation
    Dagarti Work Song
37. *Playtime* (Six Piano Pieces in African Rhythm for the Young Musician)
    Playtime, Owora, Crossroad, Rays of Hope, Libation,
    Builsa Work Song
38. *Four Flute Pieces*
39. *Suite for Flute and Piano* (seven movements)
40. *Bolga Sonata* (for violin and piano)
41. *Antubam* (Dirge for cello and piano)
42. *Quartet (Nos. 1 & 2) for Atenteben* (bamboo flutes)



TRIBUTES

TRIBUTE

I express my personal gratification as well as institutional enthusiasm for the publication of the Kwabena Nketia *Festschrift*. His contributions to this field need no special elaboration. Suffice it to say that while we enjoyed his personal presence here on the UCLA campus, he represented not only a towering intellectual force within our Africanist community, but was a delightful and supportive colleague.

Kwabena Nketia is a universal scholar. No single country or institution or combination of countries and institutions can lay claim to have facilitated his contributions. We were pleased beyond description that Kwabena spent much of his career in this country at UCLA, as a member of the UCLA African Studies Center. But the marvelously international group of scholars assembled to participate in this *Festschrift* testifies vividly to the fact that this institution was simply a vehicle for his scholarly contributions.

In the course of working on this volume, we have had much occasion to explore the nature of the relationship between Kwabena and his colleagues and students. I have discovered that it would involve not the slightest exaggeration to suggest that Kwabena is revered by both his peers and his students. I am personally grateful to have been a small part in the public expression of that sentiment.

Michael F. Lofchie, Director
African Studies Center
UCLA

TRIBUTE

Early in the academic year 1968, when it became apparent that Klaus Wachsmann would leave UCLA, I began to seek an arrangement that would be feasible for J. H. Nketia to come to the Institute of Ethnomusicology. In the beginning, he was free to come to the University any quarter of the year convenient to him. Later, he became a regular full-time member of the faculty.

During those collegial years he was in charge of many of our plans that related to Africa. He was then and is now a close friend and confidant, a relationship that began in 1962, when he was a house guest for three weeks while we worked together on plans for his graduate program in Ghana. Field work in 1962 and again in 1963–64 allowed me to confirm beyond any doubt that Kwabena was the foremost African in the field of ethnomusicology, a reputation he demonstrated so well at UCLA.

Mantle Hood
Senior Distinguished Professor of Ethnomusicology
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Former Director, Institute of Ethnomusicology
UCLA

TRIBUTE

Kwabena Nketia was professor of music at UCLA from 1968 until 1983, too short a time. His early retirement from the University and relocation in Pittsburgh left a gap in our faculty that can never be filled by a single replacement.

It was because of Kwabena that UCLA solidified the eminence of its holdings, research, and academic program in African music. But his effect upon the department was much larger; he took an active role in the formation of the ethnomusicological trust within UCLA's doctoral program in music education; similarly, his contribution to students and faculty in systematic musicology was seminal and broadly influential. And there were few gatherings of faculty or students that did not benefit from his calm, gentle, yet penetrating comments.

William Hutchinson
Associate Dean, College of Fine Arts
Former Chair, Department of Music
UCLA

PART TWO

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF J. H. KWABENA NKETIA

INTRODUCTION

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

ASPECTS OF PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

MUSIC AND GENDER

MUSICAL STYLE AND COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY: An Assessment of the Field

JACQUELINE COGDELL DJEDJE AND WILLIAM G. CARTER

When the term African musicology was coined in 1966 by Klaus Wachsmann, he saw the field in a state of change (Wachsmann 1966:62). Towards the late 1950s, he had been convinced that musicologists should retire and that anthropologists should take over (Wachsmann 1959:80). He felt this way because of the limitations that he believed existed in the study of non-Western music, which "produced a drift first toward the sounds of music and then toward music *per se*" (Wachsmann 1966:61). Yet in the mid-1960s, this emphasis had shifted and the change was particularly evident in the study of African music. There had arisen a dialogue between African musicians and Western scholars in which music was the primary subject, rather than one of the secondary ones (Wachsmann 1966:62). In this scheme, there was still room for anthropology. In his words, "it is simply that anthropology has come to serve musicology, rather than the reverse" (Wachsmann 1966:64).

Several other changes were apparent at the time. In the West, an era of re-evaluation had become commonplace. Western musicians and composers were questioning their own past and searching for new modes of expression. As a result, a new situation arose in which African composers and their Western colleagues had similar problems to face and students in musicology searched for procedures and understanding along parallel lines (Wachsmann 1966:62).

Even more noteworthy were the changes that had occurred in Africa and the approach that was used by Westerners in studying African music. No longer were African performers and listeners cast into a passive role on which Western attention and curiosity could focus. Rather, Africans had become more active in the study and destiny of their musical traditions. As administrators, researchers, and performers, they made clear and thoughtful statements about their culture, giving greater insight to the workings of the society that few Westerners could ever hope to understand. The era of nationalism encouraged both critical thinking and experimentation in the performance and development of new musical forms.

Increasing importance was given to the creative individual. Not only did traditional performers and composers begin to receive acknowledgement for their contributions, but certain individuals of African descent—for example, George Ballanta, Ephraim Amu, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, Seth Cudjoe, Joseph Kygambiddwa, Ekundayo Phillips, and Clement da Cruz—began to be looked upon as innovators and spokespersons for the larger

community because of their research experiences (also see Nketia 1986). In addition to an interest in biographical studies, it also became important to understand the interrelationship between individuals and society and the pressures that helped to mold each. Furthermore, because of the emergence of research centers and institutions devoted to the study of African music, all of these interests were given primary importance and consideration in planning by most governments throughout Africa.

In spite of the continuous usage of the term African musicology by Wachsmann in subsequent publications (1967, 1969, and 1970), the concept did not gain wide acceptance. By 1984, however, it could be argued that there was justification for the use of the term because of its precedence "in other collocations such as African linguistics, African historiography, African archaeology—all of which refer to African area specializations within the specified disciplines. Thus, the expression African musicology could be "used in a similar manner for African area specialization within the disciplines of musicology, and as a focus for the collaboration of scholars with research interest in the musical cultures of Africa" (Nketia and DjeDje 1984: xii).

J. H. Kwabena Nketia believes strongly in the tenets of the term African musicology. On the one hand, he sees it as an area of scholarly activity in which Africans and non-Africans who share a common concern for knowledge about the music of Africa can participate, each from his own perspective, background, and interest but linked by common field interests and a common concern for the collection, analysis, and systematization of data. Moreover, he believes that "African musicology would encourage:

1. critical and analytical studies that examine or exemplify musicological issues in the light of field data;
2. study that take into account the history, archaeology, and ethnology of the geocultural region of Africa or specific areas in which field work is undertaken;
3. development studies that respond to the intellectual, sociocultural, or political environment in which music is cultivated and practiced; and
4. the dissemination of information and materials on African music both within and outside Africa—that is, wherever there is a readership and a public for live performances or recorded African music.

The goals of African musicology would thus be scholarly and humanistic not only in terms of its quest for a knowledge and understanding of African man as music maker and music user but also in regard to practical issues related to music as language or a mode of communication, to music as an object of aesthetic interest, and to music as culture" (Nketia 1986:216).

Without dialogue and collaboration between scholars in Africa and in the West, both Wachsmann and Nketia knew that the spirit of African musicology would dissipate and that its benefits to all would be diminished. In a 1986 publication, Nketia writes:

> Because African musicology is a field of international scholarship, the need for dialogue cannot be overemphasized; for the African scholar and his colleague may be studying the same musical cultures, observing the same events, using the same teachers and informants, even though they may not always ask the same questions or seek solutions to the same problems. In this regard the initiative must lie not only with African scholars who are already disposed to engage in such dialogue but even more so with their

> Western colleagues who may need to modify attitudes inherited from the nineteenth century and the colonial era when scholarship was the exclusive concern of the West while other peoples and cultures merely provided field laboratories. There is certainly much that can enrich African musicology from the perspectives that scholars with different backgrounds bring to it. One can only hope, therefore, that collaboration similar to that established by Africanists in other disciplines such as history, archaeology, and linguistics will emerge in the near future in the field of African musicology, a relative newcomer in African area studies (1986:250).

We believe that this *Festschrift* is a landmark in collaborative effort. In the first volume alone, there are contributions by scholars from Africa, Europe, and the United States. While most have been trained in the field of ethnomusicology with emphasis in various related disciplines, a few have backgrounds in composition and other world cultures. Thus, the perspective that is taken here is broad and all-encompassing, which is indicative of the tremendous breadth and scope of this area of study.

CURRENT TRENDS

Current trends in African musicology are quite diverse as exemplified by the studies in this volume. Not only is the discipline continuing in the tradition as documented by Wachsmann more than two decades ago, but new developments have arisen. For example, more scholars are using the study of African musicology as a basis for developing theoretical models and concepts which go beyond issues that deal with specific regional problems. Rather, their findings have wider implications to the development of the field of ethnomusicology. Works by Nissio Fiagbedzi and John M. Chernoff illustrate this trend in interpreting data. As a result of changes in the economic life as well as the social and political organization of African populations in recent years, we see extensive diversification in the role of women in African society. The studies by Lester P. Monts and Cynthia E. Schmidt are concerned with some of these issues as they relate to music. The persistent examination of musical and performance traditions which heretofore have not been documented is making Africa one of the most researched areas in the entire world. Although much has been done, we are encouraged to see that this trend has been continued by researchers (Gerhard Kubik, Artur Simon, and Tunji Vidal), for the battle has not been won. Interest in stylistic features (Cynthia Tse Kimberlin, Gerhard Kubik, Artur Simon, and Wayne Slawson) continues to be a significant dimension of African musicology, which is good; for it is only when we "build up a system of regional or 'internal' references that one can see how a particular African usage compares with other widely known African usages" (Nketia and DjeDje 1984: xv). One of the more interesting developments in African musicology is the impact that it has made on various individuals. While it inspires some to want to learn more about a particular cultural group, instrument, or musical style, it causes others to be creative in different ways. In Ben A. Aning's work, we see how a traditional performer becomes a musical creator not only because of the changes that have occurred in his own environment, but also because of his exposure to other world musical traditions. As composers, Wayne Slawson and Gertrude Rivers Robinson have been inspired by the rules, features, and operations of African musicology to write new music in a spirit that is uniquely their own.

The studies in this volume of the *Festschrift* are divided into four sections: 1) Theoretical Perspectives; 2) Aspects of Performance Practice; 3) Music and Gender; and 4) Musical Style and Composition. In the first two articles—"Toward a Philosophy of Theory in Ethnomusicological Research" by Nissio Fiagbedzi and "The Relevance of Ethnomusicology to Anthropology: Strategies of Inquiry and Interpretation" by John M. Chernoff, the authors call for new methods by which one should approach the study of ethnomusicology. Using his work among the Anlo-Ewe of Ghana as a basis for discussion, Fiagbedzi argues the case for a philosophy of ethnomusicological theory to complement the research that has already been done in grammatical and speculative theory. Chernoff is concerned with two issues. Not only does he believe that investigators should experiment with new research methods that would bring the field of ethnomusicology in line with broad intellectual trends in social studies, but he also suggests that scholars should look for alternative strategies of inquiry and interpretation of ethnomusicological data. With the use of an example from the Dagbamba culture of Ghana, he demonstrates an approach that one might use.

The second section includes four case studies that are concerned with the dynamics of music making on several different levels. Ben A. Aning's work, "Kakraba Lobi: Master Xylophonist of Ghana," is yet another example of the continued interest in the creative individual within African musicology. He describes the musical development and significance of a contemporary traditional solo *artiste* who has gained international stature. In this account we see how the traditional performer is conscious of artistic standards and driven to maintain a high level of creativity. What is more, we get an intimate view of a traditional artist creatively adjusting to the dynamics inherent in the Western-styled audience-performer context.

In "The Role and Function of Music at Yoruba Festivals," Tunji Vidal gives a detailed account of the structure of festivals in contemporary Nigeria. Using the *Olojo* Festival as a model, he also explains the role and meaning of music during certain stages of the event. Not only does he examine instrumental types and song texts, but emphasis is given to the dramatic component of the festival, particularly that which is played by the king, or *Ooni*. We learn that music does far more than entertain; it is an integral part of the dramatic and artistic expression essential to social and cultural unity.

In the study, "*Àlọ́*—Yoruba Chantefables: An Integrated Approach Towards West African Music and Oral Literature," Gerhard Kubik examines one of the more important genres in Yoruba literature. Taking a holistic approach, much attention is given to stylistic elements—for example, tonal and harmonic patterns, speech tones and pitch lines, time line patterns, phrasing, timbre sequence and accentuation, and form. He is able to show how Yoruba performance traditions are similar and different from that which are found among neighboring groups in West Africa. In addition to the information on style, Kubik demonstrates that an investigation of the text of the stories and songs can provide important information about pre-colonial cultural history and social behavior of a society.

"Trumpet and Flute Ensembles of the Berta Peoples in the Sudan" by Artur Simon introduces us to a musical culture which has only been marginally investigated by ethnomusicologists. He gives a description of the organization and structural elements of several instrumental groups: the *waza* (trumpet) ensemble, the *bal naggaro* (flute and drum) ensemble, and the *bɔlo shuru* (flute) ensemble. From the analysis of the music, Simon suggests that the performance style used by the Berta appears to be characteristic of music that is found in the northern zone of East Africa.

The issue of social change and gender are the concerns of Lester P. Monts and Cynthia E. Schmidt both of whom consider the roles of women in Liberian musical societies. In "Vai Women's Roles in Music, Masking, and Ritual Performance," Monts illustrates that musical traditions which were once demarcated according to gender in Vai society have seen modifications because of the changes that have occurred in the larger society. Through his analysis of song types, musical status, the role of women in instrumental and vocal ensembles and ritual performance, we clearly see the interrelationship between music and culture as it exists in the life of modern Africa. Schmidt's study, "Womanhood, Work and Song Among the Kpelle of Liberia," not only includes a discussion of the importance of music during various stages of cooperative work and the *sande* secret society, but she also examines the structural components of vocal musical ensembles.

In the final section of this volume of the *Festschrift*, the authors take three different approaches to the problem of musical style and composition. Cynthia Tse Kimberlin's work, "Ornaments and Their Classification as a Determinant of Technical Ability and Musical Style," addresses the notion of musical norms in terms of style, musical ability, and skill as found among the *azmari* of Ethiopia. Using one master musician as a model, she explains that musical ability and style can be determined by examining the use of ornaments and how they are articulated.

Gertrude Rivers Robinson and Wayne Slawson illustrate the impact of their knowledge of the African musical experience on their creations as Western composers. Slawson is interested in musical innovation—methods that one might use to design new musical structures. Thus, his study, "Features, Musical Operations, and Composition: A Derivation from Ewe Drum Music" provides an analysis of instrumental surrogation correlations to verbalized speech in Ewe *adzogbo* utilizing linguo-mimetic functions and the linguistic notion of "feature." His approach signifies the art of composition, *per se*, either as a universal method or as a means of manipulating borrowed music in one's own compositions. Indeed it may open the door for composers to discover the underlying categories which isolate something of the authenticity and power of the "borrowed" original.

Gertrude Rivers Robinson presents two original works, entitled "Moods for Flute and Piano, I and II, as her offering to Nketia. Not only do the pieces reflect her development as a composer, but they are influenced by the concepts and techniques of musical organization that she has absorbed through years of study in ethnomusicology.

In summary, we see that African musicology is characterized by a diversification in musical scholarship. As this collection of studies demonstrates, researchers are concerned with theory and philosophy, application and methodology, as well as compositional models. Musical ethnography continues to be the mainstay of the discipline for such studies are fundamental as a distinguishing factor in this area of specialization.

We see, too, that African musicology has much to offer its parent discipline, ethnomusicology, and the study of musical cultures of the world. The accumulated knowledge about the music and culture of Africa parallels that of other music areas and, in many instances, the interpretations and insights based on the study of the African experience provide models to be employed elsewhere.

As Nketia has emphasized in many of his works, it is only through a holistic approach to the study of African music that one can understand fully the interworkings and creative forces that are involved in it as a discipline. Because issues in African musicology are both theoretical and practical, research and investigations are needed in all

areas. Furthermore, as Richard Schlatter points out, the humanist scholar does not only analyse and describe, he reassesses, reintegrates, rediscovers and makes available "the materials and the blueprints with which his contemporaries can build their own culture" (1963:vii). It is believed that the studies that have been selected for this volume and the contributions that will appear in Volume Two of the *Festschrift* exemplify this richness, diversity, and vitality of the field.

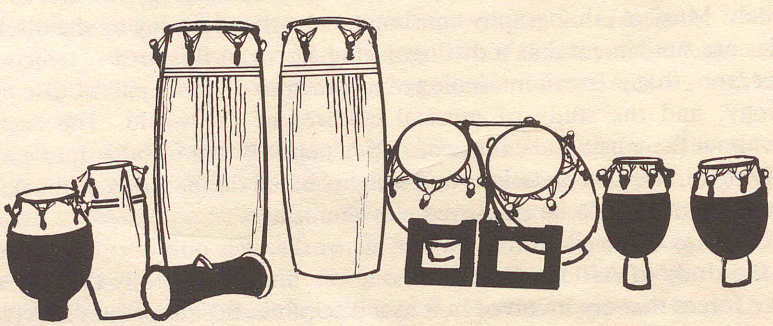
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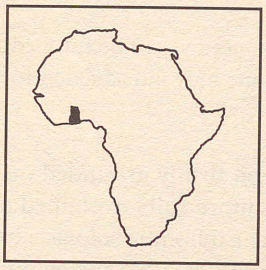
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1

TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY OF THEORY IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH

NISSIO FIAGBEDZI



STATEMENT: My first contact with Professor J. H. Nketia was through a letter in which he invited me to help teach music in the newly established School of Music, Dance and Drama, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. This was in 1962. I had no idea who it was that suggested me to him. However, nothing came of it.

Two years later, it was when I entered the University of Ghana to do a post-Diploma course in African music that I met Professor Nketia for the first time. For the next two years (1964–1966), he became my teacher. At the end of the course it was he who signed my African music thesis—*Sogbadzi Songs: A Study of Yeve Music*—as supervisor. At this time in my career, I also had the good fortune of meeting Professor Mantle Hood and Dr. Klaus Wachsmann both of whom taught me for short periods as Visiting Professors to the Institute of African Studies. To me this meeting was a valuable one, for whereas both at the time represented to me carriers of etic points of view no matter how hard they tried to avoid it—and on many occasions they succeeded—Professor Nketia embodied in my thinking the insider's view. The effect of this exposure was the development in me of an independent integrity of mind. I believe I still have it, and I think I owe it to Professor Nketia's vision in providing the golden opportunity to interact with brilliant minds in the field of African musicology quite early in my career as a research student.

When in 1970 I joined the academic staff of the Music Department, Professor Nketia had already been the Director of the Institute of African Studies and the School of Music, Dance and Drama for at least five years. As Director he drew around him students and cultural scientists from all over the world, and he was Visiting Professor at UCLA where he went every year to lecture. Again, the effect for me was a most welcome academic atmosphere of an international character that produced an intellectual ferment in the Institute and School. Many were the times that Professor and I exchanged views on various issues in African music research at Legon, during his African music seminars at UCLA and informally at other times. One such occasion was in 1974 when Professor invited me (I was then a doctoral student at UCLA) to help him with some material he was working on for his latest book, *The Music of Africa*. It was an encouragement to discover later that the little that I was able to do for his purpose was enough to make him cite my name in the Preface. On another occasion at UCLA, he asked me to try a hand at a record review that came to his notice and took the trouble to express his opinion on my effort. The review was published in *Ethnomusicology* 18(3), 1974.

Academically Professor Nketia stands out as one of the foremost original thinkers in the field of African musicology. In my own work I often find myself turning to his ideas, scrutinizing them for what they are, discovering the depth of insight contained in them, and thinking about how some of them could be more fully elaborated and sharpened to serve the purposes of scientific explanation in African musicology.

Two examples come readily to mind. First, the aesthetic model of a reference system of artistic, social and philosophical values which, transmitted through socialization and participation, operates independent of musical structure even though its exponents are embodied in the material and structure of music—a reference system which to him derives its validation partly from the aesthetic guidance embedded in the authority and ideas of recognized leaders of society and partly from the artistic integrity of the art object, the degree to which the object meets the social and artistic ideals of society. Second, the notion of a sociomusical juncture which reflects the true character of most African musical events and draws attention by implication to the necessity of distilling musical meaning from complementary angles—an eclectic position aimed at capturing the essence of African music and the related arts.

Undoubtedly *The Music of Africa* is an eloquent pointer to the need yet to be fulfilled for in-depth regional studies of African music. In my view the work is the only introduction to the subject with a breadth of coverage yet to be matched. □

Since its early beginnings the field of ethnomusicology has been firmly grounded on an anthropological view which stipulates that the art of music is more fully explained and understood relative to the culture of which it is an integral part. Ethnomusicologists have usually been "interested in understanding music from the standpoint of its sociocultural context—why a music is used as it is, what a culture expresses about itself through its music, and what the music expresses about a culture" (Jackson 1985:3).

Nevertheless the various approaches to ethnomusicological explanation have over the years tended to relate music and culture in diverse ways: in effect, the diversity in conceptual and methodological approach appears to reveal a conspicuous absence of a paradigm that would enable the analyst to interpret musical facts within the wider context of culture.

African musicologists are not unaware of the problem: to some, this problem lies in the absence of "a consistent methodology" derived from *common goals* (my emphasis) which recognize the *centrality of music* (my emphasis) (Nketia 1981) or in the failure to identify and describe "technical processes" at work in music and culture from which conclusions would be drawn (Arom 1981). Perhaps it might not be too far-fetched even to think that Nettl's (1983) most recent suggestion of approaching ethnomusicology as "the science of music history" stems from the need to stress the fusion of the ethnographic/ethnological and the historical dimensions of ethnomusicology, in order to rescue the science from its over-emphasis on the contemporary and from its apparent inattention to the historicity of the musics of the non-Western world.

Admittedly, consistency in methodology, a unified definitive approach that fuses the ethnological and the "musicological," remains to be fully worked out in concrete studies. But the need for a conceptual framework for the development of methodology must not be left unattended to: on the contrary, our continued serious attention should be focussed on definitive, investigatory and analytic approaches such as would enable the science of ethnomusicology to develop a viable paradigm.

In this essay, I propose to argue a case for a conceptual framework under the rubric: "philosophy of ethnomusicological theory." First, I shall attempt to define theory in general and in relation to music study; next, I shall distinguish between music theory and philosophy of ethnomusicological theory; and then proceed to show the sense in which the latter is discernible in ethnomusicological thinking and research. Finally, I shall indicate the need for developing this area of inquiry and knowledge to the mutual benefit of the practicing musician and the African musicologist.

THEORY

It seems admissible to assume that theory represents but one of the domains of any field of inquiry. Theory may be conceptualized as an abstractive view in explanation of, and not merely descriptive of, a phenomenon. As such, theory takes cognizance of bare facts from which it differs and for which it accounts by relating them in a way that reveals the nature or character of that which it is an explanation of. Usually theory allows for further articulation, elaboration, modification, or specification. Often, there may be more than one theory accounting for a set of facts; and where one is found to be more productive than competing alternatives, it may become paradigmatic in the sense of displaying, as a model, a greater capacity for generating new perspectives to old and new problems thereby yielding the means for a better understanding of the phenomenon to which it is applied.

In respect to music, theory may be thought of in terms of the grammatical and the speculative. Grammatical theory comprehends the rule or body of rules prescriptive or descriptive of musical organization and performance. On this view, it includes all systematizations of melodic and multipart techniques as well as techniques of formal structure, and of composition and performance that would on application yield musical products in the idiomatic style from which the rules derive.

In African music, this type of theory may involve rules of polyrhythmic and formal structures, rules of polyphony, polarity, melodic design, expectations governing the aesthetics and context of performance, and so forth. Thus rules of polyrhythmic structure may require that instruments of a drum ensemble play individual lines of rhythm aligned first to a complex of repetitive patterns played by bells and rattles and then severally to one another in a way that maintains rhythmic points of synchronization as a framework of reference (Fiagbedzi 1979:3). Or, again rules of structural design may prescribe sensitivity to the demands of the context of performance or to inherent limitations of particular instruments such as are used in hocket techniques of music making.

As conceived, grammatical theory includes what Palisca (1963:112ff) identifies in Western music as "practical" and "creative" theory aimed at the training of musicians and composers generally, and (I would add in the context of African musicology) of performers as well, but subsumes both categories under one rubric since the term "grammatical" underscores more explicitly the common prescriptive function of the two. The question may arise as to whether grammatical theory has to be written to be identifiable as such. Undoubtedly if it is written, it would be readily and publicly available—one can more easily identify it as a source, and be able to consult it if one wishes. On the other hand, it is probably unlikely that there can be any tradition of music without rules and procedures by which the music is organized.

In oral traditions where theory is often unwritten, it is probable that grammatical theory would as defined be implicit in the rules which the music practitioners recognize and make their music by. Further, traditions of music and music making are usually transmitted from generation to generation by example and verbal explanation. Unless it can be proved that this transmission takes place in some societies solely by example and by no other means, the argument must remain tenable that societies with oral traditions of music do verbalize about the rules of music making even if it is in a baldly assertive manner without much rational elaboration. To the extent that such verbalization does focus on and is in explanation of music organization, grammatical theory must be assumed to constitute an integral aspect of the musical tradition of a given society.

In contradistinction to the grammatical, speculative theory aims to discover meaning, significance or value in music and musical activity which transcends in point of rigorous articulation the conceptions of ordinary folk valuation. Thus its area of inquiry comprehends problems of musical value, modes of musical meaning (Nketia 1981), modalities evolved in societies for their communication, as well as aesthetic experience generally.

In its speculative endeavor, speculative theory may be conceived of as ultimately comprising systems of thought for the understanding of music based on *definable philosophical positions and argument* in terms of which the individual systems can have validity. For example in trying to rationalize what could constitute the most fundamental principle characterizing musical meaning, a system given to the elaboration of an eclectic view may have to base its argument on empirical evidence relating music to other arts and forms of behavior by means of which meaning may normally be communicated. As Nketia (1975:11–13) points out:

> In African societies, a person is said to understand a piece of music when he is able to relate or respond to it in certain culturally defined ways. . . . Meaning is, therefore, related to the musical experience itself (which) consists of both what is derived from the music itself and what is occasioned by it in the musical situation. . . . This meaning may be communicated in several ways: through internal properties of music, expressive changes in them which may be mirrored in observable behaviour; through creative expressions of verbal texts, the nexus between music and dance movement and between music and the context of use.

Evidently, the eclectic viewpoint advanced in the foregoing does admit to basic ethnographic description; facts may be gathered about music, musical activity, forms of artistic expression such as dance, poetic and other modes of verbal expression, observable behavior and context of use in musical situations. The list of possible ethnographic features could further include, say, body arts, patterns of spatial movement or formations, sequence and rhythm of events as well as events of a private/public, ritual/non-ritual, processional/in situ types with variations or repetitions of them.

Likewise, the notion of meaning could call for the abstraction of those principles of the ethnologic kind that could account for music and musical situations in relation to the culture of a given African society; show up explicitly what the individual culture could reveal about itself from its various artistic and sociocultural expressions in given musical situations; and, if the data so permits, indicate the morphological or typological classifications that could be established cross-culturally or by way of historical reconstruction.

When compared with the notion of the aesthetic attitude which forms the basis of Western aesthetic speculation, the recommendation by Nketia to find meaning from "several complementary angles" embedded in a musical situation can be seen to have derived from a fundamental view of music as an integrated art in opposition to the Western view which usually separates music from whatever extramusical context there may be. And whereas both points of view would probably admit to the pertinence of an empirical foundation to the argument, conclusions based on the eclectic view cannot claim to be generalizations applicable across cultures in the sense scientific laws are, without shedding the implications of their cultural reference; nor would it be justifiable to regard Western aesthetics as applicable; for, it would seem that among other factors the behavioral demands of the concert hall and the widely disseminated cultus of the aesthetic attitude have both contributed somewhat in making the cultural condition of Western art music peculiar to its social milieu and thus made its aesthetic theories inapplicable across cultures. Thus it would seem that the philosophical position on which systems of speculative theory can be founded in ethnomusicological explanation cannot meet the test of universal applicability such as obtains in scientific explanation. And if it cannot, then such a philosophical position has to be different; and in relation to speculative theory this fundamental basis needs to be defined.

PHILOSOPHY OF THEORY

While in its broad sweep speculative theory takes in the entire field of theory other than the strictly grammatical, a third but inclusive area, the philosophy of theory in ethnomusicology, may be isolated and identified with the rigorous and systematic elaboration of concepts and propositions in terms of which all manner of theory and verbalization concerning music and musical experience are formulated including the perspective(s) from which ethnomusicological explanation is made. It is to be thought of as a critical philosophy of music or an aspect thereof; and in its reliance on philosophical method of inquiry it is to be distinguished from music criticism and speculative theory. It should in the ideal clarify by analysis the idea of ethnomusicology and the basic principles and tenets governing ethnomusicological explanation showing fundamental differences between it and other scientific explanation; for, by its very nature, the science of ethnomusicology investigates the phenomenon and forms of artistic expressions rather than natural phenomena. In effect this approach would mean critically examining what ethnomusicological explanation entails, what its preoccupations, standards of rationality and objectives are or can be, as well as the assumptions on which it can justifiably rest. It would also mean searching for other modes of inquiry and analysis than those that may have become normal to ethnomusicology; for then and only then will a viable paradigm emerge that will advance ethnomusicological research and knowledge.

In its pursuit of clarity of thought through a detailed examination of theoretical views, philosophy of theory will also be concerned with the most general categories within which we think about music—categories such as musical substance, manifest qualities, experience and meaning in terms of themselves and in relation to cognate categories of thought.

In philosophy this branch of inquiry is normally considered the province of metaphysics; and just as present day metaphysics embraces the entire range of categories applicable in ordinary language and in individual sciences (Harré 1971:30), in philosophy

of theory the focus will be on studying the relation between concepts used in ethnomusicology as against those used in ordinary language and other sciences in order to promote clear thinking in ethnomusicological explanation.

In practice this may mean the comparison of general notions such as the concept of "music" as it occurs in different cultures to determine its signification in individual cultures that may have adopted the term; and for cultures which do not use the term, the area of inquiry may involve the critical elaboration of local concepts and denotata which make for precision in thought.

Thus one may discover as among the Ewe people in Ghana that whereas concepts exist in the language for most of the musical forms that would fall under the category, *music*, the term is in ordinary usage applied almost exclusively to forms of music that have been acquired through acculturation while indigenous terms may be used for individual types (of the imported forms) that are similar to the local examples.

For instance whereas the term, music (pronounced *miziki*), refers to the imported forms both vocal and instrumental generally, the Ewe term *ha*, denotes song as well as vocal music in general whether imported or indigenous. And whereas there are terms for musical instruments and the acts of playing them, there does not seem to be any term for instrumental music per se. Thus, as of now, the ethnomusicologist has to be cognizant of the semantic field of the adopted term *miziki* in relation to the category, music, in ethnomusicology. (The additional problem concerning types of sound admissible as musical has already been widely recognized to need comment.)

Again, individual languages may reveal evidence of structural features that enable its speakers to accommodate new musical concepts as the need arises. For example, in the Ewe language, the doubling of the final *u* of the word, *blewu*, meaning slow, makes the word equivalent in meaning to the musical term, *adagio*; and the addition of the syllable *toe* changes the meaning to *andante*, moderately slow. Or, to give another example, the notion of rhythm is implied in the Ewe word, *hagbe*, meaning literally "song-sound" (i.e. melody), in the similar manner in which rhythm normally is assumed to be present in the concept of the English word, "melody." Thus for ethnomusicological explanation, the rational analysis of the structural and sociolinguistic contexts that clarify concepts such as these are indispensable; and the need for this kind of elaboration suggests that both in intention and method a critical philosophy of theory should as far as possible proceed in its inquiry along the lines of the rigorous metaphysical analysis of the language of description and explanation in ethnomusicology.

If music is considered an integral part of culture, it is not unreasonable to expect that the epistonic strategies similar to those by which we ascertain what we do know or can ever know about anything would be applicable to our knowledge about music as they generally do in other domains of cultural experience. As Hoffman (1978:78) observes,

> the way people know, the assumptions they make about the nature of information and the nature of knowing, the epistemology according to which they construe and experience the phenomenal world, the rules and concepts which permeate their culture and pervade every aspect of their behaviour cannot be absent in that type of behaviour which results in ordered patterns of sound that we call music.

Let us suppose now that we become aware of having aural sensations of sound reaching us through an open door. If the sensations are like those that we normally associate with music, we would recognize that it was music that we heard; we would identify

it not only as a phenomenon but also as a "thing" that our memory informs us with which we are familiar. If we have doubts, we can verify by reference to the sound source or ask a friend to confirm our view. In view of this possibility, we recognize that the truth of this kind of knowledge can be determined by verification.

If upon reflection we concede that we do behave in some fashion in musical situations, we may also find ourselves admitting that some form of music has significance for us and the fact accounts for our behaving in relation to it. If pressed to justify the meaning it has for us, we may have to say in explanation that our feeling happy, disturbed, sad, or yet again our having to pay greater attention or move our body in some fashion is the result of our experience in the musical situation. We note that by making this explanation we have appealed to emotion and behavior as indices to the significance music has for us; and to show that our behavior in fact relates to the musical experience we may have to call in evidence the fact that we behave similarly in similar circumstances, that we do observe others behave similarly, and that they also attribute their behavior to similar musical experience. Thus in respect to behavior, we can at least maintain that the truth value of our justification depends on our belief that the claims are empirically attestable.

What of the truth value of explanation concerning emotions of joy, uneasiness, irritability or sadness? Here one has to concede that emotion in musical situations may not be directly open to empirical assessment except perhaps as it may be indirectly externalized in culturally defined forms of behavior. We may however be prepared to accept that we may have identified the emotion we have by reference to similar feeling we had in non-musical situations, and that any claim to the emotion being happy, perturbed or sad rests solely on the analogy we make. That is to say, we may have extended the meaning of "happy/sad" from its connotation in emotions of non-musical situations to music-related emotion owing to the resemblance between the two. Yet, to postulate resemblance is not necessarily to imply identity of the two emotions. If this is so, wherein lies the difference? Can we establish the resemblance and make it publicly available without reference to forms of observable behavior or other categories of non-musical experience? It seems to me that in the attempt to find answers to questions such as these we would be seeking a clarification of the epistemic bases for understanding emotions in musical situations. Such clarification seems necessary if we are to understand the nature of musical experience and value generally.

Thus in general the justification for an epistemological approach in philosophy of theory lies in the need to ascertain the kind of knowledge that can accrue from the application of particular methods, the respects in which it conforms to genuine standards of true knowledge, and how far our confidence in such methods should obtain. In ethnomusicology such approach may not be divorced from the need to measure our analytical models by reference to epistemic strategies that relate music and culture effectively. For instance, it was probably the recognition of the centrality of physical, social and verbal behavior within the music-making process that led Merriam (1964:32ff) to base his model of the three analytical levels on the close interconnection between the musical product and the behavior producing it on the one hand and to conceptual assumptions about what music is or should be on the other. Similarly in his characterization of the musicologist and his peculiar musicological juncture the assumptions that Seeger (1977) makes touching on the biological, human, cultural and professional attributes of the musicologist and the context of music study are a necessary epistemic framework for the discussion of the problems of the musicologist that follows.

APPLICATION OF THEORY

Hitherto the attempt has been made to delimit three areas of theoretical concern germane to ethnomusicological research:

1. the grammatical, which comprehends the rules or body of rules of musical organization and performance;
2. the speculative, embracing all theory or manner of theorizing in the areas of musical experience, meaning, value, interrelationship with other forms of arts and activity generally, including modalities of their use and function, and of their aesthetic and verbal communication;
3. the philosophical, devoted to the rigorous examination of the nature of ethnomusicology and the scientific foundations on which the grammatical and speculative theories rest—the metaphysical and epistemic bases and strategies of description and explanation employed in theoretical rationalization which seek to help us understand the why and how of musicological theory.

In all three, there has certainly been some activity in ethnomusicological writing. To illustrate the different types of approach, a few examples will now be discussed.

As pointed out earlier on, ethnomusicologists have long recognized the advantage of studying music within its many contexts, and the authors of a fairly sizeable number of volumes including doctoral theses have characterized their individual studies by making explicit statements on their musico-cultural references. In this regard, Nketia's works on African music are particularly notable for the consistency with which he, amongst others, advanced this view.

For example, he described one of his early works, *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana* (1963b), as "a study of the social implications of Akan drumming" based on the views of Akan drummers in Ghana that drumming has meaning. Also, in the summary and conclusions of *African Music in Ghana* (1963a), Nketia draws attention to the idea that music-making is socially controlled; that specific musical types are traditionally assigned on considerations of their appropriateness to individual situations . . . that (even) the structural characteristics also are in part derived from social contexts . . . and in part from an intensive cultural use of common musical devices. Again in *The Music of Africa* (1974), he makes explicit the socially and artistically integrated character of African music in his treatment of topics as music in community life; performing groups and their music; the role of song text; the interrelatedness of music and other artistic forms in the context of ceremonials, public worship, funerals and social relations that institutionalize group expression of public opinion in song and dance.

Quite apart from his projection of the sociocultural matrix of African music, the sources referred to show that Nketia was equally consistently concerned to advance knowledge and understanding through his rationalizations regarding the structures and stylistic characteristics of vocal and instrumental forms, including singing and other performance styles, scales, principles of modality, melodic patterns and movement; multipart textures and progressions; principles of rhythmic patterning, accentuation, phrasing, accompaniment; speech melody, the verbal bases of instrumental music and so forth.

The principles and rationalizations set out by him are presented in descriptive rather than prescriptive manner, for the theoretical observations are selective and do not deal

exhaustively with the individual traditions covered to make the rules equally prescriptive. However, since the principles and examples presented inform us about the organization of the musical traditions studied, their stylistic characteristics, structure, performance conventions and so forth, the theoretical abstractions may be classified as grammatical theory. As a body of rules, they are informative about *how* the various musical traditions are organized.

From the variety of musical types and traditions dealt with, it is to be noted that Africa is indeed characterized by unity and diversity of musical practice: that is to say, ways of musical organization are observable in various parts that suggest or confirm the historical unity or divergence or the interethnic contact of its peoples. Yet the grammatical theories themselves do not go further to inform us about *why* individual societies organize music the way each does—why for example particular ethnic or language groups sing in parallel thirds while others employ parallel fifths.

In this sense then one finds that the theories are not accounted for on the basis of their ethnic provenance and distribution. To do so would have led the theorist into theoretical speculation; and any theoretical conclusions resulting therefrom would probably have become classifiable as speculative theory. Thus, since Nketia has not attempted nor apparently had intended to show the *why* of the various forms of organizational and stylistic phenomena described and to account for their incidence on ethnic criteria, the theoretical abstractions described in his works may generally be characterized as grammatical theory.

Besides the types of works already mentioned, there are other works that focus on conceptual and methodological problems of music research for the benefit of the younger ethnomusicologists or as a survey of the field of ethnomusicology. Bruno Nettl's *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* (1964) for instance is a definition of the field, a discussion of its major bibliographic resources, problems of field and laboratory methods and techniques, as well as of theories and approaches to the study of music in culture. Also, in his *Anthropology of Music*, Merriam (1964) theorizes on the systematics of musical behavior as yet another aspect of context, clarifying its potential as a perspective or a factor in the study of musical culture. In developing the ideas centering on his analytical model, Merriam attempts to "provide a theory and methodology for the study of music as human behavior" and discusses at length the function of music as a symbolic device, the problem of aesthetics and the interrelation of the arts, as well as of music and culture change. In a similar vein, *The Ethnomusicologist* by Hood (1971) is a study of the nature of ethnomusicology and its field and laboratory methods all of which are discussed in a manner that lays bare the problems and challenges of the ethnomusicologist, and speculates on solution to problems of instrument classification and models of analysis. To the extent that works of the kind mentioned here engage with general issues in ethnomusicology rather than constitute specific area studies conducted from particular points of view, they represent a different category of research effort; they are essentially descriptive but also speculative in character because of their individual engagement with elaborate and critical argumentation necessary to making the theoretical point each makes.

In yet another respect there have been a growing number of articles that examine in a critical manner issues that are of central concern in a critical philosophy of music—issues such as the epistemological problems latent in the blind use of structural and transformational models in ethnomusicological explanation, the need for developing a truly

ethnomusicological paradigm (Feld 1974); the potential of information processing in clarifying our views on universals in music (Harwood 1976); or Seeger's (1977) elaboration and virtually single-handed defense of the area of "speech knowledge of music" as a necessary field of ethnomusicological research.

One may also note the proceedings at the recent seminar on *The Study of World Music: Perspectives in Methodology* at the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation in Berlin, and the papers submitted to it, which represent critical studies of (1) "The Juncture of the Social and the Musical: The Methodology of Cultural Analysis" (Nketia 1981), (2) "New Perspectives for the Description of Orally Transmitted Music" (Arom 1981), (3) "Historical Reconstructions for Oral Traditions of Music" (Hood 1981) and so forth. Undoubtedly the topics listed here and others like them focus on major problems dealing with the framework within which ethnomusicological research is carried out; and judging from the critical approach exhibited in the treatment of the problems they may be offered as examples of the kind of approach with which philosophy of theory should be concerned. Conversely they show a sense in which philosophy of theory may be discerned in ethnomusicology, namely as a subtradition of the field devoted to ensuring clarity of thought in ethnomusicological thinking and research through detailed and systematic elaboration of the most general concepts and approaches necessary to our understanding of music in culture.

CONCEPT OF MUSICAL CULTURE

Achieving clarity in our ideas about music entails carrying our critical examination of general concepts to its rigorous utmost. In this regard attention may be drawn to the argument advanced by Nketia in his seminar paper touching on the crucial immediacy that the concept of "musical culture" has for ethnomusicological analysis. Nketia (1981:31) describes "musical culture" as:

> the aggregate of cultural traditions associated with music which become evident at the juncture of the social and the musical, traditions that are learned in the social process or in special learning situations, traditions that are cultivated, practised and re-created by members of a society in the different roles they assume as music makers, instrument makers and audience in different contexts of situation.

A musical culture, he goes on to explain, maintains distinct identity not only through the musical but also the social sphere of culture, for the sociomusical juncture admits only forms of behavior, status and structural relationships, expressions and roles that are idiomatic to it; further, the notion does not exclude music from the concept of general culture nor does it make of music merely a symbolic element.

As elaborated in his paper, Nketia's invitation to focus on this view of musical culture in ethnomusicology seems to me quite attractive: there is point to it; for, defining the juncture as "an aggregate of cultural traditions associated with music" is in keeping with the metaphysical identity of the referent as a "thing," an event or phenomenon. Further, the possibility of the re-creation of the juncture allows for improvisation as practiced in some cultures; and more important, the notion of the juncture draws attention to the many cultural traditions latent in the music-making process.

However, to say that the concept of musical culture does not exclude music from general culture is not necessarily to show clearly wherein and how music relates to mu-

sical culture or to general culture. For instance, in what respects is culture musical or general? Wherein lies the specificity of musical culture if music is part of general culture? In what way is a particular musical juncture (a) a culture or (b) an aspect of general culture? It would seem to me that questions such as the foregoing evidently suggest that conceptually at any rate the notion of musical culture remains to be fully articulated.

There seems to be one respect in which the notion of musical culture can be identified; as characterized, the cultural traditions informing any musical culture can be none other than those that have close relevance to the sociomusical juncture. Methodologically speaking, the selective approach to ethnological data that Arom advocates in his article seems to reflect a similar point or view. Placing within the centre of a concentric schema the systematics of any musical corpus a researcher may be interested in, and regarding such systematics as the focus of ethnomusicological attention, Arom argues that ethnologic information can be considered relevant to musical data at the centre only if the two sets of data are organically related; and that there would be varying degrees and kinds of relevance depending on the nature of ethnologic data, the concentric circle to which each datum is assigned and the distance of each datum from the centre. Thus the more organically related, the closer to the centre and the more pertinent to the musical data; the more remotely connected, the farther away from the centre and the less pertinent. Within this framework then, the researcher needs concern himself only with some and not the whole ethnology of a people.

If one assumes that the way the model will work out will depend on the nature of data, the basis of organic relationship among the facts, and that the success or failure of the model can be attested only after several applications of it, an assessment of the modalities of such application can await actual research effort. Yet conceptually, certain issues seem to demand clarification if the model is to be fully characterized. For instance, on what basis are the various bits of ethnologic data assigned to the respective concentric circles? How does one minimize the element of subjectivity in deciding which bit of data is organically relevant relative to distance from the centre? Clearly, one feels the need to subject this relationship, and indeed the analytical model as a whole to a yet more rigorous elaboration.

The issues raised thus far have not been taken up to demonstrate that the particular viewpoints discussed in them were not well thought out or argued out. Far from it; they have been raised merely to indicate something of the critical approach to concepts that might be expected in a critical philosophy of theory. The need for this level of philosophical effort in ethnomusicology becomes even more noticeable in instances in which general notions are used without commitment to the full elaboration of them. For example one often meets concepts such as "metatheory," "metalanguage," "theory of theories," but hardly anywhere in the literature are they systematically rationalized from the ethnomusicological or any point of view. To some extent, I have just now become guilty of it myself; for, I am painfully aware that my effort at a critical rationalization of philosophy of theory is but barely adequate. The point must however be made that in writings on the music of non-Western cultures, unelaborated general concepts and viewpoints that demand fuller articulation are frequently found; and one would wish to suggest seriously that quite apart from "folk" ideas on music within given cultures primary data for a philosophy of theory exist in written ethnomusicological sources waiting to be critically elaborated.

For example, in *The Music of Africa* Nketia writes of instrumental combinations

that are considered as aesthetically meaningful to the African. From an examination of the aesthetic habits of some African peoples, he observes "a distinct bias towards percussion . . . a preference for musical textures . . . or sounds that increase the ratio of noise to pitch" (Nketia 1974:112). Elsewhere in the same volume, he describes norms of behavior by means of which aesthetic feeling is externalized, which range from contemplative pose through animated utterance to formalized behavior aimed at particular effect (1974:33–34). Further he gave instances of critical comment by Africans about particular performances of African music. From them he concludes as follows:

> although traditional music is performed on social occasions, there are norms that must be observed, expectations that must be fulfilled. . . . I (Nketia) have watched musical instruments changed hands in field situations because a player was faltering and have noticed time and again the stern look from a master drummer as he stopped to give someone the correct rhythmic pattern or urge him to play better (1974:240).

Obviously Nketia's observations show clearly that the African does react aesthetically in relation to music; not only does he know what satisfies him musically, but he verbalizes about it, and demonstrates by example what musical ideals one should aim at. Thus, there is evidence of aesthetic activity in the literature on African musicology, and the ideas in evidence of this activity certainly constitute basic material for critical analysis beyond primary level conceptions in the virgin field of the aesthetic of non—Western music.

One would concede however that evidence of aesthetic activity among a people is not necesarily evidence of aesthetic theory, much less a philosophy of aesthetic theory. On the other hand, in every society an intensive preoccupation with theory and philosophy in the rigorous sense tends to fall to the lot of the few individuals that are so-inclined rather than the generality of its people. It is thus reasonable to expect that the evidence provided in ethnomusicological writings should form an essential basis for developing by inquiry and analysis a detailed theory on the aesthetic behavior and communication in non-Western musical performances.

It is interesting to find that some attention is being drawn to this area of ethnomusicological research. For now however, the question must remain speculative as to whether studies such as *Tiv Song* by Keil (1979) (that attempts to theorize about the ways in which a whole culture can have an aesthetic aspect by correlating aspects of music with other modes of cultural forms and expression) can be more than an elaborated metaphor, an insightful substitute for rigorous philosophizing. The epistemology of metaphor would seem to suggest that whatever it is that "circles and angles" can mean in terms of Tiv metaphoric cultural base within which music is a reflection of non-musical cultural forms, the meaning stated or implied in full statement of the metaphor can have truth-value only within the metaphor. As such, it must be doubtful whether any "truth-conditions" can be established for testing the validity of the correlation, unless of course one is prepared to allow for a reduction of the metaphor into its similetic constituents which again would make the resemblance more tenuous.

The justification for a philosophy of theory or a critical philosophy of music within ethnomusicology would thus seem to be dictated by the need to understand one another in as precise a manner as possible as a necessary condition for advancing knowledge in ethnomusicology in general and African musicology in particular.

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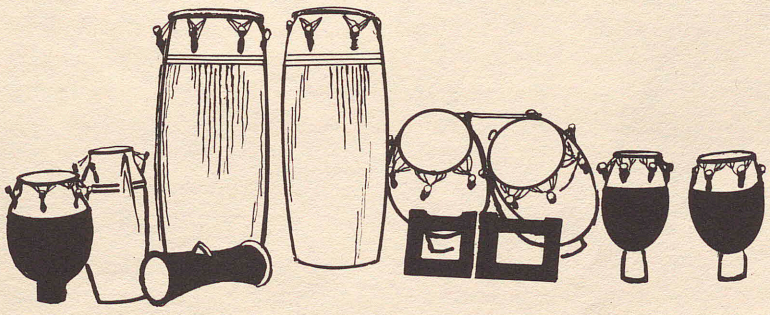
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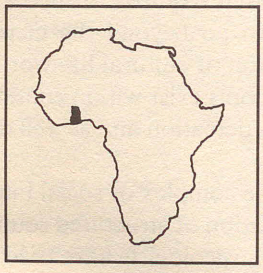
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THE RELEVANCE OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY TO ANTHROPOLOGY:
Strategies of Inquiry and Interpretation

JOHN M. CHERNOFF



STATEMENT: I first studied under Professor J.H.K. Nketia when I enrolled at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana in 1970-71, and I have had the benefit of his advice throughout my career. The following essay will indicate the extent of his influence on my scholarly perspectives. I can add that he has helped me greatly in the practical pursuit of my research, and I respect and appreciate very much his concern and patience as well as the way he has embodied the true spirit of African eldership in his professional life. □

It is evident from ethnomusicological writings, particularly those that have been concerned with describing non-Western musical traditions, that ethnomusicology has emerged from its formative period still assessing its ambiguous legacy, the hope to become a bridge between the disciplines of musicology and ethnology. In this essay I am concerned with the ethnological aspect of the ethnomusicological ideal, with the methods and analytic strategies that those undertaking or guiding ethnomusicological research might find productive in terms of influencing the development of issues faced by contemporary students of culture. The topic is appropriate to this volume dedicated to J.H. Kwabena Nketia because I believe that to an extent, ethnomusicology's own vehicle of potential relevance can be licensed by the elaboration of Nketia's contributions.[1]

The purpose of this essay is to affirm that several new avenues have been opened for ethnomusicological research. The plan of this essay is to begin with a brief overview of the interdisciplinary legacy of ethnomusicology and the context of Nketia's work. I will then discuss some of the problems associated with the models of cultural analysis that were influential during ethnomusicology's formative years. After noting how anthropologists have responded to these problems by reemphasizing the mediating role of experience in both research and cultural interaction, I will then describe an approach that focuses on the configurative themes that are displayed and stylized in musical events, and I will illustrate that analytic approach with some reflections on my own fieldwork. In a sense, then, this is an essay about culture as much as an essay about ethnomusicology.

MUSIC AS A NEXUS: THE INTERDISCIPLINARY LEGACY OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

It is probably worthwhile to review briefly the basic justification of the need for a specialized discipline to deal with the interdisciplinary axis of musicology and ethnology, in which fundamental insights from each pole of the axis are supposed to temper the methods and objectives of the other. On the musicological side, it is assumed and it has been well-demonstrated[2] that one should not make hypotheses about inherent meaning in particular configurations of sound because musical meaning is culturally determined. Ethnomusicologists have tried to advocate the position that the formal analytic frameworks of musicology should account for the contextual relativity of cultural expressions because it is clear that non-Western musical idioms that can be described in Western musicological terms nonetheless often have quite different aesthetic objectives. We have to know something about the music-makers and the varying modes and contexts of their performances in order to interpret essential issues of musical meaning. On the ethnological side, it is acknowledged that specialized techniques are often required to elicit and analyze musical data, but ethnomusicologists have hoped to go beyond the merely minimal assertion that musical activity is a significant dimension of cultural life worthy of specialized focus by advancing the position that musical idioms exist within contexts of interaction that sustain and socialize particular modes of participation and as well display significant levels of cultural meaning.

By music, therefore, ethnomusicologists refer to the whole complex of social interaction and cultural patterning that relates to the institutionalization of structured sound. To avoid making assumptions about musical meaning, ethnomusicologists have tried to approach music as a cultural complex in a manner similar to the way in which anthropologists have approached the study of religion, that is, without reference to a philosophical or universalist notion of a religious impulse or a metaphysical reality; in a musical context, such an approach avoids giving music the status of an *a priori*. Ethnomusicologists have maintained that data about musical meaning are generated in the same way as data about other aspects of culture and behavior, through the institutionalized interrelations of symbolic meaning and through the interaction patterns of social processes. Moreover, ethnomusicologists have always considered musical data important because in many cultures, the permeating social presence of musical activity establishes what Nketia has called a "nexus," a term used by Nketia to indicate a means of connection or a concurrence of otherwise discrete institutional (and analytical) realms brought together within the structure of a musical event. The word "nexal" literally refers to the mutual attraction of particles, in the sense of something that pulls things together. In Nketia's use of the term, because music often refers to so many things beyond itself, because of the way that musical style or communication can influence or even dominate situational interaction, because of the particular modes of participation and experience that musical settings institute, and because of the aesthetic sensitivity and contextual awareness required of musicians regarding the purpose and sequence of performance occasions, ethnomusicologists may hope that attention to musical data can lead to new vectors of cultural analysis (Nketia 1982:652–55; 1985). In musical contexts, people are self-conscious at the same time as they are aiming to represent something important or meaningful about themselves. The people among whom Nketia worked took pains to impress upon him the associations of music to many areas of meaning they con-

sidered relevant (Nketia 1962:2), and for more than a quarter century, Nketia has advocated the position that music offers a window onto indigenous perceptions of cultural modalities, a window that ethnomusicologists must try to open in the proper pursuit of their interdisciplinary legacy.

Nonetheless, despite the documented observation that in many non-Western societies, musical activity seems to be deeply integrated within a number of significant institutional complexes, and despite the fact that many anthropologists count themselves among musicians and music-lovers, it is unfortunately the case that most anthropologists remain unconvinced of the substantive significance of musical institutions as a field of data or as an important modality of culture. The area of musical culture has not received much attention because music has seemed far from the political and economic realities that are the basis of functionalist perspectives on social systems. Musical behavior and musical contexts have been viewed as epiphenomenal levels of reality or as the product of leisure; they have been discussed as categories of expressive culture, as play, and as aesthetics, but their connection to more fundamental realities has always seemed reflective and derivative, tenuous and by definition unserious. The discipline of anthropology thrives by developing under-reported data areas, but it is difficult to find mainstream anthropological articles arguing for the inclusion of musicological data in comprehensive ethnographic research. Ethnomusicology, despite its original hope to become a link between musicology and ethnology, has remained a peripheral and specialized subdiscipline.

Among ethnomusicology's necessary objectives during its formative period was the assertion of unique methodological resources for developing its types of data in a way that could be consistent with the standards of its cognate disciplines. In this essay I will not comment on the state of musicology with regard to the contextualization of data, but with regard to ethnographic methods, the interdisciplinary ambiguity of ethnomusicology has been compounded by the fact that the standards appropriate to the intellectual climate of ethnomusicology's formative time have been superseded by changing issues in anthropology. A few dominant metaphors of cultural representation have been replaced with a multitude of competing models, each with its own context of relevance. Cultural anthropologists, disillusioned with grand theoretical designs and acknowledging the limitations of anthropology's previous empirical and terminological base, have responded by pursuing two complementary directions. The first is a trend toward applied anthropology that seeks to make an impact on the lives of particular people in particular places. The second is an ethnographic trend that is flexible in its analytic strategies and seeks validity through richly contextualized portraiture, again, of particular people in particular places. To outsiders, it may all seem like another of anthropology's perennial crises; the nature of this crisis, however, offers a definite opportunity for ethnomusicology to reassert itself as an ethnographic resource. The development of symbolic anthropology and of what may be called interpretive anthropology has altered one of ethnomusicology's disciplinary poles. The interdisciplinary world of ethnomusicology now turns on a different axis, a shift that redefines its range of acceptable data and reorients its potential relevance within the context of academic and scientific issues in anthropology in ways that would have seemed inappropriate during ethnomusicology's formative years (Marcus and Cushman 1982:25–69; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Clifford and Marcus 1986).

To my mind, it is particularly with regard to ethnomusicology's interdisciplinary

challenge that current and coming generations of scholars should reflect upon the work of J.H. Kwabena Nketia, for in his many papers, Nketia has distinguished himself from the mainstream social anthropological perspective in which he was trained by elaborating a position that is very much in tune with contemporary sympathies. The background of Nketia's position was probably grounded partially in his personal origins as a son of the culture in which he did his seminal ethnomusicological work and partially in his practical administrative responsibilities as a prominent educator in an emerging nation that sought ways to maintain the practical vitality of indigenous traditions within the institutions of modernization. Nketia's perspective was therefore also grounded in an appreciation of what he has called the "insider/outsider" dialogue (Nketia 1985, 1986a, 1986b). He was an "insider" in his native Akan culture where he did his fieldwork, but his education and his institutional concerns had made him an "outsider" who felt the need to rediscover his own culture through the medium of his academic discipline. As such, he undoubtedly benefited from his consequent internalization of the classical problem of ethnographic relativity. The goal of establishing or reestablishing, for himself and others, a personal connection to his research venue determined many of his research emphases, particularly the prescription that ethnomusicological research should be directed beyond music into analyses of non-musical social forms and social action. To Nketia, formal musical analyses should be extended to include whatever it is important to know in order to understand a given people and their culture, and this objective should be grounded in legitimizing and integrating the musical data with regard not only to Western academic concerns but also to what the people or informants of a specific venue consider to be essential elements of musical meaning.

In these days of symbolic anthropology, it is difficult to appreciate how original was the notion that research results should address issues of meaning in the terms of the people being studied. This is not to say that Nketia's early work was not firmly rooted in social and cultural anthropology, for it was the thoroughness with which his work satisfied then-ascendant analytic criteria that enabled him to side-step potential controversy. By the same token, many scholars of Nketia's generation were able to side-step the implications of essays like "The Problem of Meaning in African Music," (1962) where twenty-five years ago, during the height of functionalist ascendancy, Nketia responded to Alan Merriam's "Ethnomusicology: Discussion and Definition of the Field" (1960) by recommending "going beyond formal analysis" with a contextual approach to meaning that unites musical structure and cultural function in "a comprehensive statement of meaning" grounded in indigenous terms and interpretations through "the perception of music in culturally defined contexts," an approach he contrasted to "other studies in which the material is organized in terms of social structure or social organization, social institutions, etc." During the time when ethnomusicology was a new discipline asserting its boundaries, there was a need for a sense of unity among its practitioners, who almost uniformly used the same homilies to describe the ethnomusicological goal of relating the study of music to the study of culture and humanity, while the quite different notions they held about what actually constitutes appropriate data and the contextualization of meaning were minimized and glossed over. The current ethnographic trends I discuss in this essay will indicate why Nketia's broader notion of contextualization has turned out to be the most far-sighted. In retrospect, his early descriptive work encompassed the perspectives of functionalist ethnology without losing

sight of the ethnomusicological ideal to integrate ethnographic description with aesthetic understanding. Nketia's early work thus looked beyond then-current ethnological perspectives. Nketia, of course, was not totally isolated; David McAllester's *Enemy Way Music* (1954) is one of several examples of early ethnomusicological writings that attempted to maintain an aesthetic focus within functionalist description. But notably, in his recent papers (1981, 1982, 1984a, 1984b, 1985, 1986b), Nketia has tried to provide a distinct rationale for the methodological issues he did not address explicitly when he did his descriptive work.

The extent to which Nketia's work can be abstracted and labeled with his name is one of the matters addressed in this volume, of course, but it is my feeling that the body of his work will become a major touchstone for ethnomusicologists seeking new ways to extend the relevance of the discipline. Nketia's position requires an exegesis beyond the scope of this essay, in which I am only going to comment on some of the ways Nketia's perspective can be distinguished from that held by more conservative functionalists, represented most eminently by Merriam in his textbook *The Anthropology of Music*. Merriam's objective in that book (1964:viii) was "to provide a theory and methodology for the study of music as human behavior." Certainly, many people would be able to split hairs on the theoretical distinctions of the functionalist tradition, and it is unclear whether there is or has ever been a consensus in anthropology as to how functionalism should even be defined; yet it can probably be safely said that Merriam's proposed descriptive model grew out of the American anthropological perspective advanced by Boas and Herskovits and the sociology of Parsons and was also basically consistent with British social anthropology as exemplified by Firth, Radcliffe-Brown, and to an extent, Malinowski. I am not trying to set Merriam up as a straw man, but I believe that through *The Anthropology of Music*, he established himself as a standard bearer of the classical functionalist message within ethnomusicology, and that still useful book remains a standard guide to research that aspires to the systematic objectives of scientific ethnography. Although Merriam himself eventually attempted to revise his position, many functionalists of the 1950s and 1960s shared a consensus that ethnology could be a science, that a formal analytic framework could be imported into diverse cultural contexts and refined through comparative research, based on data that should reflect scientific standards of detached empirical observation. Before discussing the implications of Nketia's perspective, it will be worthwhile to examine the functionalist perspective in detail in order to understand not only its appeal but also why its limitations have become more evident in recent years.

SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY'S EFFORT TO REFINE FUNCTIONALISM

Functionalist theory has long provided the dominant model of society and culture. Functionalism is very broad, and most modern efforts to relate social facts systematically can be said to be functionalist in thrust. Functionalist explanations can be stretched with amazing plasticity to account for almost anything, even to the point of irony, as in discussions about ritualized anti-social or non-functional events as ways in which the system lets off steam, ergo, functional orgies. According to a recent theoretical discussion of the ethnographic heritage by Marcus and Fischer (1986:25–28,55) the functionalist model was "designed to facilitate" the "holistic portrayal of culture," through research

that had roots in a "set of methodological questions" that can be traced to Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown and linked to Durkheim. Functionalist anthropology's characteristic ethnographic model, so close to the model adopted by ethnomusicologists, could be characterized in terms of set or formalized chapter formats, the elimination of the investigator, and the reification of institutions for typological and comparative purposes. Functionalist analysis was strategically "built around key institutions . . . or privileged structures" of society, and functionalism's further claim to scientific superiority established it as a compelling and authoritative approach to cultural representation. Most types of functionalism represented culture as a model of wholeness and unity to stress stability and continuity; more recently, other types recognized elements of cultural conflict and diversity through dramaturgical models to stress adaptation and the resolution of conflict. If someone wanted to integrate the theory of functionalism, it certainly would not require much brilliance to see in both these broad perspectives an effort to connect different types of institutions and social forms to the maintenance, survival and reproduction of society. Perhaps we are all functionalists at heart, though it may seem as if the exponents of these two trends have been arguing with each other more often than not and would resent being grouped together in a facile manner.

Many contemporary anthropologists have questioned the relevance of functionalist models in two complementary ways. First, functionalism has been criticized for not addressing with sufficient adequacy the issue of change. Critics noted that the classical functionalist model of culture is essentially a homeostatic model of a closed system that is open or adaptive primarily in response to external pressures, whether environmental or politico-historical. From that perspective, functionalism has underemphasized the structural conflicts and balances that reflect the varying character and capacity of institutions toward developing or evolving new patterns of stability in response to or as an adjustment to their internal or historical configuration. The functionalist response was the major effort to develop the concept of adaptation in order to preserve the over-riding concept of a system, accounting for change by viewing systems as strained configurations of bound tensions tending toward equilibrium, perhaps conflict-ridden at first glance but ultimately homeostatic when viewed from a teleological perspective. Nonetheless, the problem is more than just a matter of emphasis, for the formal nature of a functionalist model and the application of its chosen terminology have major implications for the initial frame of reference within which an analytic strategy can be developed; it is clear that there will not be a perfectly congruent alignment of variables and perspectives when using, for example, the notion of "conflict" to discuss what a Parsonian would call "strain" (Coser 1956).

Consequently, in elaborating on this type of formal problem, critics have noted that functionalism's categories have often seemed aloof from the real-life concerns of the people under study and that functionalist analyses have seemed somewhat artificial in terms of how people think about themselves and their institutions, that is, that functionalism lacked sophistication in understanding the role of the people involved in passing or modifying a tradition from generation to generation. Second, therefore, functionalism has been criticized for not accounting adequately for the differentiating role of symbolic meaning upon apparently comparable institutional structures that look alike but are not the same. Marcus and Fischer (1986:143), in their discussion of the influence on ethnography of Sahlins' *Culture and Practical Reason*, highlight Sahlins' argument that Malinowski and Boas "never really got to the heart of the cultures with which they were

concerned" and were not "able to probe the deep structures of meaning." Despite Malinowski's orientation to the native point of view, in contemporary perspective he remains more visible as an exponent of the positivist method and the functionalist ethnographic genre. Whatever the great figures of anthropology may have said or sermonized at times, they and their academic progeny were frequently unable to give more than lip-service to the native point of view within the confines of the functionalist model of cultural description. If they had, both ethnology and ethnomusicology would be in a far different position than where they are today.

Symbolic anthropology therefore arose from debates on the role of culture in functionalist models where culture often appeared at some sort of superordinate level to what was really going on, as in religious institutions or, not surprisingly, musical events. According to symbolic anthropologists, the functionalist model devalued the concept of culture and emphasized social structure; symbolic anthropologists attempted to show that culture has a determining role in social structure. Reacting against the notion that data could be plugged into *a priori* frameworks of analysis that could be taken into the field, symbolic anthropologists have sought to abstract indigenous models of social life by presenting evidence that people's experience is mediated though interconnected symbolic networks whose emergent meaning is rooted mainly in particular cultural constellations, with the implication that indigenous perceptions of meaning are inextricably related to classifying institutional types of social functioning and social change. The symbolic anthropological critique of functionalism was based in part on exposing the contradictory epistemological role of the functionalist concept of culture as a heuristic device for integrating data that later was held up as a symbol for the emergent configured data. Symbolic anthropologists like Marshall Sahlins, Clifford Geertz and David Schneider showed that the heuristic devices of functionalist terminology often had a tendency to refer more to its own descriptive metaphors than to the variety and vicissitudes of cultural actualization, suggesting that an anticipated textual testimony had led the witness. In the process, they dismantled both the *a priori* categories of functionalism and the universalist claims of structuralism, and they have shown that formal functionalist or structuralist descriptions of culture can also often suffer from a reductiveness that vitiates our understanding of the rich complexity of the ways in which cultural patterns and experience are determined (Sahlins 1976; Geertz 1980; Schneider 1980). Among the varied approaches to the problems in functionalist models, considerable work was originally done in linguistic analysis to establish the foundation for symbolic anthropology, and cultural anthropologists have pursued their efforts primarily by utilizing the notion of social action as a performance, with the objective of returning a sense of intentionality in the construction of social meaning, via the human actor or agent, to the social phenomena which serve or constrain the larger whole or system. This approach has been applied particularly in the areas of religion and ideology, and a few studies have focused on the reinterpretation of historical action, and on the ceremonial and ritual aspects of political organization.[3]

Functionalism still constitutes the bedrock of late-twentieth century efforts at systematic observation and description, but the reifying and reductive tendencies in functionalist description have attracted attention because they imply epistemological limitations in terms of social scientific objectives of understanding the ways in which cultural patterns and experience are determined. It is worth noting, in the defense of functionalism, that current critiques of functionalist analyses have been undertaken not with

the goal of disputing or rejecting them but rather with the goal of tempering their overconfident and global inclusiveness; current research affirms their validity but offers a more limited appraisal of their value by assessing their applicability in particularized contexts of meaning. Amid what has been called the "polyglossia" of contemporary social scientific interpretive schemes (Clifford 1983), many practicing ethnographers have adopted a flexible approach that justifies particular methods or analytic frameworks according to what works within narrowly delimited objectives. A number of different avenues have been pursued as ways of increasing the sophistication of functionalist description. Research projects in these veins do not dispute the foundation of social systems within environmental or politico-historical realities; rather, they investigate the symbolic aspects of cultural systems to enhance the theoretical perception of their role in adaptation and change. In effect, much current work can also be seen as responding to the suggestion (von Bertalanffy 1968:196–97), by a leading exponent of general systems theory, that the systems approach that has defined the scientific character of social investigation can be improved by attention to the "difficulties" posed "not only in the complexity of phenomena but in the definition of entities under consideration."

With reference to the problems of functionalist analytic methods within this context, it has been argued (Geertz 1973 [1959]:144) that the frequently dichotomized concepts of culture as an "ordered system of meaning" and of social system as the ongoing "pattern of social interaction" be placed for analytic purposes into a more dynamic and open relationship that asserts both integration and discontinuity, "to treat them as independently variable yet mutually interdependent factors," and to survey the variety of their "modes of integration with one another." Among the existing methods of approaching universal statements in social science, two which stand out as relevant to the current state of functionalist theory are (1) to focus on factors of analysis that may be atomized or posed within limited settings, and (2) to encourage flexibility in the application of the concept of functional imperatives. Although the development of scientific models in social science is not fully comparable to the models of natural science as characterized by Kuhn (1970), it is consistent with existing methods to expect that shifts in the level of abstraction or in the relationship of higher and lower order statements might have relevance for the establishment of future theoretical models, and to anticipate that the cumulative effect of investigations that transfer focus from one set of relationships to another might result in more refinement in our knowledge of the variations of institutional response and the documented roles of various social and cultural entities in transmitting selected patterns.[4]

Functionalism may remain a dominant vehicle of cultural description, but from the perspective offered a researcher who has based his vantage point atop functionalism's supposedly secure foundation, the view can be disappointing, and the irony of the functionalist concept of culture was an epistemological foundation that was, so to speak, the feet of sand of empirical concreteness. The notion of culture advanced by classical functionalism provided a way of talking about functional dynamics and adaptation that was based on a metaphor of a stable system, but as such, it was epistemologically ironic in many ways. As an abstracted totality to which functionalist analyses had limited points of reference, culture remained undefinable as a functional entity, the multivalent whatever-it-is that distinguishes one group of people from others. Like many abstractions, the more culture was defined, the less meaning it had as an integrating symbol,

the less utility it had as a heuristic device. It referred objectifiable data to a general structure that was non-objectifiable with reference to the logic of indigenous cultural constructions. In its devalued status, if it was an analytic factor at all, more often than not it was a native grab-bag of metaphysical rationalizations.

In an important sense, therefore, symbolic anthropology can be seen as an effort to refine functionalist empiricism with more scientific rigor. Among the advantages of the classical functionalist approach was that the data it generated seemed attractively hard. Indeed, the empirical nature of functionalist data was what led many ethnographers to hope that they were avoiding the idiosyncrasies of relativism and contributing comparative data to a universal science of culture. Nonetheless, functionalism's theoretical hope to provide a universal framework for social and cultural analysis unraveled as relativism raised its many heads. It is consistent with the approach of symbolic anthropology, with its concern to assess the impact of cultural systems of meaning on institutional functioning, to assume that certain hypothetical formulations might have a semantic range that in itself will introduce additional variables into an inquiry and possibly distort the applicability of those formulations. Also, some factors of analysis do not lend themselves easily to hypothetical formulation as variables and must be evaluated in relation to broader fields of data, where their significance or usefulness must be established in terms of the connections they demonstrate among observable social entities and processes, particularly those which were previously thought to be unrelated. The variety and the complexity of the ways in which human societies have organized institutional life bent and twisted the functionalist interpretive scheme, loosening its hold on its terminological and empirical base and making its insights occasionally seem reductive and superficial. Attempts at further theoretical sophistication have often led to sophistry, and nowadays the assumption that any and all descriptive data are grist for the functionalist ethnological mill is no longer accepted. The grand interpretive models of social analysis like functionalism and structuralism now exist within a plethora of competing frames of reference. The problems that occupy contemporary ethnologists are less grand in design, less directed toward global theories, more concerned with establishing new models of the role and purpose of ethnographic description. Ethnographers and ethnologists are still left with the problem of constructing a viable framework for maintaining the classical humanistic role of anthropology as the interpreter of cultural alternatives, but most of them have made their peace with relativism, and to paraphrase Maurice Stein (1963), they are no longer waiting for their future Newton.

THE LIMITATIONS OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY'S PREVIOUS DESCRIPTIVE MODELS

While it is clear that there are significant issues that were unresolved by classical functionalism, the abstruse complexity of much symbolic anthropology reflects the difficulty that anthropologists are having to break through that impasse in discourse. Theoretical statements are supposed to be refinements of meaning, but they are often difficult to read in terms of meaning. Perhaps one implication for ethnomusicologists is simply that they should understand that many anthropologists are prepared to accept the premise that what people are talking about when they try to discuss culture is a very vague thing indeed. Current ethnographic trends in conveying other cultural experience

are both an effort to sophisticate the achievement of functionalist objectives and a reaction against its conceptual and descriptive limitations. Acknowledging the limitations posed by the modern crisis of cultural interpretation, however, can be more liberating than paralyzing. Once orthodox structural and functional metaphors are not as satisfying at the end of an analysis as they once were, an ethnomusicologist need not be defensive about doing scholarship that questions the types of data and experience that constituted functionalist ethnographic authority.

The classical functionalist approach toward studying music ethnographically has predominantly been to study the role of music in culture according to a specific descriptive model and a specific notion of what constitutes contextualization. In that approach, musical behavior is observed and classified according to an idea of culture ordered by Parsonian categories considered to be "imperative" for the functioning of a social system, within which institutional contexts or institutional themes define the ways a musical repertoire can be categorized, and it is to the functioning of these institutions rather than the functioning of the social system that musical meaning should be referred. A functionalist of this type might collate performance contexts with recreational, religious, or political objectives, in the sense that "this type of music is performed when people are doing X," and the music is portrayed as playing an integrative role in achieving or expressing that institution's functional objectives. Aligned with this overview is the search for data that display aspects of this integration and show how a given musical mode is a product of its social and cultural context, such as demonstrating the relationships between melodic lines and speech patterns, relating song texts and communication norms, discussing the social position of musicians, and so on. Additional areas of focus to complement the description of musical roles and relationships are the technological elements of music in terms of the classification and measurement of instrument types with a dual focus on ecology and on sound texture. A model text might start with a synopsis of socioeconomic background, followed by discussions of instrument types, a categorized repertoire, notational examples, and a summary essay. What does this approach offer, and where does it fall short?

Following this paradigm, ethnomusicologists have produced quite a few notable studies. The role of musical events in maintaining or validating the social status quo has been amply documented. A great deal of information has been accumulated and a number of significant cultural relationships have been examined. I myself have spent most of the past ten years working on a large project oriented to cultural documentation,[5] and I would not minimize the importance of documentation as the foundation of the study of culture and human diversity. As a contemporary objective of social research, documentation can be seen as a major service provided by Western intellectuals through both their research and the complementary dissemination resources of their institutions. Indeed, the feeling of early anthropologists that their vocation was one of "witnessing" a threatened diversity of cultural alternatives is no less compelling today. On the other hand, fifty years ago, anthropologists hoped that Westerners could learn something important by comparing their ways of living to those of traditional cultures around the world; today the people of those cultures need to know about the traditional ways of life of their parents and grandparents because the traditions are still energetically influential. Major international projects are compiling the wealth of knowledge that has been accumulated to date, and we can assume that there will always be a role for such efforts, whether in the service of Western or non-Western records or as the basis for global or

local advocacy and development initiatives. The non-literate cultures of the world have by now produced quite a few literate children, many of whom are concerned with maintaining the vitality of their traditions. Ethnographic description is meaningful to this new audience because integrating elements of traditional culture into meaningful relationships with the institutions of modernization is now seen as a progressive rather than a regressive goal. Many non-Western people need good ethnographies both to refer to procedures they need to know about in their daily lives and to provide a kind of exegetical criticism that will help them relate personally to their heritage or gain historical sympathy for it. Some of them as well have political or administrative responsibilities that can and should be informed by ethnographic documentation. All types of ethnography provide documentation, but functionalist description is particularly useful in this latter regard because its categories reflect the bureaucratic organization of a modern industrial state.

To many ethnomusicologists, however, what must have been grating about the functionalist paradigm was the way it reduced music to a subordinated aspect of some other sphere of cultural meaning whose precedence was based on utilitarian significance. By referring music to something else and by restricting their notion of aesthetics to a very narrow slice of Western philosophical and critical theory, functionalists like Merriam (1964:259–76) separated their definition of what is aesthetic from their conception of what is functional. Since musical appreciation is so much a matter of taste, it was in the name of relativism that functionalists avoided the problems of looking at music as art, and it was ethnomusicologists' familiarity with well-established notions of cultural relativity that led them originally to offer a response to this question by positing the need for contextualizing research. One of the corollary benefits we have already received from this orientation has been a body of interesting discussions refining the very definition of the word "music." Beyond that contribution, however, the grand theoretical paradigms continue to give a very incomplete picture of music because they overvalue certain types of empirical data and ignore other types. But for an ethnomusicologist, the abdication of aesthetic problems is a very risky option. After all the analytic tools are applied, one measure with which the validity of a musicological inquiry can be judged is by how well it goes beyond the question of how the music sounds to answer the question of what makes the music work. That question is an aesthetic one which requires interpretation to show what matters in various and particular cultural contexts, and to address it a researcher should think twice about hitching the analytic horse to formal models of a scholastic genre that subordinates music's contextual function or devalues the cultural significance of musical expression. A researcher is rather impelled toward particularized and pluralistic descriptions of musical meaning based in humanistic interpretation, whether in a critical or art historical mode or even in a personal mode. In such delimited inquiries, the criteria of successful scholarship are measured in the degree to which any eventual text itself fulfills the rather complex mission of addressing multiple levels of meaning with regard to its focus on music and culture, and at such a point, these criteria are often in conflict with established functionalist ideas about what is important. Native peoples, on the other hand, have long been saying that certain things are important if one really wants the total picture, and music is one of them. There was evidently something missing in ethnomusicological uses of functionalist perspectives, for they have not achieved their objective of elevating the study of music within the field of ethnology, which in turn has never accounted for musical meaning in terms of the reasons why

musical activity seems so important to its audiences and participants, why music could become so highly developed in materially impoverished circumstances, or why music should have so many associations beyond itself. When ethnomusicologists assumed that social science could not tolerate the interpretive ambiguities raised by the distance between artistic experience and their cultural model, they ignored the potential insights that art offers about experience and the nature of culture itself. Ironically, the reason why ethnomusicologists should be aware of the resurgent influence of relativism is that classical functionalism's inadequate appreciation of the role of culture in the functioning of social systems led its ethnomusicological practitioners to define contextual meaning in a very narrow way, that is, within given institutional locations. Methods of inquiry sophisticated by symbolic anthropology's critique of classical functionalism employ a broader notion of contextualization, one that may be more subtle or difficult in its application but also one with greater potential to establish the relevance of music as a key institution of cultural description with regard to the current climate of ethnography.

In Nketia's brief article on the problem of meaning (1962), he wrote that his field experience indicated that "musical tradition did not consist only of repertoire but also of a body of knowledge in terms of which music took place or was interpreted." Contemporary critiques of functionalism have focused on the importance of cultural perceptions to the dimensions of cultural functioning. To the extent that this essay reexamines Nketia's work in the light of symbolic anthropology's critique of functionalism, it is significant to note that while the description of music's institutional roles in culture fulfills an essential aspect of ethnomusicology's objectives, the intent of Nketia's latest thrust with the concept of music as a nexus is still to go beyond the narrowness of the classical functionalist contextualization of meaning. For an ethnomusicologist, adopting a broader perspective on the interrelationship of music and its context allows the characterization of ethnomusicology in terms of studying music to gain access to social processes that present indigenous frameworks for articulating cultural relationships. In this sense, ethnomusicological discussions about the difference between studying the role of music "in" culture or the role of music "as" culture reflect a shift in emphasis from referring to a reality that stands "behind" cultural activities to positing a reality that is acted out and incorporated "within" social action. To this characterization may be added another prepositional emblem, that of studying culture "through" music. When we start looking at the many ways in which music is integrated into or separated from cultural life, we notice that in musical events, people often combine aspects of cultural and social functioning that we might ordinarily think of as being quite distinct. Understanding what happens at a musical event can give us an idea of the kind of connections people are making, because music ties many different things together and it brings many different people together, including ethnomusicologists. Viewing music as a mediator of interaction and meaning in such a context is one dimension of Nketia's idea that the study of music provides a nexus for the representation of crucial cultural relationships, positing a field of data for an integrated discussion of culture and social system as "independently variable yet mutually interdependent" factors.

It is the ethnographic task of ethnomusicology, therefore, to demonstrate the ways in which the study of music can itself provide a significant point of view for making generalizations about culture. Music often presents an image of cultural modalities based on indigenous attitudes and standards about what is good and beautiful or important and meaningful, and people make music happen in many ways for many reasons. As

such, the study of music offers an avenue for incorporating indigenous ideas and intentions into a researcher's idealized cultural model. To fulfill such an objective criterion, therefore, ethnomusicology would be forced to grapple with questions of aesthetics, and indeed, for modern ethnographers as well, issues of aesthetics focus on the crucial methodological problem of finding a middle-ground of perception and action between phenomena and understanding. Aesthetic issues in this framework do not address merely the narrow notion of aesthetics as the study of what is beautiful or well-formed; aesthetics is rather a philosophical realm that is broadly distinguished from metaphysics and closely allied with ethics. Aesthetic questions focus on values, on sensibility, on participation and judgment, and what the aesthetic view offers is precisely a perspective on the nature of culture in a given place. In their own way, aesthetic questions address the same problem as functionalist questions, that is, the problem of meaning. Following such logic, it could be said that the aesthetics of music are the key to its function, the key to what makes it work and to what work it does in the world of social action.

Westerners looking at their own music have often felt that formal analytical discussions need to be complemented by humanistic or aesthetic interpretation, that the spiritual depths of musical art could only be approached or alluded to through similarly artful writing, or perhaps comprehended in a new composition. Musicologists who are music-lovers understand the humility and anxiety of an artist confronting a tradition of genius. More often than not, unfortunately, the presumptions of scientific inquiry have forced ethnomusicologists to abandon this sensitivity, with a resulting devitalization that I believe must have been felt by many practitioners as a frustrating sacrifice, a tragic burden of academic credibility. It is an experience both instructive and pitiful to encounter the characteristic methodological defensiveness of many ethnomusicological writings and then to try to imagine an enviable research setting filled with music and music-lovers, the ethnomusicologist splayed by divergent notions (and occasionally lists) of what constitutes "music" and what constitutes "culture." Musicologists who understand the inherent irony of trying to capture in words the power and function of music should understand the fact that many anthropologists now share a similar perspective with regard to the functionalist concept of culture, which has been thoroughly demythologized by symbolic anthropologists. It should not be surprising that a renewed struggle to find ways to talk about music and the type of data it represents would complement a similar struggle among ethnologists regarding the meaning of culture. In using the concept of culture to provide a broader context within which conceptions of institutional function are to be interpreted and understood, the representation of culture involves a host of metaphoric modalities that are missing in functionalist models but are at the essence of musicological perception: feeling, texture, tone, rhythm, volume, dynamics, counterpoint, motif, theme, and so on. Ethnography would take a major step forward if these aspects of culture would be used to provide a frame for assessing the meaning of the social forms under investigation in a social portrait, how they fit into the big picture, whether an event supports and reflects dominant modalities of social reality and communal ambience or whether it distorts them or stands in opposition or implicit critique. Think of a ritual: what kind of reality does it have in functional terms? Does it reflect people's understanding of the social order and where they have to be coming from in everyday life, or is it a projective fantasy in a well-bounded moment, a psychological dodge to help them forget about the reality with which they are coping? Eventually, a researcher has to make a judgment about meaning to make a case on such an

issue, but data will point toward both options. The realm of aesthetics is one place where these data can be evaluated. The ultimate problem is less one of theory than of practical method. What types of questions and orientations will help us get around our paradigms' tendency to overvalue particular types of emergent data and to give us an incomplete picture of the subject under study? What types of questions and orientations will help us develop intermediate levels of abstraction between the culturally and methodologically relative empiricism of social scientific definitions of institutions and the culturally vague generalizations, like person or community, whose meaning must be interpreted?

Ethnomusicological data in the functionalist mold are ultimately unsatisfying because the data address such a limited aspect of musical meaning that at best we have difficulty assessing its significance, and at worst we may even obtain a distorted perception of actual musical phenomena. Ethnomusicologists should be aware that it has become a truism of ethnographic work that different types of data lead to different levels of abstraction, different notions of significance, different types of interpretations. A choice of research strategy establishes limitations on results, limitations that should be explicitly understood before data-gathering has even begun; insofar as ethnomusicologists pursue a number of diverse research objectives, they need to make use of a combination of methods and they need to be tolerant of the ways in which various research venues require a number of methodological applications, often in innovative combinations. Nonetheless, functionalists did not make their assumptions about empirical validity without a reason: the types of data to deal with issues of musical meaning will by force have to be softer than the types of data that have been the primary source of our picture of music. We know that hard empirical data require interpretation because the data can be too shallow for the type of generalizations the data are supposed to support, but functionalist and structuralist descriptive frameworks remain relevant because anthropologists are still confronted with the problem of relating the symbolic complexes of cultural meaning to the realities of social structure and history, finding data to bring the high theoretical analyses of symbolic anthropology down to the level of social action. Whatever the types of data that could substantiate a discussion of social and cultural issues of aesthetic meaning, we can expect that they would require the development of alternate configurations of data, the integration of different lines of analysis, and probably a degree of literary interpretation that might not convince an orthodox functionalist of the old guard. But in the current climate of cultural theorizing, for ethnomusicologists the significant point is that data in musical situations are often more accessible than other types of data in terms of helping us objectify a meaningful concept of a culture and representing its modalities and its depth.

THE ROLE OF EXPERIENCE AND NEW APPROACHES TO CULTURAL DESCRIPTION

My reading of Nketia's work emphasizes the assumption that the institutionalization of music can possibly provide a nexus for alternative analytic approaches to functional interrelationships. Within the concept of music as a nexus is the premise that within musical events in many research venues, there are data that represent or affect in unique ways the configuration of institutional variables as well as the effective levels of social cohesion and the division of labor. These central concerns of social science should be discussed by ethnomusicologists who wish to expand the relevance of their research and

perhaps make a contribution to current issues in anthropology. Ethnomusicologists must recognize and go beyond the limitations of what has previously been considered objective social data, because the data to sustain alternative discussions require more personal familiarity with the music and its context than data oriented to a classical functionalist study might require.

Practical study of a given musical idiom has been the ethnomusicological parallel to an anthropologist's ethnographic fieldwork. The ability to perform music or to participate in musical events is a very useful tool to help an ethnomusicologist understand the significant dimensions of musical meaning, for an intensive and grounded focus on music as an aspect of a performed event offers possibilities of addressing both axes of the ethnomusicological goal. From the perspective of a performer, a researcher has access not only to the music but also to the network of relationships and communication that are brought into focus in a musical event. As a tool of fieldwork, the gradual acquisition of musical expertise is directed both toward the establishment of a deep basis of involvement and identification with the experience of informants and participants and toward the suspension of aesthetic or analytical judgment that can serve as the foundation for potential phenomenological bracketing of musical perception. Apprenticeship therefore offers a way of enhancing otherwise vague participant-observation methods because musical experience can provide for the contextual grounding of data. The networks and patterns of communication in music are not always cognitive or symbolic. There are not always specific words for the types of communication evident in a musical context. People may not know or remember much about responsive movements or ritualized gestures whose significance may be related more to the experience of doing them than to understanding why they are there. Other fundamental communication like the movement of intensity through a musical context is often perceptible only to people who are involved. Sometimes aspects of musical meaning can be seen only in patterns of interaction, as in a dance; at other times one must look at the context in order to understand what is happening in the music. The contextual grounding of musical meaning may originally have been posited as a response to aesthetic relativism, but a focus on musical performance can open a musical analysis to the possibility of relating musical structures to roles and behavior within the institutional context of a musical event, and quite frequently, these "non-musical" aspects of the performance context relate reflexively and interactively to musical structure (Nketia 1963, 1965). In some types of music such as African idioms, aspects of the context like the dancers' feet often show where the pulse is more clearly than the musical ensemble; by accepting such data for what appears to be primarily a musicological problem, musicologists would acknowledge that ethnomusicology has unrealized potential significance for further enhancing the perception of context in influencing musical form and expression. What is more important from an ethnographic standpoint is that musical apprenticeship in the field provides a research role that opens up significant dimensions of cultural experience. Learning and performing music in its indigenous context offers a way of gaining a perspective on the meaning of cultural relationships that might not be evident to a detached observer. On a practical level, too, this role is certainly more accessible to an outsider than meaningful participant roles in other events or institutions that anthropologists have typically used to obtain data about cultural interaction, such as religious ceremonies, political or legal decision-making, property acquisition and management, marriage, and so on.

Although any institution or activity can be interpreted as a mediating focus of social

action and experience, a musical event is generally already delimited as a unified field displaying both structure and process. New perspectives on culture have enhanced older notions of culture as the whatever-it-is that holds things together, and these perspectives represent culture as something that is continually being redefined in social action, its institutional realities an emergent product of negotiation among the counterplayers of a situation. For an ethnomusicologist, participation in this type of social action is a search for a window onto what the important issues are within an indigenous framework for articulating cultural relationships and generative themes. Many contemporary anthropologists use concepts like mediation and hermeneutics to rationalize the relationship of a thing and its meaning as a category of action and experience. The notion of mediation was borrowed from the fields of aesthetics and art criticism; for ethnomusicologists it can suggest a way of understanding music not as a subordinated or expressive element of an objectified tradition or institution but as a mediating event that brings people together and patterns their behavior in specific ways that are accessible to interactionist analysis.[6] Anthropologists also borrowed the notion of hermeneutics from the disciplines of religious studies. Hermeneutics originally referred to the problems of translating religious texts from languages in which they were supposedly not written but revealed; its original questions were asked particularly with reference to the theological implications of whether and how the grandeur of the source could be reconstituted in another language. Hermeneutics focused on the inevitable role of interpretation in such a translation. Anthropologists joined existential philosophers, literary critics, phenomenologists of religion and many other humanistic scholars in using the ideas of hermeneutics as a way of talking about an effort to convey or translate the original contextual meaning of a phenomenon or a text in a different medium, that of a scholarly or critical interpretation. This notion of translation fit well within anthropological goals of representing and making comprehensible the relativity of the different ways "other" people organize and express themselves.

For an ethnomusicologist, a hermeneutic perspective is appropriate to thinking about music as a manifestation of essential cultural modalities because musical events locate the data for a conception of culture within a delimited field that can be subjected to many of the newly available interpretive strategies that have revitalized the relativist position. This type of contextualization elevates the formerly neglected aesthetic aspects of music in several ways. What is most important among them is that hermeneutic interpretation complements the notion of mediation by focusing on the crucial aesthetic idea of distance. The concept of distance has long been an element of discussions about the way people relate to art, and it wields a double-edged sword. On one side, the representation of reality in art addresses the distance between form and idea, as Plato would have it, or Being and being, as Heidegger might say. On the other side, the concept of distance refers to the way that art or play enables people to gain a perspective on the reality it represents or opposes. Hermeneutics is a notion that has been used to refer our understanding and refine our answers to some very broad questions that have been with us for a long time, and one need not be a student of hermeneutics to notice the many ways similar perspectives have been applied through other lenses to shed light on human concerns.

To a philosopher or a theologian, there is an ethical dimension to the concept of distance, for distance implies location, the place from which a person relates to his or

her condition in society or a society relates to its situation in the world. There is a vast body of humanistic scholarship discussing an artist's intention within an artistic tradition or an artist's motivating direction with reference to artistic context, and there is considerable precedent for such approaches in social science as well. Not surprisingly, psychologists have developed the concept of distance in their examinations of what Erik Erikson (1964) has called the interplay of psychological reality and historical actuality. The notion of distance has conventionally been an implicit element in sociological and anthropological writings that elaborate on Durkheim's seminal discussions (1893, 1895) on the relations of individuals and the collectivity, particularly in his classical arguments about dysfunctional and deviant behavior, in which he argued that social response to such problems can serve the purpose of assisting social groups in establishing and maintaining boundaries and in defining rules of conduct and normative values. To a contemporary ethnographer, the concept of distance advanced by hermeneutic perspectives on mediation is relevant as a way to avoid the one-sided focus on integration in functionalist paradigms or the reductive focus on essential elements in structuralist paradigms. An ethnographer also uses the concept of distance to refer to relativism as the distance between cultures or sub-cultures or the distance between text and context that is addressed and translated by ethnographic writing. In an another sense, as an analytic tool, the concept of distance helps to advance a dialectical perception of the dynamic strain between an individual and his or her circumstances. In effect, contemporary efforts to convey cultural experience represent the native point of view as a native hermeneutic. On multiple levels of meaning, ethnographers are looking at configurations that highlight the interplay of participation and self-consciousness, integration and alienation, commitment and stress, conformity and conflict. Seeing the performance of a musical event as an articulation of intention and distance within a given cultural ethos provides as well a way of linking the concerns of the researcher with the existential concerns of his or her subjects: they are all united in an act of self-location that reflects the historical elaboration of cultural meaning. By using concepts of aesthetics within an analytic framework, it is possible to address the issue of music's function in terms of the ways a performance elicits participation and social interaction within its mediating role. Aesthetic judgment presents meaning in a moral perspective, one which is tied to generative values that are at the roots of a grounded cultural analysis of a given social system.

The proof of such a strategy and its assumptions, it should be noted, is and will be evident in more satisfying characterizations of various cultures and in the improved imagery of ethnomusicological and ethnographic work that will restore a sense of intentionality and history to our inherited paradigms of cultural structures, categories and imperatives. Ethnomusicology has a splendid opportunity to respond to this challenge: if ethnographers are intimidated by musical data, it is up to ethnomusicologists to show how an interpretive approach to the institutionalization of music can be applied to larger concerns of culture and community. It is the ethnomusicologists who are in the best position to find and provide evidence of the ways in which music enables people to relate to one another at the same time as it articulates their relationships, and it is from the way that fieldworkers manage to open up and explore new types of data to complement social structural, historical and comparative data that the progress and development of ethnomusicology will proceed.

How specifically are such data most likely to be found? Acknowledging the reasons

for the current trend toward delimited and particularized themes and topics of inquiry, we must allow specific research venues to dictate the nature of available data to individual investigators. In the majority of cases, perhaps, conventional data can acquire new force under the impetus of different methodological assumptions and interpretive strategies. On a general level, though, we can expect a significant vector of primary data to be based in a current trend among ethnomusicologists to develop the concept of music as a performance. Observation and documentation of music as a sequential event provides a nexal framework for integrating ethnographic, historical, and musicological methods. The major avenue for eliciting primary data is a dual focus on what Nketia (n.d.) has called the "intensity factor" in performances, involving an explicit attempt to relate musical alternatives and social processes in close description. On the musicological side is a detailed focus on musical technique as it relates to performance issues of aesthetic command and generative modalities of expression and creative decision; the study of technique is where data can be found to support interpretations about internalized elements of expression. On the social side is a detailed dramaturgical focus on interaction among musicians, participants and witnesses within the dynamics of the performance. The underlying assumption is that the intentionality inherent in dramaturgical data gives access to the relationship between individuals and their history and culture as that relationship is displayed or acted out in an event. Why is the music there in the first place? What is the music about, or to quote Nketia, what is its "motive force"? What "truth" does the musical experience have for those involved? What values and insights does it project? To what extent is it integrated or isolated from different cultural variables? What tensions or contradictions exist in the musical context, and how does the music resolve them? Where is the music heading and how does it change, and what are people doing from moment to moment?

Second, beyond the close analysis of musical technique and social interaction, in order to incorporate indigenous perceptions of meaning into descriptive metaphors and models on an additional level, an ethnomusicologist must break through the artificial distinction between the musician and the musicologist. Musicians are ideal informants on the types of knowledge and experience participants bring to performance contexts and on the social purposes and aesthetic values underlying musical articulation. This is not to say that ethnocritical statements are not frequently oblique in their reference but simply to assert that despite occasional interpretive problems, ethnocritical data must be pushed. A detailed focus on musicians and their lives, feelings and insights should complement an eventual analysis because it provides an avenue for interpolating their knowledge of musical contexts into a discussion of the relationship between self-consciousness and cultural expressions. Frequently, ethnocritical data expose points of contradiction and uneasiness: obstacles and conflict in data-gathering indicate possible key analytic vectors of indigenous historical consciousness that parallel the insider-outsider dialogue of a researcher's situation.

The major vehicle of descriptive synthesis, grounded first in the unified discussion of technique and interaction and second in the ethnocritical data about purpose and experience, should be an attempt to objectify aesthetic meaning as it relates social values to a historical situation enacted in the cultural configuration. The controlling metaphor of the cultural analysis should be to define a general concept of musical style coupled with a focus on the heterogeneity and differentiation of the indigenous musical repertoire within diverse settings, that is, a synthesis that portrays the variety and alternatives

of musical and cultural experience. The theoretical objective in such an effort is to abstract and examine indigenous perceptions of the community and its institutional relationships and evaluate the effect of these indigenous conceptions on the analytic treatment of the configuration of functional categories. This approach would be enhanced by inquiring into factors of articulated conflict and balance within the cultural and social order as portrayed at musical events. The analytic strategy in such an effort is two-pronged, therefore, examining and linking factors of structural integration and continuity with factors of structural conflict, discontinuity and adaptability.

What is the foundation of this definition of style and how is its representation to be conceived and patterned? Obviously, these questions will again have to be answered by individual researchers according to the dictates of varying research venues. To my mind, one of the best guides remains Max Weber's conception of "ideal types" as tools oriented both toward constitutive description and analytic stylization (Weber 1949; Aron 1970). Weber not only discussed the epistemological implications of this conception; he provided some exemplary models of its utility in his discussions of types of domination and authority and in his discussions of religion. In the context of this essay, I would suggest that a characterization of musical styles as ideal-typical tendencies or idealized modes of self-presentation can serve as a descriptive referent to an image of integration and as a guide to the evaluation of discontinuities that are introduced either on the level of technique or on the level of the distinctions in a society's repertoire of musical selections or motifs.

This characterization of style offers an intermediate level of abstraction to bind the concerns of ethnomusicology with the concerns of anthropology and to get around the epistemological indefiniteness of concepts like "music" and "culture." The definition of a musical style and its variations at least makes an attempt to discuss the essential aesthetic question of what makes music work in the middle ground of human values and social action. The parallel ethnological question is answered by discussing what distinguishes a culture and makes its people somehow unique. Within such a conception of style, instead of mysteries that we must talk around, are themes that have elements of psychological and social content. It is not difficult to find scholarship that elaborates this objective in instructive or exemplary manners. Kai Erikson (1976:80–83) has referred to "axes of variation" and proposed that the "elasticities" of the concept of culture can be turned to advantage by discussing the "identifying motifs" and "core values" of a given culture with reference to points of conformity and divergence along these axes; Erik Erikson (1963:285) discussed national identity as the ways in which history has "counterpointed certain opposite potentialities . . . to a unique style of civilization"; C. Wright Mills (1959:213–14) talked about "polar types" that assist an investigator in obtaining comparative understanding. Whatever one chooses to call such configurative elements, on a practical level, a researcher who relies on them has at least a chance to avoid the reductiveness of systemic metaphors of structure, the alienating abstruseness of certain types of symbolic analysis, and the overvalued abstractions of "value-free" empiricism.

As I mentioned, the contemporary critique of functionalism was advanced not to refute it as much as to enhance its constructs. Current approaches to the problem of universals in social science as discussed above, with their focus on the exploration of differing sets of relationships and variables, are undertaken with the ideas of obtaining alternative configurations of data, distinguishing alternative integrative levels, and developing alternative paradigms of the cultural means that constitute a given system's

repertoire of response to functional problems. Since classical functionalism has viewed music as epiphenomenal to its models, ethnomusicology can blamelessly position itself outside those models in order to ask what the functionalist perspective does not deal with and, more specifically, what musical data can add. The institutionalization of music is grounded in delimited contexts of social action that tie together cultural complexes and give reference to cultural symbols. Aesthetic judgments and values throw issues of meaning onto the same level as metatheoretical concerns to evaluate significant issues and configurations in cultural interpretation, and conversely, a focus on style and sensibility can help reconstitute the human content of cultural description.

A SAMPLE APPLICATION

I would like to give a brief example of how such an approach to the institutionalization of music can be focused on cultural description, in which music fulfills a role comparable to the one an anthropologist might more typically assign to a religious ritual or a political ceremony in addressing broad anthropological issues. The example is based on some of my reflections on the fieldwork I have been doing among the Dagbamba of northern Ghana, and it builds on classical functionalism and attempts to use musical contexts to address broader questions about cultural sensibilities. A full discussion of the functions of music in Dagbamba society, where music provides the institutionalized nexus of a cultural complex that relates history, politics, family, and community, is beyond the scope of this essay. In this context I am only offering the example to show some lines of approach and some types of questions that bring the preceding abstractions down to the level of a case study.

Dagbamba society is a somewhat feudal patriarchal arrangement organized under an elaborate hierarchy of chiefs. More than five hundred years ago, the Dagbamba consolidated one of the earliest centralized political states south of the Niger bend, the traditional state of Dagbon (Fage 1964). They have influenced the surrounding peoples of northern Ghana, and they played a role in the routing of pre-colonial trade and the penetration of Islam into southern Ghana (Wilks 1961, 1974). Early studies by colonial officers emphasized the political sector, focusing on historical data in an effort to clarify and even codify chieftaincy succession patterns as an adjunct to indirect rule (Tamakloe 1931; Blair and Duncan-Johnstone 1931; Staniland 1975). Much recent research has had the same focus, an aspect of interest in and response to an extended chieftaincy dispute with national political implications (Ferguson and Wilks 1970; Ghana Government 1974; Ladouceur 1972, 1979). Other discussions of Dagbamba life are only brief sketches within works that attempted to deal with all the diverse peoples of northern Ghana (Cardinall 1925; Rattray 1932; Manoukian 1952) or with selected aspects of social processes in the Volta Basin (Levtzion 1968). Recently the historical literature has been reviewed (Benzing 1971), and the process of Islamization has also had detailed attention (Ferguson 1972).

The Dagbamba entered their present traditional area as conquerors. With horses, spears, and arrows in their military technology, they subjugated the indigenous stateless tribes under an elaborate and competitive hierarchy of chieftaincies. They gradually intermingled and became agriculturalists. Their staple crop is yams, but they do multiple plantings in their fields, and they rotate crops. Their other main food crops are sorghum (guinea corn), corn, millet, and beans. Recently, intensive rice cultivation has

been encouraged by the national government, with mixed success. The Dagbamba are patrilineal, patrilocal, and polygamous. Marriages are relatively unstable, and divorce is common. Funerals are elaborate, and there is an annual cycle of festivals. Just over a majority are Muslim, and the remainder practice animism and ancestor worship, focused to a great extent on local and household shrines, land-priests, soothsayers, medicine-men and witchcraft. There are several craft-guild lineages (Oppong 1973), drummers being one such group, and within the cohesive political framework of Dagbon, there are a number of groups that retain a degree of foreign lineal identity, assimilated Islamic scholars being one such group, and many court officials of slave origins being another.

In Dagbamba culture, seemingly divergent customs are layered into integrated patterns of institutionalized relationships and activities. The major cultural strata can be broadly distinguished as: (1) the surviving customs of the original and assimilated inhabitants who are representative of the indigenous culture base shared in varying degrees by many small tribes in the region; (2) the political and technological innovations brought by the conquerors related to the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Nanumba peoples; (3) the Islamic customs introduced in the early eighteenth century through contact with Wangara and Hausa people; and (4) the Western influence of the twentieth century. Significant complexes of customs have also developed through contact with Ashanti, Guruma, and Konkomba people. The complex integration of these many cultural trends within Dagbamba society has resulted in a thoroughly distinctive culture, yet to an extent, Dagbon may be characterized as a cultural laboratory of the pre-colonial Volta Basin. Much of our knowledge of this highly structured traditional society has bearing on our understanding of the closely-related states of Mossi, Mamprusi, and Nanumba, and also has varying degrees of general application on many nearby societies of the Volta Basin which share a number of cultural traits, most notably Tampolensi, Kantonsi, Talensi, Frafra, Kusasi, Wala, and Dagarti. Some aspects of Dagbamba society are also comparable to aspects of other sub-Saharan traditional societies, such as the Hausa and Songhay.

A sense of history is central both to Dagbamba culture and to the Dagbamba musical heritage, and drummers know the most about history. The paramount chief of Dagbamba drummers, the *Namo-Naa*, is an important elder of the paramount chief of Dagbon, the *Ya-Naa*. In contrast to societies in which political offices or scientific-technological establishments control and authenticate information transfer, Dagbamba tradition is transmitted through artistic specialists. A Dagbamba drummer is a political figure whose influence extends from conferring varying degrees of respect on chiefs to discriminating the status of individual lineage identities at social gatherings. As such, drummers acquire high respect not only for their historical erudition but also for their detailed knowledge of the kinship patterns of their local communities. Considered even against other African societies where music has a significant function in the institutionalization of tradition, Dagbamba society illustrates a further elaboration of this tendency into the maintenance and validation of political and historical information.

At several prescribed times during the year, drummers in major towns beat and sing the different parts of the history of Dagbon outside the house of their town's chief, who sits with his wives and elders while the populace assembles around them. After the evening meal, while the populace arranges itself, the town's drummers praise their own ancestors in lengthy introductory sections, until one of the chiefs of the town's drummers takes over at around ten or eleven o'clock and sings until dawn. Most of the drum

history is recounted through the medium of stories about the lives of past chiefs, their ancestry and progeny, what they accomplished and why they got their proverbial praise-names, and what happened to their descendants' access to chieftaincy lines. I have said in other writings that the event seems much like what I imagine as the setting of a Homeric epic recitation, a comparison that can be elevated by the observation that Dagbamba music is an essentially classical form whose exponents are moralists with a profound grasp of history and human relationships. The drum history lends meaning to traditional Dagbamba social dances, which are based on the praise-names of the paramount chiefs of Yendi and the chiefs of other traditionally important towns such as Savelugu and Karaga. Although a typical Dagbana's preference in dancing is not necessarily overtly political, different dances have associations that relate aspects of centralized political power with family origins, since drummers trace the ancestry of most Dagbamba to former chiefs. Not every son of a chief can become a chief, of course, and someone for whom the "door" to chieftaincy closed generations ago may still respect his family's line by dancing to the name of a great forefather.

A dance called *Nantoo Nimdi* can serve as an example. *Nantoo Nimdi* is a praise-name for Naa Yakubu (ca. 1850). "Nimdi" is meat, and "nantoo," defined by Dagbamba as a very poisonous flying creature, is a disease vector of anthrax. The praise-name means that meat which has been touched by *nantoo* cannot be eaten or approached. In addition to obvious respect for the power of chieftaincy, the name implies that whatever a chief's hand touches becomes a dangerous thing; thus the name cautions that people should not do anything bad or become involved in a matter that will come before the chief. The name the drummers gave Naa Yakubu is not only appropriate to his violent career; it also has a good dance beat. Drummers beat the name *Nantoo Nimdi* and improvise on its rhythm, and people dance to it. Dances such as *Nantoo Nimdi* are danced individually inside a circle of spectators. Drummers call a person to dance by beating praise-names of his or her forefathers. A dancer may dance several dances inside the circle, while friends and relatives press coins onto the dancer's forehead or place coins into the dancer's hands. At a typical Dagbamba community celebration—whether a funeral, a wedding, a festival, a chief's installation, or a newborn baby's "naming"—music, dance, and proverbial praise-naming are integrated with status encounters, concerns of social control, and genealogical and historical elucidation.

A functionalist analysis of Dagbamba music would focus on the role of drumming by reaffirming the social role of musicians in the validation of the political and social status quo. As indicated, Dagbamba drummers are a lineage-based guild whose conservative social function—through historical knowledge, through proverbial naming and praising, and through dance drumming derived from praise-names—is to elucidate genealogical relationships at community events and provide a framework for asserting both social integration and status differentiation. I was told that, "Drumming is respect, because we drummers know the praises of people. If there are no drummers at someplace, then you should know that whatever people are doing there is not a serious thing." A discussion of the integrative function of this role in various contexts could also be complemented by discussions of the status and training of Dagbamba drummers and by the cataloguing of factors that foster and preserve their lineal identity and their effective professionalism, such as ritual sanctions on the recruitment of children into the profession and the taboos and sacrifices required for discussing certain historical events. The drum history would be interpreted as uniting Dagbamba in learning about their past and

enhancing their sense of their community as both a tribe and a family. The meaning of social dances like *Nantoo Nimdi* would be interpreted as augmenting concerns of social control. All these contributions of musical activity to the functional integration of the Dagbamba social system are clearly evident.

Issues of continuity and stability are addressed on several levels within the functionalist model described above, which would be consistent with the analytic strategy prescribed by Merriam. With a few notable exceptions, analyses in this mold have characterized ethnomusicological efforts and have expressed as well the main tenets of functionalist views on music. The type of analysis suggested by symbolic anthropology would take the data a step further through additional analytic efforts to objectify social meaning by examining conflict and discontinuity and by sophisticating the investigation of individual and institutional boundaries as articulated and balanced in the musical or danced presentation of self. An analysis of the aesthetics of performance, therefore, a factor specifically separated from the conception of function and often considered of dubious relevance in ethnomusicology's repertoire of valid analytic tools, would be one major differentiating vector of approach. Another vector of analysis would relate to the examination of boundaries as articulated and reconciled in the drum historical performance in terms of the presentation of historical consciousness and the representation of social values.

The complementary human values that Dagbamba admire are patience and shyness. They say "Patience gets everything," and they also say "Shyness is a human being." The concept of patience needs no explanation to most readers; the Dagbamba notion of shyness implies a sense of shame. Together, as a basis for social action, the two values address ideals of cooperativeness and interdependence and ethics of respect and obedience within the many hierarchical structures that coordinate an individual's life and social position in Dagbamba society. Dagbamba praise a person who occupies a position of integrity and productiveness in the society. At the other end of the axis is pride or impudence exemplified by the notion of "showing oneself." Dagbamba do not like people who are proud or who boast, who get annoyed or who argue, who interfere in other people's problems or who make trouble, who bluff others or show themselves to be "more" than others. Given these values, as one might expect, the social atmosphere in the Dagbamba traditional area is restrained and tranquil; the people are reliable, temperate, and generous; the pace of life is relaxed. I found the traditional state of Dagbon to be a beautiful place to live, and I enjoyed a sense of security from being among thoughtful, considerate and mellow people. And actually, the whole time I was there, no one ever did or said anything negative to me; people always made me feel welcome and tried to help me in whatever way they could.

In music and dance, Dagbamba provide a format for the display of character presented as the flexible expression of individuality within the rigidity of structured affiliations. As noted above, at a musical event like a funeral, a person seated in a circle of friends and relations is invited to a solo dance by a drummer who squats and beats and sings praise-names of that person's ancestors, who are traced to some point on a chieftaincy line. "A person does not praise himself," Dagbamba say, but thus identified and addressed by the drummers, the dancer stands up and arranges his or her clothing and then comes into the dance circle and "shows" himself or herself with a solo dance before being surrounded by people who press money onto the dancer's forehead and publicly demonstrate the dancer's integration into the community. The different

dance beats are themselves rhythmic elaborations of the proverbial praise-names of former Dagbamba chiefs, and the drum language is augmented by additional sung praises relating to that chief or to the dancer. Although dance preferences can vary, many Dagbamba may demonstrate their relationship to historical figures by dancing to the names of their forefathers.

Observations of Dagbamba dancers as well as indigenous critical comments from master dancers indicate that Dagbamba dancers balance inward and outward movements to enlarge and contract their dancing space. Dynamic and expansive body movements that epitomize the force of personality are alternated with shifts into concentrated and precise movements that balance or freeze the body and establish the head and the eyes as the focus of character. Changes of direction and focused body movements engage the rhythms of the drums, while composed control and release of the body demonstrate awareness of the subtleties of presence and projection in artistic and personal expression. Dagbamba say that to dance nicely is to dance "coolly," "according to the tradition": in the same way a drummer expresses artistry, a dancer must "cool the heart and use patience and sense to dance." A dancer who dances according to the "crying" of the drums, so that the dance "fits," makes a gesture of respect to the tradition of the particular dance, and the dance becomes an embodiment of the tradition in which improvisation, the personal expression of the unique insight and imagination of the participant, exemplifies or "adds to" the tradition's continuity and vitality. At a community celebration, praise-drumming, music and dance are integrated with concerns of genealogical and historical elucidation into a dramatic presentation of self on multiple levels of projected and expressed reality.

The symbolic foundation of social dancing is the Dagbamba drum history, and on the surface, as noted, the drum history unites Dagbamba in learning about their past and enhancing their sense of their community. But to an outsider, there are two peculiarities of the drum history and its influence on the Dagbamba musical repertoire that seem to require ethnographic analysis on other levels. To someone raised on the exemplary myths of historical figures, the first curious point about the drum history is that it presents a reality that is almost antithetical to the laid-back Dagbamba lifestyle. Many of its stories are full of war, civil violence and familial enmity, and many of its personages are treacherous, willful, vengeful, and proud, their characters and their praise the epitome of what Dagbamba would consider anti-social. Many of the praise-names flaunt the strength of a chief and abuse the weakness of his rivals; the praise-names also highlight the presence of jealousy, mistrust and wickedness in human affairs. The happy ambience of community celebrations, where beautiful people enjoy themselves, stands on an incongruous foundation of dances whose names and whose drum language say things like: "Poisoned Meat," "I Will Not Know a Person and Let Him Know Me," "The One Who Has Strength is the One with the Truth," "If You Trust a Human Being, You Are Lying Down Naked," "When Blood Touches Iron, Rats Cannot Eat It," "A Small Porcupine That Grows Spines Need Not Fear Getting Slapped," "If an Ant Grows Feathers, It Will Fly," "Someone Who is Recovered from Illness is the One Who Says that the Medicine is Finished," "Wind is Blowing Clay Pots, and Calabashes Should Not Be Proud." In short, the reality represented by the social dances and drum history is poles apart from the pleasant daily lifestyle and values of the people. Yet there is also an element of reality in the dramatized transformation of an amiable farmer or petty trader into the blood descendant of a great leader, into someone who does not mind

to say or do what he wants and die, through a flash of remembrance, commitment and capability expressed in a dance in which respect for traditional form and improvisational display are balanced, in which the artistic projection of force and character is distanced, bounded by initial shyness at its start and by an enveloping community at its finish.

Second, despite the incredible degree of historical consciousness articulated in the dance repertoire and at public gatherings, ritual sanctions exclude explicit historical discourse from everyday life and from community celebrations other than the drum historical performance; the drum history performance is the only time in which detailed accounts of the past are presented openly. Singers in other musical idioms restrict themselves to relatively recent and benign stories. The "old talks" are "forbidden" and "hidden." Drummers acquire historical knowledge over a period of years by staying with elder drummers who have a reputation for learnedness. Many only learn Dagbamba history to a comfortable extent, and most do not even want to answer questions about it. Someone who talks about Dagbamba history can be accused of "revealing the anus of Dagbon." Such social control is supplemented by the notion that the "forbidden talks" are dangerous, and drummers can easily justify lying or giving false information as a way of avoiding the dangers of mentioning "forbidden" matters. Talking about "forbidden" matters or performing the drum history must be accompanied by gifts and sacrifices whose expense is borne by the one who is seeking knowledge. Minor or village chiefs cannot even ask for a drum history to be beaten. In the case of a drum history performance, if appropriate sacrifices are not made, bad luck or trouble will come to either the chief who sponsored the history or the drummer who sang it. Drummers and chiefs generally meet in advance to discuss the extent of the drum history that will be beaten. The indigenous explanation for the sacrifices is twofold. First, many of the topics concern war and bloodshed, and the blood of the sacrifice is necessary as commemoration. Also, the spirits of the past chiefs are still around: "They are not the kind of people who are buried and stay in the ground; they roam." They are dangerous because they did bad things and they do not like to be talked about, but they can be placated with the blood of the sacrifice. The fact that historical knowledge is hierarchically classified according to its degree of secrecy and danger is one of many cultural dimensions supporting drummers' lineal and social identity, but the facts of the sacrifices and the taboos, the physical and temporal structuring of the drum history as a performance, its repetitiveness and occasional periods of monotony, its mythic elements, its isolation from normal discourse, all indicate that the event can be considered as a ritual.

Anthropologists and other social scientists have generally discussed rituals as events based on a body of belief, in which concrete actions and things have symbolic meaning, functioning to affirm or realign a community's place in the cosmos, or, in the case of ritual healing, the place of the individual within the collectivity. The central communal metaphor of ethnographic studies is quite evident in interpretations of ritual as the reification of order or structure in the face of chaos; in more contemporary interpretations, the study of the relationships of ritual symbols reflects indigenous perceptions of a community's functional or structural order as well. To a musician, though, the portrayal of ritual meaning as established by the emotive force of comprehended symbols is somewhat uncomfortable: the perspective is a bit too close to the aesthetics of writing, including scholarly writing; the religious imagery as well resembles Western religious notions that project an "objective" view of chaos as something "out there." It is not surprising after all that the music which plays such an important role in rituals is often excluded

from analyses oriented to the cognitive and symbolic dimensions of participation. It would seem as well that ethnomusicologists can play a role in opening this perspective on the nature of religious mediation toward models of action and engagement, particularly because general aspects of musical style can convey participatory modalities beyond ritual boundaries into other contexts of social experience.

What is significant about looking at the artistic aspects of Dagbamba communal rituals is that instead of posing a sense of community in terms of a covenant of the faithful or the blessed, Dagbamba look at aspects of uneasiness in their sense of history. When they dance at funerals or weddings or festivals, or when they assemble for the drum history, Dagbamba establish almost dramaturgical settings in which the unthinkable and the unknowable, the amoral and the disruptive, are incorporated into an expressive dialogue in which people define boundaries that enable themselves to feel involved with their society while they achieve a distanced perspective on some of its realities. The drum history chronicles the destinies of individuals and families and the foundations of the social order in an ambivalent comparison of past and present. There is no sweeping affirmation of either the past or the present in the Dagbamba assessment of the drum history that "it tells a chief about his forefathers and lets a chief know what is inside chieftaincy. And for any Dagbana, whether man or woman, it tells that person who he is. The drum history will open his eyes to the old talks that are inside his family, and it is inside his praise that he will know his relationship to chieftaincy." Within the Dagbamba ritualization of history, the need for sacrifice can then be interpreted not merely as a magical ransom but also as a memorialization of the pain of structural transformation: the sacrifices make a bond with power and with the violence and frustration that underlie political form and social stratification.[7] Dagbamba come to terms with their history by incorporating and beautifying this ambivalent acknowledgment within participatory musical contexts that counterpoint and engage the "forbidden" through the generosity and communicative clarity of mature art and through the balance and control of personal expression. One can wonder whether the achievement of Dagbamba civilization lies in the organizing genius articulated in a complex political system that has continued for more than five hundred years under a single dynasty or in the artistic genius that turns people into allusive proverbs and reconciles an awareness of the necessity of terrifying greatness in politics, sophisticating it until it turns to play. Dagbamba drummers answer, "Without drumming, there is no chieftaincy in Dagbon."

To most Dagbamba, music remains a meaningful vehicle of historical perspective and a foundation for moral awareness; such abstracted insights on the role music plays in their lives are relatively unnecessary. There are also others who have become partial outsiders to their tradition and who might find in the preceding analysis a degree of historical sympathy to help them overcome the destructive and totalizing tendencies of the anomie and frustration that can be unleashed by the loss of historical perspective. When the mythopoeic function of the drum history as an elaboration of cultural values has become morally problematic in life situations, they might find, and many do, that artistic sympathy is also a guide to authenticity in social relations. They can address issues of self-consciousness and alienation through appreciating music and song and particularly through dancing. They are not alone in apprehending the times when the cultural ordering of their existence fails or is displaced by destiny or death. Like myths and rituals, music provides a structure for the transformation of symbols, but like art, music also provides multiple perspectives on reality within a participatory context for experiencing and enhancing a mature sense of historical location and personal meaning.

An effort to understand participation in Dagbamba musical contexts points toward musical expression as a dynamic style that mediates the complex institutionalization of history, politics, family and community in Dagbon. Although the details of that configuration are unique to Dagbamba society, it is my impression that in the broader culture area of which the Dagbamba are part, there are parallels in the use of music as a medium for articulating indigenous insight into types of social structure and patterns of social organization. An ethnomusicological representation of Dagbamba cultural life leads us into interpretive problems of aesthetics and ethics and reveals different dimensions of cultural actualization and social meaning than those that would be comprehended within the confines of the empirical scientific models of classical functionalism. The relationship between functionalism and ethnomusicology, therefore, presents some very, very difficult questions. A picture of Dagbamba society based solely on the privileged hierarchy of institutions in a functionalist analysis would be one of incredible tensions: a rigid and patriarchal feudal state that can be characterized by political conflict and contestation within the elite, a stratified population of diverse origins, emphasized attention to status concerns among elite and commoners, cultural conservatism and backwardness with regard to development, the exploitation of women and mistrust in social relations as evidenced in conjugal jealousy and witchcraft problems, and so on. Dagbamba life provides many manifestations of structural tension, even though the social ambience presents a calm surface. Without the musical data, however, the portrait of Dagbamba society remains a conflict portrait of difficult social and personal tensions, and the question of how they are resolved or sublimated is left unanswered. It is not enough to refer the integrity of the Dagbamba state to an abstracted conception of culture as a unifying element that binds structural tensions. We have to characterize how contestation and conflict are culturally sublimated. As an element of culture, music does not inherently express anything functional, and music can be linked to social forms in many ways. If it is music and dance that bind the tensions, then these aspects of expressive culture are not insignificant epiphenomena but are rather constitutive realities at the essence of the system.

The ruling dynasty in Dagbon is among the longest continuously ruling dynastic lines extant today, going back more than five hundred years. What accounts both for the longevity of the Dagbamba state and for the reasons why this quasi-feudal political system has not developed into a more autocratic type of despotism? Students of social history generally answer such questions by looking for certain types of often complementary social and cultural elements: one is the presence of conservative factors that prevent changes in institutional forms and particularly check against revolutionary or radical breaks with the past; another is the presence of ritualized communal forms and constitutive or generative elements of social meaning which hinder the development of new patterns of institutional relations that might have effect on structural cohesion.[8] Ethnomusicological data have bearing on these broad issues having to do with aspects of stability and instability within the Dagbamba political system, adding significant dimensions of social meaning to the portrait of Dagbamba society. Ethnomusicological data are not the only data for such a portrait, but in the Dagbamba case they are crucial to informing our perception of deep structures of meaning. While a simple integrative perspective would focus on the way that musical activity functions to enhance institutional rationales, it is clear that the political aspect of Dagbamba music is not only a matter of using music in political contexts but also a matter of designating channels of access and patterns of relationships that link persons and groups to centers of power in the

social structure. In Dagbon, the political structure is that within which the musicians move. In this regard the drummers' role in maintaining and validating historical and political information, and specifically the way in which this information is actualized in public gatherings and the extent to which it is formalized in repertoire and process, can be said to exert meaningful influence on the strengths and weaknesses of various centers of power—the paramountcy, the towns, the markets, the land-priests, the Muslim community, the traditional soldiers, the court bureaucracy of enfranchised slaves, and so on.

In Dagbon, musical events are the nexus of the social meaning of history, politics, family and community; music is a permeating presence of symbolic and aesthetic forms in many types of participatory communal events where this complex of relationships is brought to the level of social action. In musical contexts, Dagbamba act out social identities with a self-conscious focus on origins that affirms archaic relationships and asserts a particular model of integration among the various layers of society and within the elite itself. Musical situations gather these elements and give them presence within a repertoire of historical allusion and concern, representing in unique ways the strengths and weaknesses of the Dagbamba aristocracy as a whole and inhibiting the economic or political motives that might lead to the development of coalitions against the peasantry within the chieftaincy structure, between chiefs and Muslim or priestly religious groups, or between chiefs and nascent bourgeois commercial or mercantile groups. Musical data address many typical variables of political analysis, if not always directly, then at least through the power relations of entities responsible for such variables; in many cases, factors such as relations of political and religious authority and the checks and balances in the relations of the paramountcy and the aristocracy are extensively elaborated in terms that constrain both the independence of divisional chiefs and the authority of the paramount chieftaincy.

The significance of this abbreviated interpretation is not primarily theoretical with regard to its use of major paradigms of social theory; the interpretive model of the role of Dagbamba music is relative and will have only relative applicability in other places. Nonetheless, I hope that the interpretation demonstrates that a focus on music can provide an essential complementary perspective that significantly enlarges our capacity to portray the depth and height of Dagbamba culture. Data for the interpretation of Dagbamba culture can be grounded and developed through the observation of social processes in musical life, represented by a repertoire of pieces and their dynamics in the musical contexts of community dancing and the drum history performance. And what is theoretically significant is that musical events can give us access not merely to peripheral generalizations about expressive culture but perhaps to a more satisfying and comprehensive overview of Dagbamba civilization, where history and historical consciousness have been refined to a sophisticated integration of perspective and praxis. Within the mediating structures of Dagbamba music, the violent historical reality represented in the drum history and the amoral and disruptive social presences memorialized in the praise-names of chiefs are placed within the framework of the dance repertoire and the social ambience of public gatherings, where the disturbing dimensions of Dagbamba history are enacted and transformed through aesthetic display into a communal ethos that expresses the social values of respect and patience, interdependence and modesty. Also, within the mediating role of music as an analytic nexus are models that enable us to deal with social content through intermediate levels of abstraction that are understandable in human terms and applicable to humanistic correlations.

CONCLUSION: LOOKING FOR MODELS

To an extent, the suggestion to work with thematic configurations of cultural content might give one pause if one recalls the checkered career of books like Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934) or Margaret Mead's *Sex and Temperament* (1939) and some of the work done in the areas of culture and personality and national character. On the other hand, the criticism of such studies was based on what was perceived as problems of data: they did not fit the scientific model ascendant at the time, but they are worthy of reevaluation in the light of the revitalized and strengthened relativism of the modern ethnological climate. The current stress on the particularization of topical focus and the contextual or existential grounding of data-generation means that researchers can feel free to expand their awareness of alternative strategies of inquiry and interpretation. It could be argued that the ambiguity and relativity of participant-observation as a field method contributed to the increased focus on the integrity of an ethnographic text itself as the major way of affirming that methodological rigor was indeed exercised in the research situation. Given the acknowledged limitations of available methods, a researcher will do well to look for textual models in the substantive works of the classical traditions of social and humanistic studies as well as in the works of contemporary scholars who have attempted to sustain and revitalize those traditions.

In the ethnomusicological field, works like Nketia's *Funeral Dirges of the Akan People* (1955) and *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana* (1963), Hugh Tracey's *Chopi Musicians* (1948), David McAllester's *Enemy Way Music* (1954), A.M. Jones' *Studies in African Music* (1959), John Blacking's *How Musical is Man?* (1973), Charles Keil's *Urban Blues* (1966) and *Tiv Song* (1979), Paul Berliner's *The Soul of Mbira* (1978), Steven Feld's *Sound and Sentiment* (1982), and David Coplan's *In Township Tonight!* (1985), among others, present a range of potentially useful models, all or parts of which may be applicable for a representational strategy. But I would suggest as well that useful models can be found among works from other disciplines that rely on the disciplined analysis of isolated themes or genres and their expressive vicissitudes. Developing the latter bibliography is bound to be an individual matter of peripatetic reading and study. A partial and quickly recollected list of some of the books that influenced me or gave me methodological confidence when I was a student includes critical works and classical studies like Geoffrey Hartmann's *The Unmediated Vision* (1966), Robert F. Thompson's *African Art in Motion* (1974) and Vincent Scully's *The Earth, The Temple, and The Gods* (1969), and sociological and historical works like Kai Erikson's *Wayward Puritans* (1966), Maurice Stein's *The Eclipse of Community* (1964), Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1967) and Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station* (1953). Many works from diverse fields, whether or not they were successful within their disciplines, can be relevant at least as literary examples of the way scholars have handled the polyvalent representation of otherwise delimited motifs or styles.

In the end, the type of theoretical essay I have written here is very far from the actual type of work that is going to achieve the goal of advancing ethnomusicological relevance. We need studies that will demonstrate the importance of music as a cultural category, studies written with the idea of encouraging ethnographers to engage music within their own research contexts. The nexus established by musical contexts includes the ethnomusicologists who are there: music pulled them there and made them want to be involved

with it; for them the nexus is also relevant as the sense that music can lead to deeper levels of meaning and human contact. I will conclude by restating my conviction that it is from finding new types of data and new ways to interpret data that the discipline will be advanced. This essay is therefore is a plea for openness: those who oversee research should encourage experimentation that will bring ethnomusicology in line with broad intellectual trends in social studies; those who are doing research should strive for the interdisciplinary erudition that can open their research in new directions. Models of successful scholarship are more important than theoretical statements because models demonstrate the possibilities and range of available choices. The theoretical justifications only offer a place for a researcher to hang his or her coat. It is on the practical level of research and methodological innovation that the significance of the discipline will or will not be established.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank the following people for reading and commenting on early drafts of this essay: T. David Brent, Kai T. Erikson, Steven Feld, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, and Philip Schuyler.
2. A recent contribution to this area is Rouget (1985).
3. Representative works in this vein include Turner (1957, 1968, 1969) Singer (1959), Geertz (1980), Fernandez (1973), Obeyesekere (1984), Comaroff (1985), Sahlins (1985); see also Sullivan (1986).
4. The formulation of the argument in this paragraph is derived from Moore (1963).
5. Chernoff and Father Drummer, n.d.; for brief discussions of Dagbamba musical culture, see Chernoff (1979a, 1979b, 1985).
6. Symbolic interactionism was developed by sociologists before it was adopted by anthropologists. For representative theoretical statements, see Blumer (1969), Garfinkel (1967), Glaser and Strauss (1967); for an ethnomusicological application, see Chernoff (1979a).
7. The formulation of this argument is derived from Bakan (1971) and Taussig (1987).
8. The formulation of the following argument is derived from Moore (1967).

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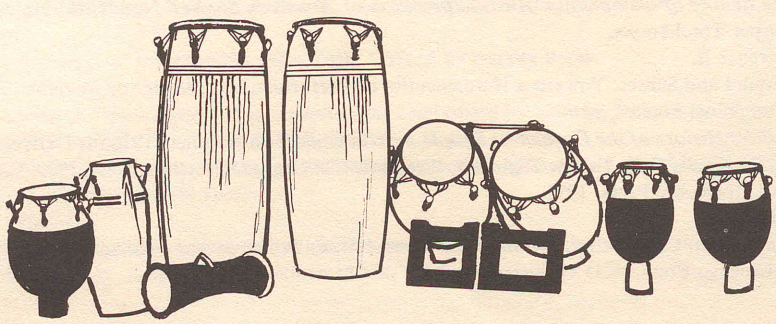
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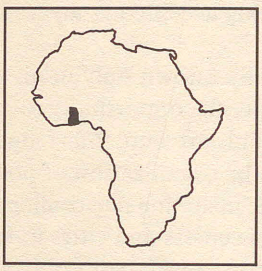
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3

KAKRABA LOBI: Master Xylophonist Of Ghana

BEN A. ANING



STATEMENT: The seeds of my love for, interest in and attraction to music, especially traditional African music, were sown about forty-three years ago when the then J. H. Nketia gave me my first lessons in music theory (at the Presbyterian Teachers Training College, Akropong Akwapim). These first lessons set me on the path to "investigate" my ethnic Akan music. This exercise of "investigation" meant to me, forty years ago, just collecting and teaching traditional melodies to my school pupils. It was not until 1962–64, when I was a little more mature, and when he put me and three other colleagues through the mill of the Diploma in African Music course, and later through the M.A. in African Studies (Music) Course, both at the University of Ghana, Legon, that I really began to see and "understand" (to use his own word) African music in the right and correct perspective.

I was then, even as I am now, not only impressed by the thoroughness, the all-embracing and all-encompassing character of his methodology in the study of African music, but he also aroused in me the interest, the urge and the necessity to attend to the many-sided problem of the study of music in Africa in general and in Ghana in particular. Among his many publications which now number well over a hundred, two particularly did and continue to positively and directly influence the methodology, style and thoroughness in my research. These are "The Problem of Meaning in African Music"[1] and "Musicology and African Music: A Review of Problems and Areas of Research."[2] Nketia strongly advocated and persistently applied a multidisciplinary approach in his study and writings on African music. This has had such a deep and lasting influence on his students including this writer.

Secondly, I have tried to take a brand from Nketia's bright academic torch with regards to the variety of the many areas of interest in African music such as ethnomusicology and music education, to mention only two, and the contributions these have made towards defining a cultural policy for his native country and Africa in general. Professor Nketia, a second generation native Africanist musicologist in Ghana (Dr. Ephraim Amu constitutes the first generation), has markedly influenced the direction of the growth of music research (with the creation and nurture of the Music Section of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon); music education (with the creation of the former School of Music, Dance and Drama, now School of Performing Arts, also of the University of Ghana); and the national policy on music promotion in Ghana. This writer is a product of that influence. My own understanding, theoretical approach and methodology, and areas of research in music have both directly and indirectly been influenced by his work and findings. □

NOTES

1. Nketia, J. H. K., "The Problem of Meaning in African Music" *Ethnomusicology* 6(1):1–7, 1962.
2. Nketia, J. H. K., "Musicology and African Music: A Review of Problems and Areas of Research" in *Africa in the Wider World* edited by David Brokensha and Michael Crowder Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1967, pp. 12–35.

In many African societies the musical performer is acknowledged more as an accomplished artist than as a professional one. Because the social framework of such societies does not provide for professionalism in some of the performing arts, "this is not to suggest that there are no professional artists, or artistes in all Africa. Some groups, such as the Hausa, make provision within their social structure for professional artistes who make their living out of the earnings they realize from the performance of their chosen art (Ames 1973). Such an artiste must of necessity satisfy certain well-defined artistic values and standards that the society expects of him before being accepted as an accomplished artiste whose artistic product must be paid.

This accomplished traditional artist, or artiste, is generally known only in his native village, district or ethnic area. Rarely, in the past, did he get the opportunity to perform outside such ethnic confines. Extra-ethnic influences on his art were thus reduced to the minimum. However, in contemporary African society the organization of political and economic affairs makes it possible and easy for people, including performing artistes, to move out of their ethnic areas into the modern urban centers and cities to find employment. It is under such circumstances that Kakraba Lobi, a virtuoso Lobi xylopone, *gyil*, player finally found himself performing in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

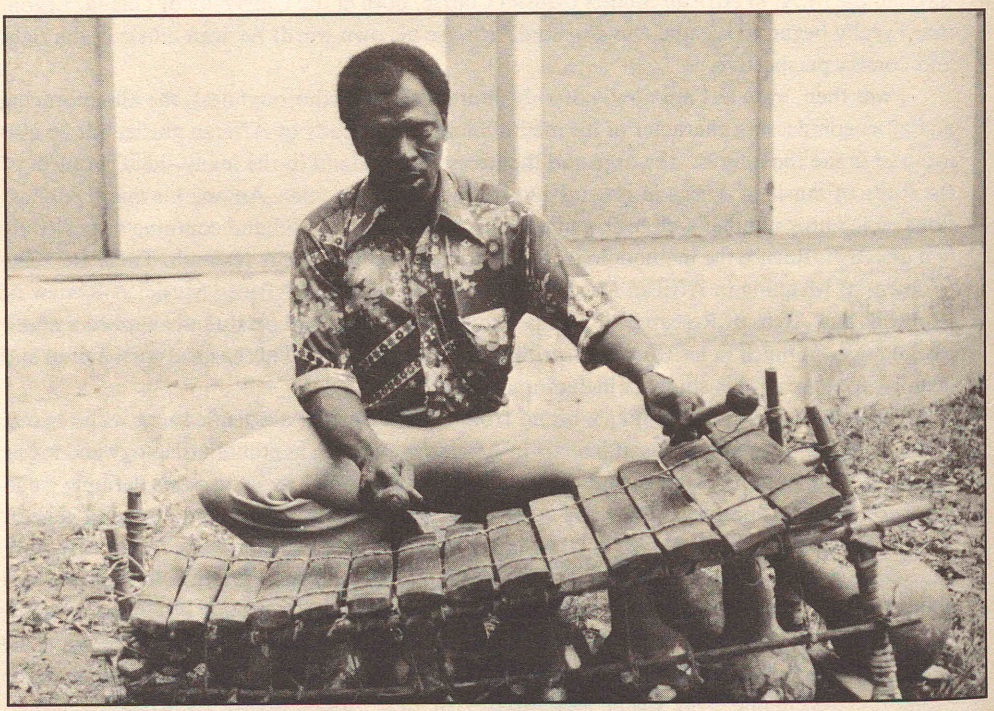


Photo 1: Kakraba Lobi playing the xylophone, 1976. (Photograph courtesy of Larry Godsey)

KAKRABA LOBI GOES SOUTH

"Kakraba Lobi" was not his original name. His father named him *Kunsinyire* which literally means "death spoils the home." When he was still a young boy, Kunsinyire behaved in a way that amused people. In self-praise he would refer to himself as being a *bandanjel*—the bouncing egg of the lizard, and this eventually became his name. Except perhaps in his home village of Saru or Sara near Kalba, in northwest Ghana, this great xylophonist is known neither as Kunsinyire nor Bandanjel.

In the past people from northern and upper Ghana migrating to the South, often adopted the name of their ethnic group. Thus it was common to find such names as Awuni *Kusasi*, Atia *Frafra*, or Mumuni *Kanjaga*: Kusasi, Frafra and Kanjaga being names of ethnic groups.

Kunsinyire travelled from his village to Dawurampong, a town near Kokote in the Ofinso district in Ashanti. He told his hosts that he came from Kalba in the Lobi ethnic area. His hosts could not easily pronounce Kalba. They found a ready solution in the local Akan word "Kakraba," meaning little one, that sounded nearest to Kalba. So by combining the name of his ethnic origin, Lobi, with the new name, Kakraba, they changed his name from *Kunsinyire* into *Kakraba Lobi* which he has not only accepted but has since used for himself and in all official documents including his passport.

Kakraba Lobi has not received any formal Western education. However, he has learned to write, read, sign his name and to speak English with a reasonable degree of fluency and intelligence. Although his passport gives the year of his birth as 1939, he believes that he was born three or four years earlier, which makes 1935 or 1936 as the possible year of birth. Kakraba recollects that he left Sara, his hometown, for Ashanti when he was about twelve or thirteen, that is about 1948 to 1949. He first stopped at Akumadan to look for a job, "to be employed as a farmer." He was not successful there, therefore he continued to Ofinso Kokote from where he went on to Dawurampong, all in the Ashanti region.

At Dawurampong he was first offered employment as a farm laborer with an annual emolument of five pounds. He considered this "too much work for too little money," and therefore declined the offer. He decided to learn the trade of *kente* cloth-weaving under a master weaver, one Yaw Barima, at a fee. After he "qualified," he worked for Yaw Barima for a period of six months to "cover the money I was expected to pay before leaving," (that is in lieu of) his apprenticeship charges. In the company of two other young *kente* weaver graduates, Kakraba stayed on and worked for his master for wages. In the end, Yaw Barima failed to pay them and Kakraba left him for Kumasi. This must have been in 1958 or slightly earlier, because he recalls that it was "the time we gained independence when the West African pound was first changed . . . " and that he "got the new money in Kumasi."[1]

Kakraba must have been more than twenty years old when he arrived at Kumasi. But he claims that at "that time I was about fourteen years." It is tempting to dismiss this claim but later claims seem to lend some credibility to it. At Kumasi he made the first attempt to learn to drive, but he soon went to work on a road construction project for a short while before spending about six months on a cocoa farm at Kodie near Goaso in the Brong Ahafo Region. He resumed his taxi driver apprenticeship under another person, again for a brief period, and ended up as a laborer on a sugarcane farm at Kumasi for about six months. After these varied experiences, he heard of an uncle serviceman

resident at Burma Camp in Accra. He therefore continued to Accra where he met that uncle.

At the beginning of his stay in Accra, he sold ice cream for a Lebanese businessman. A little while later he sold his own iced water. After a few months of these economic activities, including a two-month stretch on construction work at Legon, he decided to look for another job. All this while, that is throughout his journeys in Ashanti and in Accra, he never touched the xylophone. After he gave up the construction work at Legon hill, he moved to stay with a friend at Odorkor, an Accra suburb. In the same house was a fellow from his home district who owned a xylophone which he, the owner, could not play. For the first time since he left Sara, ten or more years back, Kakraba played on the xylophone to the delight and enjoyment of all, especially this fellow from his home district who happened to be a "headman," a leader of a work gang at the Accra Waterworks. Because of his skill on the xylophone, the headman decided to keep him by finding him a job at his work place. Kakraba at long last obtained a labor card, and a job with the Waterworks. His work was to dig trenches for the laying of water pipes. Because of his "tender" age and small physical build, he claims he could not complete his day's assignment even though all the other workers easily completed theirs. The European engineer in charge discovered that the work was too much for him, so he very sympathetically assigned him the lighter job of fetching drinking water for the workers.

All these events must have taken place in 1959 or 1960 when, according to his first age claim, he must have been more than twenty-one. At twenty-one, one would expect him to be big enough for full participation in the manual labor of earth digging. But he claims he could not.

According to his second age claim, he was about fourteen when he arrived at Kumasi in 1956 or 1957. This means he must have set out from Sara when he was about eight or nine years old. But Kakraba dismisses the suggestion that he came to Akumadan when he was under ten. He says, "No, I was not younger than ten years." He accepted that he was about eleven, twelve or thirteen. The second claim also means that when he got the job in Accra as a laborer he must have been sixteen. Whatever his age, the important thing is that in 1960 he was "too young" and physically incapable of digging trenches for water pipes.

When Kakraba Lobi returned home from work in the evening, he would play on the xylophone for the enjoyment and dancing pleasure of the headman. This xylophone on which he played was defective in the sense that it had no gourd resonators. In the course of time, word reached them at Odorkor that the headman's brother who had arrived at Teshie, another Accra suburb, on transfer from Tarkwa, a gold mining town in the Western region, had brought with him "a xylophone completely built, with gourd resonators. . . . " So, on a Friday evening Kakraba went to Teshie with the aim of bringing the xylophone to Odorkor the following morning. He very vividly recalls the incident that marked the first turning point in his life in the South.

KAKRABA PLAYS IN STREETS OF ACCRA

On that Saturday morning he was carrying the instrument on his head when he reached Osu, a suburb of Accra, tired and worn out. He put the xylophone down under a tree and began to play idle tunes on it. People who heard it invited him to come and play for them. He was reluctant at first because he knew they did not know the Lobi language

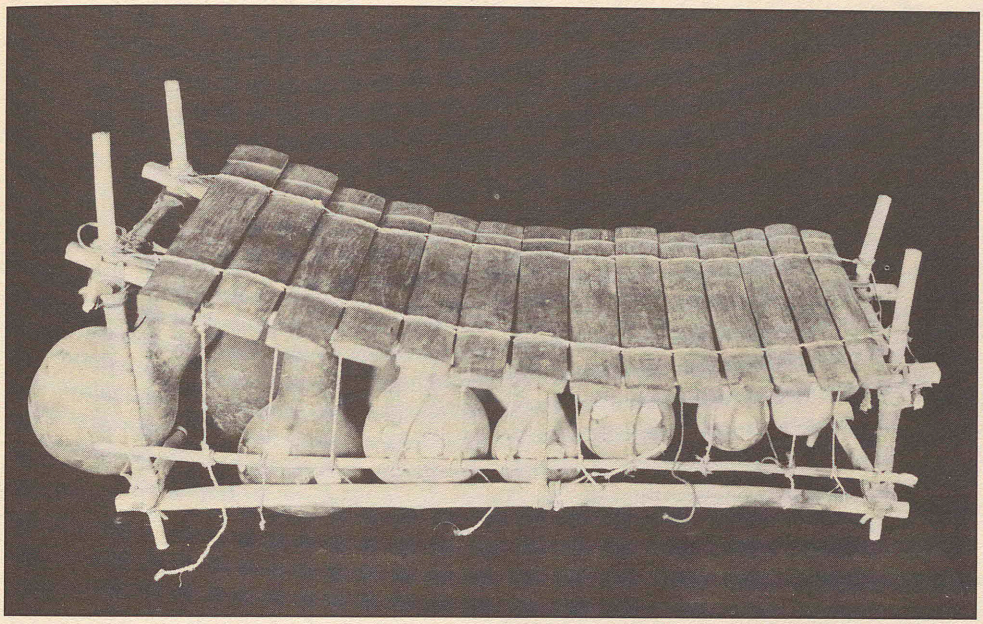


Photo 2: A full view of the type of xylophone used by Kakraba Lobi. (Photograph courtesy of the UCLA Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology Dept.)

and therefore they would neither understand nor enjoy the music. But as the people insisted, he obliged and played something to them, first in a Lobi musical idiom and then in the popular *highlife* idiom of the South. They understood the latter and therefore danced to it. Among the *highlife* melodies he played, he remembers, was *Konkonsa abo me*. To show their delight and appreciation, they threw money of different denominations at him. After a few minutes' performance, he stopped to check the money; he had collected about ten shillings. That was a lot of money for a laborer whose daily wage in those days was no more than two shillings.

The way was opened to Kakraba Lobi. He came to realize that he could make money by applying his instrumental playing skill instead of sweating under a pick-ax. He collected his xylophone and went to Accra where the very sight of the instrument attracted more people who wanted to know what it was and subsequently invited him to play for them. He played for a taxi driver, for Makola women and other passersby. By three o'clock in the afternoon, after some four hours of performances, he had collected fifteen pounds, enough to pay him for five months at his regular job. He was naturally happy and satisfied.

But Kakraba was still a traditionalist. Lobi custom prescribes that if a musician plays on another musician's xylophone and makes some money, all the money must be declared to the xylophone owner who decides on how much he will give to the former. So when Kakraba reached home, he declared his total earnings to the headman friend whose brother owned the instrument. The headman decided to keep the money "until there is enough, then it can be shared between us. . . . "

The headman sensed the prospect of making money out of Kakraba's performances. Using his position as leader of the gang of workers to which Kakraba belonged, he sent him the next day and on subsequent working days to the town to continue with his itinerant performances. Kakraba recollects that on the second day he collected about fifteen pounds which he again declared to the headman. He continued like that for the rest of the month at the end of which he approached the headman for his share of the earnings. It turned out, however, that the headman had squandered the entire amount.

As an artist, a devoted and skilled performing musician, this experience did not daunt him. He continued to go around Accra performing on his instrument. But he had learned his lesson the bitter way. The headman's behavior had affected and undermined his honesty. Instead of declaring the whole of the day's earnings to the headman, he opened a savings account at the Post Office into which he paid fractions of his daily earnings before he declared the remainder to the headman. He continued this deal until he had saved more than one hundred and fifty pounds.

KAKRABA ACQUIRES A XYLOPHONE

It was therefore no wonder that he gave up his job as a laborer at the Waterworks, withdrew his savings from the Post Office and proceeded to his home district to buy his own xylophone. And for the first time in more than ten years, that is since he left Sara for the South, Kakraba found himself back in the North. He did not think he had enough money to cover the obvious expenses that he would incur towards his family should he decide to visit them at his village. What is more important, he knew that if he went home his father would not permit him to return to the South again. So he decided not to go to Sara village. Instead he went to nearby Gbongboduri to see a famous xylophone maker, Dzasora. At Gbongboduri he missed his father by twenty-four hours; he was told his father had come to confer with Dzasora just the previous day.

Having arranged for his xylophone, he was expected to perform the necessary customary rites for the eventual acquisition of the instrument. In Lobiland the ceremony performed on the occasion of buying, that is outdooring, a xylophone is the same as the ceremony performed on the occasion of a death. Ordinarily when somebody dies, the xylophone "is brought outside" and played. Almost immediately, people start crying and wailing. The bereaved family then collects maize, guinea corn, beans, dry meat, pepper and all kinds of food items and prepares a meal for everybody to eat. Lots of the local drink, *pito*, are provided. When someone buys a new xylophone, he is expected to outdoor it in the same manner.

In addition the buyer has to pay a customary fee of a live cow for the xylophone. Kakraba performed an abbreviated version of this custom and paid for the xylophone in cash and returned to the South, because he had no cow to offer.

HIS FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY TRAINING

Before we go further in the study of Kakraba Lobi's musical life in the South, we may look at his family history and how he acquired his musical skill. As we discovered earlier on, it is not easy to establish the date, not even the year of birth of Kakraba. What can be established is the fact that he comes from a family of musicians. His father, Tijani, is one of five brothers of whom four are accredited musicians. Of these, two, Dana and

Dorpur, play the xylophone at funerals.[2] Two of these uncles, Darichier and Dana, are also expert xylophone builders.

Further evidence that Kakraba comes from a family of musicians is to be found in the fact that he has four brothers of whom only one, the youngest, is not a musician. The second brother is yet to qualify to play at funerals. The third brother xylophonist is Dorwana Tijani who until very recently was the resident xylophonist of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, attached to the Ghana Dance Ensemble.

In Lobiland parents do not actively teach their children to play the xylophone. Provision is however made for interested and ambitious sons to learn to play the instrument, *kpankpoli*. A rectangular hole is dug in the ground. Four pegs are planted a few inches from the corners of the hole. The interested son brings out the xylophone "keyboard" called *kpankpoli* which he ties to the four pegs, thus leaving the *kpankpoli* hanging on top of the hole, ready to be played. The *kpankpoli* is thus different from the normal *gyil* in which the keyboard is permanently mounted on its wooden frame, with gourd resonators to match. To learn to play the xylophone, the young musician after assembling the *kpankpoli* on its pegs, sits behind it and, by himself and on his own, begins to imitate and experiment with the tunes which he had heard his father, uncle, or elder brother play. This is how Kakraba began his first lessons in xylophone studies.

Considering the fact that Kakraba left his hometown at a very tender age of about nine or ten quite an accomplished musician, it can safely be suggested that he must have started his xylophone lessons at an unusually early age which he himself cannot clearly recall. Another significant thing is that throughout his sojourn in Ashanti between 1949/50 and 1959, he does not claim ever coming into contact with any xylophone. The first xylophone he ever played was the gourdless one he met at his Odorkor residence in about 1960. Yet there is no evidence to show that he had gone rusty within the many years of inaction.

And so when he sprang into action in 1960 and he realized that it was an economically rewarding exercise, he found it necessary to own his instrument. He felt that he should not share his earnings with any other person. He therefore continued his itinerant musical activities when he brought his xylophone from the North. It will be recalled that indigenous Lobi musicians make their money at funerals. This of course was not a regular or frequent affair. Kakraba in his new urban environment was free to play at any time, and on any day, for money. Thus he came to realize that being a xylophone musician in the South was a lucrative employment. When he started this development of his musical life, he first played his music before people rewarded him with money. But when he realized that "the people were really enjoying" the music, he started to charge a fee of one shilling before performing. In addition he collected whatever bystanders gave him. He was also performing on invitation.

On weekends he took the music to the houses of patrons. He would sometimes start from the roundabout near the Military Hospital in Accra, playing from bungalow to bungalow, till he reached Labadi, another suburb of Accra, from where he continued to Osu and then to bungalows at Kanda, near Nima. At the end of the day he would naturally be feeling tired and worn out yet he would carry his instrument and trudge homeward, refusing to go by taxi because he was afraid a driver would rob him of the day's takings. He was yet to rid himself of his rustic suspicions and beliefs. Kakraba recounts with pride the Lobi belief that if one is carrying the xylophone, one is free from all mishaps. He recalls that throughout the period he played all over Accra—at market places, in front of shops, on pavements and at residences—he never met with any mishap.

NEW HORIZON AT LEGON

A small incident opened the gateway to the second phase of his musical life in Accra—his contact with Legon. Kakraba anxiously wanted to know the source of the sounds that he used to hear coming from the radio in his house. After several weeks of searching, he went to Broadcasting House with his xylophone where he met Atta Annan Mensah and Kwaku Dery (both of the Music Department) who recorded a sample of his music. A. A. Mensah consequently invited him to participate in a concert that had been scheduled to take place at the University of Ghana, Legon, later in the week. He accepted the invitation and played at the concert, at which both Mensah and Nketia also performed. He was paid a small honorarium, and arrangements were made to record his music for the University's Music Archives. Because he was happy with his type of work and lifestyle, he declined the initial invitation to work full-time with Nketia at Legon. After several meetings and persuasions, he accepted work at the University of Ghana with J. H. Nketia. During the initial part of his association with Legon, he sometimes left the University about 10.00 a.m. for Accra where he continued his *itinerant* musical life. This was in 1961 when the Institute of African Studies had just been set up.

Initially Kakraba's schedule included playing on the xylophone for the purpose of being recorded, as well as explaining and illustrating how the instrument technically operates to enable scholars to study and write about the instrument. When the School of Music, Dance and Drama of the Institute of African Studies was founded in 1962, Kakraba began to teach students, including the writer, to play the xylophone. Later in the years that followed, the Institute of African Studies organized summer schools for American professors and their students who came to study the xylophone among other things. This is how Kakraba met Professor Comb who was to feature in his musical life later.

OVERSEAS PERFORMANCE TRAVELS

In 1963 Kakraba made his first trip outside Ghana. He accompanied Nketia and Mensah to a conference in Israel where, for the first time, he performed for a non-African audience at the University of Jerusalem. His music was very well received by the audience. This exposure to an outside audience and many others that followed later were a major factor that subsequently influenced his attitude to his own music. At first Kakraba was very discriminatory in the choice of the material he played even to his southern Ghanaian audiences. He would choose to play only the items with which his southern Ghanaian audiences were familiar, mainly popular *highlife* tunes. He would play indigenous Lobi items only when he was sure that there was the absolute need and demand for them.

To non-Ghanaian audiences, the popular *highlife* and the indigenous Lobi items were both exotic. So it did not really matter which one he played. He came to realize that both types of musical styles were acceptable to these non-Ghanaian audiences. However, he seemed more successful at winning their applause when he played indigenous Lobi items because he was most at home with these.

During this phase of Kakraba's musical life, he did not limit his public performances to solo concerts. He quite often played in ensembles that provided the music for the Ghana Dance Ensemble dances. He played with this dance group extensively in Ghana, in other countries in Africa and, later, in Europe and the Americas. In June 1965 the

troupe visited Hungary, East and West Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. That was the first time he presented his music to audiences outside Ghana within contexts that were closely akin to the original Lobi experience. People danced to xylophone music provided by a mixed instrumental ensemble.

In 1966 he accompanied the Ensemble to Dakar, Senegal. Later in the same year he and some students of the School of Music, Dance and Drama, under the superintendence of Professor Nketia, attended a music festival at Munich, West Germany. At the festival concerts, he played solo xylophone performances, for he had then not learned to integrate the xylophone with instruments played by students of the School.

When the 1968 Olympic Games were held in Mexico, Kakraba was part of the Ghana Dance Ensemble group that was invited to perform during the festivity. During this tour he combined the xylophone with drums and the *wea* flutes of northern Ghana to provide music for Dagarti *Bawaa* dances. He also performed solo interludes between dances. After the games, the group toured parts of the United States of America, France, Italy and Britain before returning to Ghana. The group must have impressed its audiences considerably. In 1969 they were invited to perform again in the United States and Italy.

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS IN OVERSEAS UNIVERSITIES

In the meantime, the Institute of African Studies was busy organizing its annual summer schools in which Kakraba taught the xylophone to visiting professors and students. He was evidently very successful with this assignment. In 1974, he was invited as Visiting Artist to Northwestern University where he taught the xylophone in the African Studies Programme for three months. The following year, 1975, Comb also invited him to the University of Tennessee where, as a Visiting Artist, he taught his instrument to American students for three months. From Tennessee he went to Chicago where he continued his teaching work at Northwestern University for another two months. In both universities he left the students with two *kogyil* to help them to continue with the xylophone tradition.

In 1977, Kakraba undertook a similar teaching assignment at the University of Cologne, West Germany, at the invitation of Robert Gunther. In addition to his teaching assignment, Kakraba recorded five items from his repertory which were pressed by Tangent Records in the United Kingdom on TGS 130 under the title *Kakraba Lobi—Xylophone Player from Ghana*. This can be said to be the first and to this date the only album of Ghanaian xylophone music. Later in the same year he went back to Europe, to Stockholm, Sweden, where he made recordings of xylophone music for use by children. While there, he entered into another contract with the education authorities. This contract made it possible for him to go back to Sweden in 1978 to undertake a three-month tour of about twenty schools where he demonstrated on his xylophone to children between the ages of seven and nine. Kakraba recalls this experience with pleasant memories because not only did he enjoy the reaction of the children to his type of music, but he also enjoyed the challenge of teaching his performance tradition to the children.

On his return to Ghana he received a letter from the government of Berlin inviting him to go there in 1979 with his wife and four children. He performed at concerts arranged for him by the Berlin authorities, and was entitled to a handsome government monthly maintenance grant, as well as all monies received at the box office for his concerts.

In September 1980, Kakraba was invited with Mustapha Addy, a Ghanaian drummer then resident in the United Kingdom, to attend the African Festival held in Dusseldorf. After the festival they stayed on for a while giving concerts and holding workshops that were organized for professional teachers and students.

KAKRABA AND THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES—A RETROSPECT

In March 1980, Kakraba resigned his appointment with the Institute of African Studies, Legon, to devote his full time and energy to the new kind of work that had begun to make calls on him and which took him away from his regular work in growing frequency. He recalls his teaching experience at the Institute with mixed feelings. He enjoyed his work with his foreign students, especially those from the United States and Zaire. They worked with commitment and devotion. They were quick to learn whatever he taught them and, within a short period, were able to perform creditably. On the other hand he thinks that with the single exception of one Saighoe, all his Ghanaian students were slow and covertly disinterested in their learning program. They did not only make very slow progress, several of them would fail to turn up for their weekly lessons. He very much regrets his inability to build up a strong xylophone playing culture both in the School of Performing Arts[3] and in the parent body, the Institute of African Studies.

KAKRABA IN NIGERIA

Between the latter part of 1980 and October 1981, Kakraba settled in Ghana and supervised his small transport and farming projects. At the height of the exodus of Ghanaian talent to Nigeria, Kakraba decided to join the current. In October 1981, he traveled to Lagos with his xylophone where for one month he played in the streets of Lagos as he did at the beginning of his musical career in Accra in 1960–1961. This experiment both exposed him to many Nigerian listeners and gave him more money than the few occasions where he was invited to play at hotels on weekends for three hours each night.

For his street performances he sensitively avoided playing anything Lobi. Instead he spent his first few days in Lagos learning a few popular Yoruba melodies which he "arranged" on the xylophone for his Yoruba audiences. As he could speak some Hausa, he composed one or two Hausa tunes which he sang as he accompanied himself on the xylophone. The sight of the strange instrument and the music that he produced from it, together with the vocal accompaniment in the local languages, fascinated his ever changing audiences who expressed their satisfaction by donating monies liberally.

He compares his Nigerian experience to that in Europe. He knew that his European hosts had their own xylophone with which they played their music. He also knew that the southern Ghana *highlife*, but for its rhythms, was structured and sounded like European xylophone music. Therefore to project the uniqueness of his xylophone, he refrained from playing anything southern Ghanaian. Instead he concentrated on only LoBirifor (full name for Lobi) items that demanded the dexterous application of the full resources of the instrument. These LoBirifor items also demanded the frequent complementary use of the left hand in playing part of the melody, which was mainly carried in the right hand. These musical features and qualities made LoBirifor items on the xylophone sound impressively complex. Further, this characteristic feature and technique of

playing the LoBirifor xylophone that produced a contrapuntal resultant made the instrument, its music, and its executor appeal to European audiences. This observation is corroborated by the notes on the jacket of his album published by Tangent. The writer observes: "Generally speaking, xylophone playing is characterized by the use of two beaters as independent projections of the hands. It is fascinating to observe how Kakraba's technique attains virtuosity through the creative imagination he displays in the variety of combinations produced by the manipulation of two beaters. The intricate, synchronous melodic/rhythmic roles of the two parts often alternate, resulting in a highly complex musical process in which it is often impossible to follow the two parts separately. Especially striking is the way in which the rhythmic and directional patterns are interlocked" (Gunther 1978).

Thus Kakraba is sensitively conscious of the type of musical items that he must play to his different audiences. To his southern Ghana audiences, he emphasizes *highlife* and popular local tunes. Yoruba and Hausa melodies are given prominence in Nigeria. In Europe he plays down on these and highlights traditional LoBirifor pieces. Among his own people at Sara and Kalba in Lobiland, however, he "shows off" his wide repertory, entertaining them with items he has acquired outside Lobiland in addition to whatever Lobi pieces he considers appropriate to play. He identifies those non-Lobi items before playing them to enable his LoBirifor audiences to comprehend and enjoy them.

HIS REPERTOIRE: THE TRADITIONAL AND INDIGENOUS ITEMS

We have already noted that Kakraba Lobi was born into a family of musicians. His father, Tijani, was both a maker and a player of the xylophone, *gyil*. Of Kakraba's four paternal uncles, three were accomplished xylophonists. He therefore grew and developed in the xylophone culture. Naturally his first experience of xylophone music was in the LoBirifor xylophone tradition. Even though his great grandfather was a Dagarti, the latter's long sojourn and settlement in LoBirifor land and their subsequent intermarriages with the Lobis had erased all Dagarti traces in his children and their children's children. Kakraba, a great grandson, therefore grew up to know and practice only the LoBirifor xylophone, *gyil*, tradition.

Up to the age of about twelve or thirteen when he left Sara and Kalba in Lobiland to travel South, he had been playing only pieces that he learned from his father and uncles. And these were all Lobi xylophone, *gyil*, repertoire. He never performed at any funeral at this stage of his musical life because he was too young. Moreover his father and uncles, more mature and more accomplished *gyil* performers, were all around.

Kakraba has since developed a wide repertoire of *gyil* music. These include several items from his native LoBirifor land, and others from their neighbor MeewoLobi group. His repertoire includes items from Lobi Lusaala, Dagarti and Sissala, all in Ghana, and Wangara in Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso. He has also composed a few original works.

The earliest repertoire he learned was called *Pire*, an introductory item that every qualified *gyil* player must play before he plays anything else. And it happens to be the first that a LoBirifor xylophone student learns to play. There is a version of this which he calls the learner's version; the qualified or advanced player can then go on from that to perform the advanced version. *Pire* incidentally is the music that is performed at the funeral of men in LoBirifor land, and like all LoBirifor funeral music, it is played on the *kogyil*, the Lobi funeral xylophone.

His LoBirifor repertoire includes *Ponar Pire*, another funeral music for members of the Ponar family, performed for both men and women, and *Darkpen*, funeral music for men and old women who have reached menopause. Because LoBirifor musical tradition admits new *Darkpen* additions, accomplished *gyil* musicians take the opportunity to compose their own *Darkpen* items. Kakraba therefore plays several *Darkpen* items including one entitled *Nanyie nur gbar kara* (The thief has a long hand) composed by Pador, a grandfather-in-law of Kakraba.

Although musicians are free to compose their own items, it appears that the number of *Pokwobo* items he plays is not as great. A popular one he often plays is said to bemoan the death of a wife whose absence is felt because there will be "none to cook the food for the household and to take care of the children." The text therefore sympathizes with the bereaved husband, who, together with the rest of his family, is urged by the musician to give him, the musician, monetary gifts.

Gun, another *kogyil* (funeral) music, is played for all and sundry: for men and women, for the old and the young. LoBirifor *gyil* players are free to compose their own version of the *gun* music.

The LoBirifor have several family lineages. Among them are the Daga, Panala, Wielbe, Wetulbo and the Ponar. The Ponar family *gyil* musicians play an item they call Ponar Big Song, *Ponar Binkpen*, which Kakraba has included in his repertoire.

One very important genre of LoBirifor *gyil* music is *Kyikwobene* (*kyi* = guinea corn; *kwo* = farmer, and *bene* = music), music for the guinea corn farmer. Even though the LoBirifor farmer specializes in cultivating such other items as yam and maize, that genre of *gyil* music is dedicated to the guinea corn farmer on behalf of all farmers, because almost all LoBirifor farmers plant guinea corn. *Mayiri kwò rali yi* —the farmer does not sleep—is part of the text of the music. He is supposed to be up by five o'clock at dawn, wash, and go to the farm and not come back until the evening. Kakraba has not composed any *Kyikwobene* because "nobody composes *Kyikwobene*," and "because there is only one way of playing it. . . . " The *Kyikwobene* he plays is claimed to have been composed before the present century and no new music has been added.

Just beyond Ghana's western border are the Lobi Meewo who live in Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). Even though the LoBirifor and LoMeewo do not speak the same language, elements from their social and musical cultures are shared. Consequently, Kakraba includes in his repertoire the LoMeewo *Joro* funeral music for adults.

Another Lobi sub-group are the Lobi Lusaala who live in and around Lawra, also in the Upper West Region of Ghana. From this group Kakraba includes two types of *gyil* music: *Tumo Bine* and *Sebri Yielu*. From the *Tumo Bine* (Work Song) genre he plays an item entitled *Die Bine* (literally, Room Dance), which is dance music played to accompany the tedious exercise of roofing a house with mud. The workers sing and dance as they go on with the work. The accompanying song says:

> Tsepil, son of Zen,
> Members of your lineage die young.
> The people talk of you
> That members of your lineage die young.

Sebri Yielu (Sebri songs) music is performed to celebrate the harvest season in Lobi Lusaalaland. He plays several of such songs in a kind of suite, one of which is entitled *Fonsa di noo kye wa kpi alesa*, saying that it is better to enjoy one's wealth in one's lifetime than to starve to death and leave it for others to enjoy.

The Dagarti are the eastern neighbors of the LoBirifor. Among other things they play the *Bawaa*, a popular music and dance form for the youth. The story is told in one such song, *Dekuor gaa zie*, of a school girl who voluntarily "sees" the bedroom of a bachelor and consequently becomes pregnant. The bachelor refuses to accept any blame for the accident. The singer narrates:

The girl wished trouble for herself.
If she goes into the bachelor's bedroom,
She deserves the consequence.

A second *Bawaa* song, *Puo yele* (The matter in my stomach) says that his thoughts are a secret to himself. The text is:

What I have in my stomach
Nobody else can know.

Another *Bawaa* song, *Vielu daa*, discusses how the people of Nandom have developed the taste for good drink, *pito*. It says that there is a good and abundant harvest of millet which is to be brewed into good *pito* for their consumption. The full text is:

It is good alcoholic drink
That the people of Namdom drink.
There is an abundance of millet seeds
To brew more alcoholic drink.

Kakraba aims at introducing and maintaining stylistic variation in his performance program. His repertoire therefore includes an item from the Sissala, also in the Upper West Region of Ghana, who practice another xylophone tradition. Out of his entire repertoire, this item is the only one he cannot identify by a title. He identifies it only by its ethnic origin.

Immediately north of Ghana, in Burkina Faso, are the Wangara who belong to the xylophone culture complex of that geographical region. From their xylophone repertoire Kakraba has added one item which he identifies as *Kambele bi na Bobo-gyileso*, that is, "There are plenty of women at Bobogyileso."

HIS REPERTOIRE: ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

As a performing artist, born, bred and trained in an indigenous LoBirifor environment, it is no wonder that this large repertoire of Kakraba, discussed above, belongs to the traditional stock. He would have been limited to the items from LoBirifor and perhaps Lobi Meewo and might not be able to include anything from Lobi Lusaala, Sissala and Wangara, if he had remained within his ethnic boundaries. By moving out of his indigenous ethnic area to the South where he came in contact with other xylophone cultures, he enriched his knowledge, skill and repertoire. Because of the new performing situations in which he found himself, namely to perform out of context in concert halls, and to audiences that were non-participating but passive listeners, Kakraba slowly but progressively felt the need to enrich his programs by including items of different styles.

Secondly, Kakraba was exposed to the creative artistic activities ever unfolding at the Institute of African Studies and the School of Performing Arts. He was also exposed to concerts given at the University by celebrated visiting musicians and to orchestral and other musical concerts in Europe and elsewhere during his many overseas tours. These

exposures and experiences brought new life into his otherwise dormant creative faculty, and generated the urge to exercise that creative faculty. The result was that Kakraba composed five original pieces in addition to a few other African melodies that he "arranged" for the xylophone.

He composed his first xylophone piece, *Lokpen Domo*, in 1965. The music depicts a situation in which a person lives albeit happily and peacefully with a neighbor as a friend but who in reality is a bitter enemy. The music warns us to beware of our friends.

His second composition has an interesting history. Early one morning in 1966 Kakraba left his house to see a friend. On his way he met two girls engaged in a brawl. Since he knew one of them, he tried to intervene and to cool them down. Both of them ignored his intervention and the quarrel escalated into a fight in which the one known to him suffered a good beating. This incident made a deep and lasting impression on Kakraba who remarked that it is not good to engage in brawls that end in struggles and fights. Later that same year he traveled in the company of Nketia to West Germany. In the morning following an impressive evening's orchestral concert, the visitors were conducted around a xylophone producing factory where the visiting African xylophonist, Kakraba, was invited to demonstrate his skill on the European xylophone. After satisfying himself that the tuning was different from that of his own xylophone, he decided not to attempt to play any of the xylophone music that he knew from his homeland. Instead he decided to improvise. He then quickly recalled his impressions of the previous evening's orchestral music and decided to play in that style. He improvised a melody that was characterized by distinctively slow and very fast moving phrases. The rest of the demonstration was characterized by contrasting *pianissimo* and *fortissimo* as well *accelerando* and *ritardando* sections. He was consciously and intentionally introducing Western musical elements and performance style into his music for the first time.

In 1967, that is some months after he had returned to Ghana, he decided to develop the melodic idea on his own xylophone that he improvised on in West Germany using the European xylophone. He recalled the scene of the quarrel and fight between the two girls the previous year and decided to describe it in the music. Thus he called that piece *Gidigidi menyo o*, an Ewe phrase that means struggling or fighting is not good. As he puts it, *Gidigidi menyo o* is unlike other Lobi pieces. "It does not speak. It has no words. It is like European music. When you listen to *Gidigidi menyo o* you find that it is played in the Western style, the way they play loud and soft. So I can say it is a very interesting composition." Apart from using contrasting *pianissimo-fortissimo* and *accelerando-ritardando* features, he employed developmental techniques including extracting from the melodic phrase a short melodic motif which he sequentially tossed around between the two hands, in the high, middle and low registers of the instrument, sometimes in a statement-and-answer fashion.

A few years later (he does not remember exactly when), he composed *Salo Kakraba, Tijan Kakraba, nire kotuon ima yele*. Literally it means "Kakraba, son of Salo (mother), Kakraba, son of Tijan (father), nobody can do me any harm." The style is typical of Lobi xylophone music. The melody is in the right hand, mainly in the upper-middle register, while the left hand carries a rhythmic ostinato in the lower register. He sings an accompanying song.

It was not until 1976 that Kakraba came out with his fourth composition. It is called *O ni nyuo*, The cat and the mouse. This piece was created in the then popular narrative style of the guitar bands of southern Ghana. The xylophone provides an accompanying

ostinato, with a melodic statement in the right hand and the answer in the left hand. In an agitated voice he narrates the story of the cat and mouse, pausing now and again for an instrumental interlude which then grows contrastingly fuller and denser, as compared with the ostinato accompaniment. Towards the end he sings a song whose accompaniment is a development, a fuller and denser version, of the ostinato figure.

Gandaa yina is the last of Kakraba's compositions. Composed in 1977, *Gandaa yina* is a *Darkpen*, men's funeral music. It laments the fact that the strong and courageous man is dead; the breadwinner is dead. In *Gandaa yina* Kakraba works on an original melody that is carried in both hands while at the appropriate time the left hand provides the accompaniment, both melodic and rhythmic. The LoBirifor *Darkpen* player may or may not provide a vocal line to the *kogyil* part. There is no hard and fast rule governing this practice. In his *Gandaa yina* Kakraba decides to provide a song line to the instrumental part. Notwithstanding this, the writer has witnessed Kakraba perform his *Gandaa yina* on a few occasions without the accompanying vocal line.

THE GYIL IN A MODERN URBAN ENVIRONMENT

In indigenous LoBirifor tradition the xylophone is used functionally to announce deaths, to sympathize with bereaved individuals and families, and to provide recreational entertainment to the community. As in other African musical situations the audiences are not mere passive listeners, they are active participants who share in the singing, in providing rhythmic accompaniment by way of handclapping, and in the dancing. The arena of performance is often the village square, the shade of the big tree in the village or the opening space in front of a house. The performing musician(s) is/are surrounded by the audience. These were the traditions and conditions under which Kakraba learned and practiced his *gyil* music before he left for the South.

In the urban areas where he now found himself, conditions and other things were different. There were no funerals to which he could be invited; although it can be said that there were a good number of LoBirifor nationals around whom he could entertain with his music. Generally his audiences comprised people who were not LoBirifor, they belonged to other ethnic groups to whom the *gyil* music was not quite easily intelligible, and therefore they could not actively participate in the performance. They were forced by circumstances to behave as passive listeners. It is true that when he performed from house to house, in market places and on pavements, he was often surrounded on all sides by his audiences who, because the music was strange, listened passively; yet it is also true that he often performed on stage in concert halls where his audiences were physically removed from him, and he observed the prescriptions of concert hall traditions and etiquette. The audiences were not the active participants he played to at home; they were passive audiences who sat quietly through the duration of items and only came to life with applause at the end of each item. The new situation deprived Kakraba of the opportunity to address or speak, through the music, to individuals or to contextually important actors in the musical drama that was expected to be unfolding.

As a result of his attendance at concerts given by visiting Western musicians in Ghana, as well as the concerts he attended in Europe and the Americas, he learned and appreciated Euro-American concert hall conventions practiced by artists. As part of his concert hall performance etiquette, therefore, he has learned to appear on the stage when

the audience is seated, to bow to the audience and take his seat. He captures the attention of the audience by briefly directing a concentrated gaze at them before he commences his performance. Musically, he has learned to control the length or duration of the pieces he plays in contrast to what he normally does in his home environment where he can prolong a piece indefinitely to satisfy the interest and need of the participating audience. Finally, he has learned to mark the end of his performance with a bow, and to return to the stage to acknowledge the audience's applause, also, with a bow.

This awareness of, and indulgence in, Western music performance traditions and conventions have had a resultant effect on the performance of his music. We have already referred to *Gidigidi menyo o*, one of his original compositions, in which he employed those elements of European music idiom that appealed to him as a result of a concert he attended in West Germany. This piece as we noted, is characterized by contrasting fast and slow, *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* passages, as well as *ritardando* cadences.

In the music from the LoBirifor tradition, Kakraba does not introduce these European musical characteristics in the main body of the pieces. In *Vielu daa*, a Dagarti *Bawaa* piece, however, he introduces a *ritardando* at the end. Similarly in the Lobi Lusaala *Tumo Bine* music, Kakraba does not only end in *ritardando*, he also introduces a *decrescendo* at the same point. Another item in which he introduces *ritardando* at the end is his grandfather-in-law's *Darkpen* entitled *Nanyie nur gbar kara*. In his own *Darkpen, Gandaa yina*, he very briefly uses *ritardando* at the end of the piece. It seems reasonable to say in summary that Kakraba has accepted some European music performance styles and practices which he consciously employs in his performances, even in some of the traditional pieces. And specifically he employs the *ritardando* style almost exclusively at the end of such pieces.

While playing for a LoBirifor *Bori* festival one of the two *gyil* players, the player of the female *gyil*, turns the beater in his left hand to tap a rhythm on the last slat with the wooden handle of the beater, while the right hand continues with its music. This practice forms a structural part of the music because it is a signal that calls the dancers to change from marching in a circular formation into active linear dancing with all the bodily movements that constitute that kind of dance. In other situations such as playing the *Darkpen*, when the xylophonist is fully charged, he may express his emotion by tapping a time line of rhythm on the last slat with the wooden handle of the beater in the left hand while the right hand continues with the melody.

Kakraba also uses this performance device but for a different reason and purpose. He begins to excite his audience by systematically introducing sections of the music that are marked by more and more musical complexity and playing dexterity. Then at the appropriate point, at the climax, he introduces this performance device which invariably draws a round of applause from the audience. As a departure he sometimes uses his right hand to tap the rhythm as the left hand continues with an ostinato figure. Kakraba thus employs this traditional device to project his showmanship in the xylophone music culture in the new urban environment.

Frequently when Kakraba moves away from the beginning towards the middle section of a piece, his lips may be seen to be moving. This action is an externalization of a more fundamental action taking place in his throat. From the throat can be heard what may amount to grunts. These grunts are uttered independently of the melody that the xylophone may be playing even though he explains that he is articulating the tuning of

the keys and that action gives him the impetus to play more accurately, *agitato*. Be that as it may, that practice can be considered a personal idiosyncracy that he has developed as part of his performance personality.

This writer has known Kakraba to perform his *Gidigidi menyo o* at an open public concert to last about eight or more minutes. Years later when this writer recorded Kakraba playing the same item on request, he completed the piece in about three of four minutes. When questioned on this, he readily admitted the difference but explained that that was part of his performance "trick." He argued that his xylophone music, including the traditional numbers as well as his own compositions and arrangements, was not a written tradition and therefore after establishing the principal melodic and/or rhythmic characteristics of a particular piece, it is he and only he who can determine the ultimate duration or form of the music. He revealed that he uses various forms of repetition, deletion and developmental techniques to lengthen or shorten the duration of his items. These techniques include melodic repetition. A melody may be repeated in different registers of the instrument. Or it may be repeated with embellished coloration that may, in some instances, amount to a melodic variation. Alternatively the repetition may take the form of a dialogue between the two hands in which the left hand answer may be given in the same register or in another a step or two below.

He employs yet another technique in prolonging his music. He may introduce new material, melodic, rhythmic or harmonic, which he develops and which smoothly joins on to a later restatement of the original music. Repetition, it may be emphasized, is a very important stock-in-trade of Kakraba's xylophone music culture. Yet one can hardly get bored with his music because he seasons his repetitions with variations, and handles them expertly too.

EPILOGUE

Now in his late forties, Kakraba can be said to be still young. He left the academic environment of Legon in March 1980. His last academic and professional overseas engagement took place in September-October 1980. It was not until October 1981, that he undertook a short and exploratory performance trip to Lagos in Nigeria. It appears there is a lull in the hectic round of engagements that characterized his musical life between 1975 and 1980, and which precipitated his resignation from the Institute of African Studies in 1980. A chapter in the musical life of Kakraba is closing or has just closed, and a new phase is now opening.

Having been apparently satisfied with the result of his exploratory experiment in Lagos in 1981, Kakraba was back in Nigeria as a migrant musician. He was an artist who, with his past wide and varied international experience, moved around in the streets and nightclubs of Nigerian cities performing his music for his livelihood. He had gone back some twenty-four or twenty-five odd years to what he was doing in the streets of Accra in 1960, but perhaps in a different geographical, social and economic environment. The economy of Nigeria then, which, compared with that of Ghana, was a booming one, and had attracted hundreds of thousands of Ghanaians of all calls of life. These included footballers, laborers, artisans, technicians, professionals, music teachers and practicing musicians of whom Kakraba was one.[4] One is tempted to believe that this phase of Kakraba's musical life was bound up with the continued prosperity of the Nigerian economy or, on the other hand, until the economy of Ghana began to bounce back to life.

What is more difficult to forecast about Kakraba and his music is the direction and tempo of its development. Kakraba was until recently in popular music making in a strange land. It is obvious that the LoBirifor, LoLusaa a, LoMeewo, or Dagarti items were not suitable for the new environment and audience. He would have to play low on these and highlight popular Yoruba, Igbo or Hausa music for his new audience. But how are these going to influence and shape the direction and tempo of the development of his xylophone music? One can see him developing more showmanship antics and very little or no development in the area of classical LoBirifor xylophone music idiom or anything like his own *Gidigidi menyo o*.

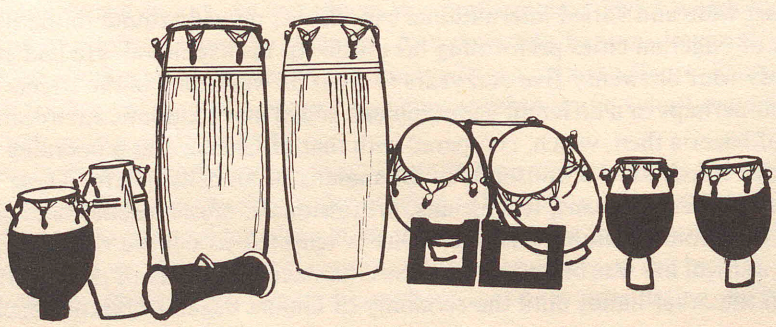
NOTES

1. The West African currency for Nigeria, the then Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia ceased to be legal tender, and was replaced in Ghana with the Ghana pound in 1959.
2. In Lobi musical tradition a xylophonist must be a distinguished player before he is invited to perform at a funeral. He is expected to sympathize with and extol the bereaved family, by making references to their appropriate ancestors. He must be knowledgeable in local history.
3. Kakraba's teaching links with the School ceased in 1977 when the School became independent of the parent body, the Institute of African Studies.
4. Following the order of the Government of Nigeria that resulted in the exodus of illegal immigrants out of Nigeria in January-February 1983, it is assumed that Kakraba has returned to Ghana.

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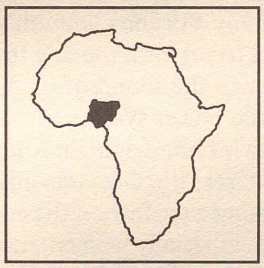
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4

THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF MUSIC AT YORUBA FESTIVALS

TUNJI VIDAL



STATEMENT: The greatest influence of Professor Nketia's work and findings in my research work has been his philosophy of discussing music, especially African music in the context of culture and society, and his three dimensional approach to the analysis of music in terms of sound, structure and function. Of particular significance is his linguistic approach to the analysis of music—an approach that has led me to many meaningful discoveries and a better understanding of the music of my own culture in particular and the music of other cultures in general. Since everything cannot be demonstrated in one single article, I have decided to concentrate on the functional aspect of music within a specific context, the festival. □

INTRODUCTION

Within Yoruba society, a festival is generally defined as an annual event or anniversary in remembrance or commemoration of a god, spirit, ancestor, king or historical occurrence. Ogunba (1978) defines it as the great artistic institution in traditional Africa. When one scrutinizes the events that precede, culminate, and terminate with the festival, one finds a specter of human activities and behavior, sometimes puzzling with their multifaceted meanings. Not only is the festival an artistic occasion with deep spiritual values during which individual and societal sentiments are given expression through the medium of music, dance, drama, costume, sculpture and other non-verbal modes of expression, it is an occasion for cultural reawakening with its attendant historical values of allusions to atavistic subjects. It constitutes one of the main periodic forms of amusement, entertainment, and diversion. The variety of conceptual interpretations of the festival is often reflected in the equally diverse forms of its artistic and humanistic components as well as their corresponding functions.

PURPOSE AND METHOD

Through a careful examination and analysis of the sequence of events and human activities surrounding the festival, this paper outlines the role and function of music, one of the artistic components of Yoruba festivals. Music is known to perform an important role in the traditional lives of the Yoruba people. The death of the king, for

example, is often announced through the sounding of rhythms performed on the *gbedu* drums (a set of five drums of contrasting sizes and pitches kept by Yoruba kings in the palace and played during important palace ceremonies):

Yoruba Text:	**Translation:**
O je titi.	You ate for a long time.
O mu titi.	You drank for a long time.
O ku gbi.	You fell down like a log of wood.

Individual and familial identities are often presented to the community in the form of *oriki* (praise chants) that give the subjects' history and genealogy. Important historical events are recorded for posterity either through the composition of special music[1] or the invention of new musical instruments.[2] These are only a few illustrations of the significance of music in a Yoruba community.

The focus of this paper, however, is on the festival—an annual religious, ceremonial and social event—as it is observed, reenacted, and staged in many Yoruba communities and towns. Although music is often thought by casual observers to perform the sole function of entertainment, this is hardly the case. For example, when the sound of the bull roarer rings out during the *Oro* festival (*Oro* represents the male power symbol through which discipline and justice are maintained in a festival), the whizzing frightful sounds can hardly be said to be entertaining. By sounding the bull roarer, the *Oro* not only is announcing its appearance in public and simultaneously imposing a curfew on the community, but it is a way of sequestering all the uninitiated people, especially women, inside their houses, thus effectively keeping them away from the secrets of the *Oro* cult.

THE FESTIVAL

Before discussing the role and function of music at Yoruba festivals, it is important to first examine the structure of the festival in the Yoruba speaking area. The celebration varies from town to town as well as from event to event. The length of the celebration is not set, and sometimes festivals of varied duration may be held in the same town. A festival may be elaborate or non-elaborate; it may be public or private.

Whether a festival is publicly or privately executed is determined by those who plan it on behalf of members of the community and the entire Yoruba race. In Ife, the cradle of Yoruba civilization, a festival is held every day of the year except one day (there are three hundred and sixty-four festival days). This festival-free day is known only to the *Kabiyesi* (another name for the paramount ruler). Ife thus observes more festival days than any other Yoruba town. As explained by the participants, these festivals are conducted for the peace, welfare and prosperity of the Ife people, as well as for those Yoruba who have migrated from Ife to other parts of the globe.

Despite variations, there are certain constants that define the structure of the Yoruba festival. The entire festival event can be divided into three stages of activities: pre-festival, festival, and post-festival. The pre-festival activities consist of the announcement and preparation. The principal group involved in the execution of the festival meets with the *Kabiyesi* of the town to secure a date, which is determined by one of three methods: 1) consultation with the *Ifa* oracle, 2) observation of the cyclical cosmological events of the sun, moon and rain, or 3) consideration of the periodicity and sequence of various festivals that have been celebrated by the town or community. Once the date is given or

approved by the *Kabiyesi*, the custodians of the festival, who are responsible for ensuring the successful celebration, start preparation. Public announcements are then made. In the past, announcements were made either by the town crier (*akigbe*) who broke the news at the market place; specific cult members who visited the homes of important chiefs in the town; or the appearance of appropriate mask or age-sex dancing groups. Today some of these traditional modes of announcements have been replaced with modern communication such as radio, television and the newspaper.

At the festival, several activities—rituals (*etutu*), sacrifice (*ebo*), atonement (*ebe*), and thanksgiving (*ope*)—are performed either in private or both private and public. It is during the public presentation that the entire community is involved as participants, observers or well-wishers, and a large procession through the town to important religious and historical sites normally takes place.

The post-festival activities involve the cleaning up and removal of material used in the festival. In some cases, a specific drum may be sounded to again announce the end of the festival.

THE OLOJO FESTIVAL

The annual *Olojo* (owner of today) celebration held recently at Ife illustrates the model structure of Yoruba festivals and the role played by music. The *Olojo*, dedicated to *Ogun*, the god of iron and war, is usually referred to as the pathfinder in the Yoruba pantheon and therefore occupies a unique position among the other deities. The *Olojo* festival, which lasts for three days, is preceded by a series of activities among which is the *ilagun* or vigil keeping ceremony at the *okemogun* (the *Ogun* shrine). Located about one hundred yards away from the palace entrance of the *Ooni* (paramount ruler) of Ife, the *okemogun* is a sacred grove situated on a hill where there stands a stone obelisk symbolizing *Ogun*. A day before the *ilagun* ceremony, Chief Osogun (the *Ogun* priest) and other priests meet to prepare the *Ogun* shrine. The *Ooni* enters into seclusion to commune with his ancestors three days before the *ilagun* ceremony begins. He communicates with no one, for it is at this time that he is expected to attain the highest state of spiritual consciousness and purity necessary for the festival.

The *ilagun* ceremony takes place at night. Two hoes and gong-bells are provided by Chief Ojugbede (the representative of Ife blacksmiths), who is accompanied to the palace on the day of the festival with the musical repertoire known as *ojugbede* music. Assisted by other chiefs, the *Ooni* or his representative pours libation for *Ogun* and offers prayers for the peace and prosperity of Yorubaland. After which he leads a ritual dance around the shrine. Once these preparations are completed, the stage is then set for the festival.

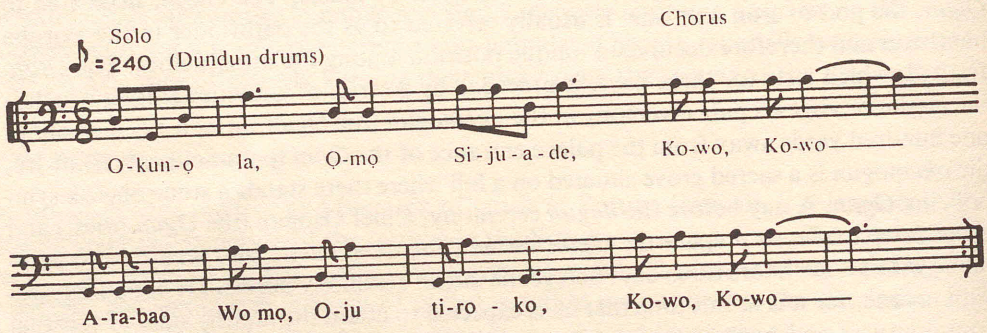
On the day of the festival, called first *okemogun*, many important elders, chiefs and dignitaries start arriving at the palace to pay homage to the *Ooni*, and by twelve noon a few people will have gathered both inside and outside the palace. At 3:00 p.m., various chiefs of Ife start arriving on foot in a procession to the palace with their musical ensembles: the *laalo* bell ensemble of Chief Ojugbede, the *bembe* drum ensemble of Chief Osogun, and the *geredigi* bell ensemble. Inside the palace, other musical ensembles (*dundun, bembe, bata, apinti*, and *agere*) are played simultaneously at different spots. The *emese* court where the *Ooni* is received by the chiefs has been decorated and prepared. Several calabashes are placed on the ground, and a stone is put a little distance

away from the outer perimeter of the *emese* court. Rituals and ceremonies, which can be divided into three main categories, continue inside and outside the palace:

I. The highly private ceremonies are held inside the inner chamber of the palace where only a few people are allowed. Here the *Ooni* dances to the music of *osigiri*, the state drum. After putting on the *are*, the sacred beaded crown that is brought out and worn by the king only once a year during the *Olojo* festival, he is greeted with shouts of "*Kabiyesi.*" Normally, the *are* is kept in another inner chamber within the palace.

II. The semi-private ceremonies are held in the palace courts and yard. In the *emese* court, the *Kabiyesi* appears with the *are* in full regalia and receives loud ovations from chiefs, dignitaries and others gathered. Prepared with whips, the *ilari* (king's servants or messengers) get ready to clear the road for the procession. While a white parasol is held above him, protecting the *are* from rain or water, another parasol, crimson in color, is used to lead the procession. The drummers, who have been drumming all day inside the palace awaiting the appearance of the *Ooni*, increase their tempo and volume and play the following drum verse at the first sighting of the king:

Example 1. *Olojo* Festival: Drum verse for the king's procession



This drum verse alludes to the events of the past twelve months—how some people wished that the king had fallen, and how the great tree, *araba*, did not fall; thus the *iroko* (another big tree in the forest) was put to shame. It is politically expedient and respectful on festival days to play drum verses or sing songs that emphasize or articulate the supremacy or victory of a paramount ruler over the travails of the preceding year. To do this, musicians must be well acquainted with the political events of the community during the preceding year so that they can utilize their power of communication either to the advantage or disadvantage of any paramount ruler, aristocrat, or public figure in the society. The drummers, echoed by the singing crowd, repeat this verse continuously as the *Kabiyesi* moves forward to the last shrine (*ile-nla*—located opposite the *emese* court, just before and overlooking the three main entrances to the palace). On this spot, beside the *ororí* (sacred graves) of departed kings, the *Kabiyesi* steps on some ritual

ingredients prepared on the ground; receives blessings and assurance of a safe return back into the palace; and then moves out of the palace into the public.

III. The public ceremonies begin around five o'clock in the afternoon. The *Ooni* comes out of the palace and leads a procession of chiefs to *okemogun*. He passes through *enuwa* (the public quadrangle) where a huge assembled crowd of citizens wait to receive their king and catch a glimpse of the *are*. With the *ilari* clearing the way and accompanied by his chiefs and drummers, the *Ooni* receives loud ovations from the thousands of people who have gathered outside the palace. He moves to the *Ogun* shrine where the grove has been decorated with palm fronds. The carcass of a dog hangs upside down over the grove. At the foot of the grove, the *Ooni* offers a ram to be sacrificed to the spirits of past monarchs. Guns are fired into the air, and prayers are said. At the end of the ceremony the *Ooni*, still accompanied by drummers, returns by a different route (although parallel to the first one), which overlooks the left entrance of the palace. Midway, he stops at the *Ifa* temple and exchanges greetings with the *Araba* (chief of the *Ifa* priests), who has been waiting to receive him in the traditional manner. After the exchange of greetings with the *Araba*, the king then continues his return to the palace through the *igbo-ija* (a historical spot) where the *Obalufe*, prime minister, has been awaiting him with other chiefs. Here, the names and *oriki* (their noble deeds and contributions to Yorubaland) of the past monarchs are recited in a kind declamatory "recitative" style by the *Obalufe* who then continues his procession to his official residence while the main procession of the *Ooni* ends in the palace.

Thousands of people gathered outside the palace as well as worshippers of other divinities who have lined the route of the *Ooni* to the *Ogun* shrine with their musical ensembles now retreat to their respective homes. By 6:30 p.m., the retreat is complete and another first *okemegun* is ended. On the night of this *okemogun*, while a curfew is observed throughout the community, an ultra-private ritual is held inside the heart of the town. The ritual is performed not only to cleanse the town, but to ensure that all its iniquities are carried away. It should be remarked that since the commencement of the rituals for the festival, several animals including dogs, goats, rams and sheep have already been slaughtered at different spots inside and outside the palace.

On the second day, which is a free day, the chiefs from *Ilare* (the quarters of the king's ancestors) entertain the audience at the *Ooni*'s palace with their magical powers and cultural dance. The second *okemogun*, the return visit of the *Ooni* to the *Ogun* shrine, takes place on the third day of the festival. By 4:00 p.m., many people will have gathered both inside and outside the palace. On this day, the crowd is more stratified, including musical, religious, associational, and age groups of both sexes who parade the grounds between the palace and the *Ogun* shrine. About a dozen and a half *Ogun* women worshippers, all clad in white wrappers and *buba* (a type of dress worn by women), gather around the *Ogun* shrine. After singing and beating a set (three) of *bembe* drums, they take the route to *Ilare*. Also featured are several ensembles of *bembe* and *agogo* (bell) musicians who perform as their chiefs arrive for the second *okemogun* ceremony. Also at about 4:00 p.m., the *Ooni* appears in public again surrounded by his chiefs and preceded by the *ilari*. He proceeds to the *okemogun* for the ceremonies of the second *okemogun*. At the foot of the shrine, the rituals of the first day are repeated, musketry are fired into the air, and then the *Kabiyesi* with his entourage go to the *Ilare* quarters to visit and greet his royal ancestors and members of his family. Thus ends the second *okemogun* and another *Olojo* festival comes to an end.

MUSIC AND THE OLOJO FESTIVAL

The celebration of an *Olojo* festival among Yoruba people is inconceivable without music, for much symbolism occurs within the music event. For example, the use of two hoes and gong-bells not only is symbolic of an impending celebration, it symbolizes the contributions that *Ogun* has made to Yoruba culture: 1) to industry, represented by iron hoes, and 2) to art and craft, represented by iron gong-bells. According to Yoruba belief, the technological progress and artistic creativity of the Yoruba start with *Ogun* who introduced iron into Yoruba society.

Yet the symbolic interrelationship between certain events and music is not limited to the *Olojo* festival. At the annual *Agbon* festival, also held at Ife, the performance of music cannot begin without the throwing of four kola nuts. Two or more kola nuts thrown with their inner sides turned up signifies a favorable disposition from the gods. The same thing applies for the *Obatala* festival that is held at Ife. To remove an unfavorable disposition, further divination, propitiation, sacrifices and atonement must take place. At the *Ifa* festival at Ede, symbolism is seen in the "ritual feeding of the drums" prior to performance. The blood from a slaughtered animal is poured on the shell of the four *Ifa* drums, for this is believed to enhance the drums' sound resonance and necessary to transform the instruments from their ordinary to their sacred usage in the community. Once the ritual is completed, the drums represent the voice of the gods. Even vocal performers go through some type of ritual. For instance, a substance (*agunmu*) that vocalists sometimes take orally is credited for enhancing their memory and giving them a resonant voice.

The communicative role of music is found in the texts of drummers which make allusion to political events of the past twelve months. Although the mode of communication is music, the idiom is proverbial and analogic. The drummers reaffirm the supremacy of the *Ooni* over the Yoruba people. Therefore, throughout the festival, not only is music used as an accompaniment to other activities, it is integral to the procession and recession. On another level, it serves as an affirmatory, contemplative, interactive, and reflective medium within the context of specific ceremonies and rituals. By performing these roles, music contributes to the effectiveness of the festival as a social and artistic institution among the Yoruba and serves as a means by which the history, religion, and traditions of the people are periodically reenacted and reaffirmed.

MUSIC AND ITS MULTIFARIOUS ROLES AND FUNCTIONS AT FESTIVALS

The role or function of music is often multifarious and multitudinal when one looks at a single festival such as the *Olojo*. The first significant function of music at a festival may be described as the *referential*. The referential, or symbolic function, involves the association of musical sounds and instruments or aspects of them with some extramusical qualities or power. The association may be analogic. For example, male and female bells are played together by the *Aworo* (priests) of *Ifa* during the rituals accompanying the celebration of the festival. The playing together of male and female bells connotes the natural cohabitation between male and female species without which there can be no procreation.[3]

Similarly, the organization of the drums along the male-female continuum is evidence of the analogic connotation between musical and extramusical elements. Two of

the *igbin* drums played at the *Obatala* festival at Ife have images of a male and female person on them. Just as *bata* drums played at a *Sango* festival are organized on the basis of *ako* (male) and *abo* (female) concepts, so are *bembe* drums that are used at the *Olojo* festival. The connotation may be contiguous. For example, a male bell is often associated with war music by its continuous repetition and referential image of the prowess of the male at war. Thus at the *Igogo* festival at Owo, male bells are featured when the god, *Olowo*, appears in public; inhabitants of the town describe this performance as war music.[4] While male bells are long, slender and have a high sonorous pitch, female bells are short, bigger and have a low, mellow sound.

The referential function of music is not limited to the connotative association between musical instruments and their ascribed extramusical qualities or powers. It also involves formal structures of music such as rhythmic and model patterns and melodic figures. Each major Yoruba divinity has a rhythm with which it is associated and identified. The rhythm depicts the personality of each divinity as fiery, violent, peaceful, uncertain, and thus sets the correct mood for worshippers during public worship. For example, the fast rhythm of the war music performed for *Olowo* during the *Igogo* festival symbolizes manhood and strength. This connotation can also be observed in the music for divinities such as *Ogun* and *Sango*. Fast rhythms symbolize fieriness; slow rhythms, peacefulness.

Melodic formulas and modal patterns are also associated with divinities through a musical concept known as *ohun orisa*. According to Fatola Ojo,[5] each Yoruba *orisa* has its own language that is reflected in its music. Thus *ijala*'s melodic formula is associated with *Ogun*, *sango-pipe* with *Sango*, *pipe-esu* with *Elegbara*, and *iyere* with *Orunmila*. Although a complete catalogue of melodic and modal patterns with their association is not available at present (more research needs to be done in this area), statements by informants verify that no one chants *sango-pipe* at the ritual of *Ifa* or *iyere* at the rituals of *Obatala*, thus emphasizing the associative nature of these melodic formulas with divinities. The connotative association of musical sounds and its resultant mood setting may elicit responses from participants which affect their collective image processing.

THE SIGNAL AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The *Oranfe* festival at Ondo takes place in the month of September, fifteen days after the celebration of the *Ogun* festival, and lasts only eight days. As part of the activities preceding the commencement of the festival, the *agba* (ritual) drums are sounded to warn members of the community to keep other kinds of drums out of public view, for it is taboo to play other forms of drumming during the festival. At dawn on the first day of the festival, wives of the *Sora* family call at the houses of all descendants of *Sora*, singing the following announcement to warn the public:

Yoruba Text: *Di laja maja so*
Di leran meran so,
Sora maa woo loni o.
Diu laja maja so,
Di leran meran so,
Akunara maa woo loni o

Translation: Let the dog owner chain his dog,
Let the goat owner tie his goat,

Sora is appearing today.
Let the dog owner chain his dog,
Let the goat owner tie his goat,
Akunara is appearing today.

According to informants Igbekele Aden and Adesolaju Adeboboye, both of Ondo, "Anybody who has heard our song can no longer claim ignorance of the commencement of the festival and its corresponding taboo." A similar announcement is made at the *Obalufon* festival at Ido-Ekiti. The announcement song, which is performed at night again, warns people not to claim ignorance about the beginning of the festival:

A sawe oro ra kama ba
Sari so fun yin o
Pere oloye o ege
Pere oloye o.

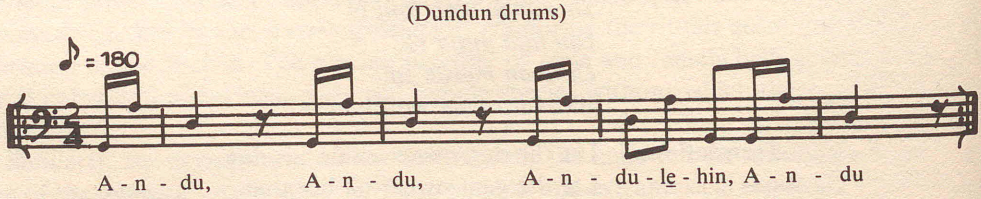
Announcements may sometimes signal the start of a curfew in a community. For example, the whizzing sounds of the bull roarer (the *Oro*'s voice) signals the approach of the *Oro* spirit and thus the beginning of the curfew of the women of the community. The uninitiated, particularly women, are forbidden under the penalty of death to personally experience the image of the *Oro* spirit. During epidemics, special rites of desacralization may be performed by members of the *Oro* cult as part of the celebration of the festival for that year.

The use of music at festivals for announcements and signalling illustrates the way in which people in non-technological societies solve the problems of communication. It is too early to predict what effect the media (radio, television, and the press) will have on these non-technological modes of communication.

THE PROCESSIONAL AND OUTING

The public appearance of devotees of divinities, participants and principal actors in a Yoruba festival is an important aspect of the entire celebration. On the third day of the *Egungun* festival, the masks (members of the cult), followed by devotees, leave their various *ilesanyin* (groves) to appear in public. Each mask is accompanied by an ensemble of drummers and a bevy of chanting women. The drum music continues throughout the duration of the public procession of the mask and its devotees. During the annual *Egungun* festival at Ede, the following text of processional music was recorded for the *Alagba* mask:

Example 2. *Egungun* Festival: Drum verse for the mask's procession



At another festival at Lagos, the *Oya* mask was accompanied into public with this text:

Siga, siga, siga kenge,
Awa omo 'ya ree o.

Each *Egungun* group has a distinct processional music that is used to accompany it into public from its grove to the market place or *Oja*. This was observed at Iragbiji, Ede, Ibadan, Abeokuta, and Lagos. Just before the commencement of the *efe* ceremony, which marks the beginning of the *Gelede* festival at Ijio, *meko* and *ilaro* (male and female performers known as *bolojo*) sing *efe* songs from past years as they appear in public procession. The social procession of the king, chiefs and people of Ilesa to the *Ogun* shrine during the *iwude* (public outing) of the *Ogun* festival is accompanied by *bembe* drumming. Similarly, the procession of the *Ooni* and his chiefs to the *Ogun* shrine during the *Olojo* festival at Ife is accompanied by *dundun* drumming. The public appearance of the *Olowo* during the *Igogo* festival at Owo is accompanied by *igoge* (*agogo*). The *Igunnuku* mask makes its public appearance during the annual festival to the sounds of *bembe* drumming.

In all of these processions, not only does music (instrumental and vocal) become the vehicle through which artistic components such as masks and costumes acquire motions, members of the larger community are reached and devotees and participants identified. The element of parade or procession is a common and integral aspect of the festival. Its goal can hardly be achieved without the accompaniment of music.

THE EVOCATIVE AND INVOCATIVE

At each festival, devotees and participants are expected to follow a set, prescribed behavior. The general atmosphere at the *Obatala* festival is reflective with devotees performing gentle, graceful movements. The movements performed by participants at the *Sango* festival are volatile and convulsive; this coupled with a magical display of "eye plucking" and "ear cutting" creates an atmosphere of uneasiness and fear. These contrasting moods are evoked partly through music. As stated in the foregoing, specific melodic and rhythmic patterns are associated with a divinity's nature and personality. These musical figures, in conjunction with drum texts and vocal eulogy, inspire culturally codified moods and sentiments in the participants. Mythical experiences surrounding each divinity arouse images which also help to stimulate an affective response. As Meyer (1956) puts it, a particular mood arouses image processes and these processes are the stimuli which actually give rise to affect. Thus, the priest dancing in honor of *Sango*, the god of thunder and lightning, selects appropriate dance steps that are based on the known myths about *Sango*. With appropriate red costumes and codified, intricate drum patterns from the *bata* drum, he succeeds in recreating the fury that would descend on anyone offending his person (Vidal 1971).

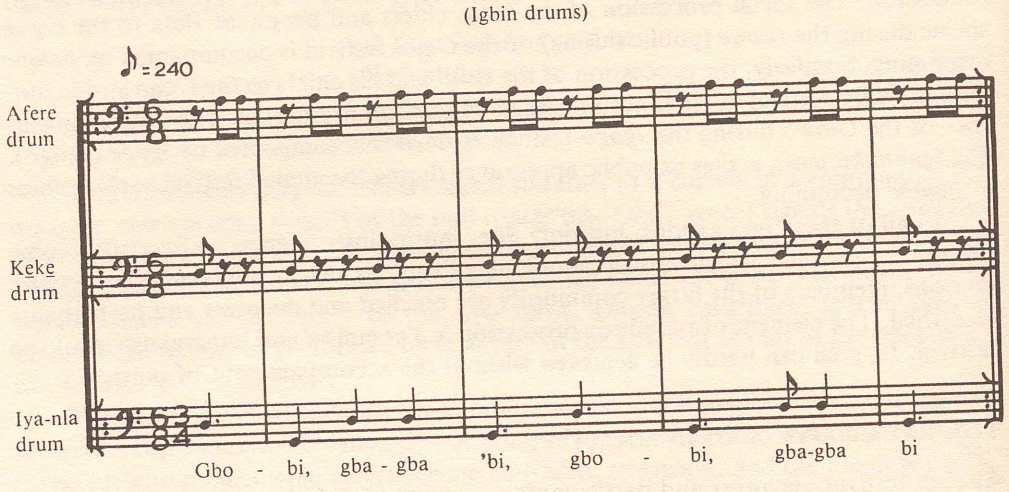
Besides evoking moods and appropriate behavior from participants, music is also used during the annual rites of appeasement and worship to invoke the divinities. At the beginning of the annual *Obatala* festival, the *igbin* drums generally play an invocation (see following text and Example 3), calling on the gods to come and accept the offerings and prayers of the devotees.

Yoruba Text: *Olufon, gbobo je, gbobi.*
Orisa, gbobi je, gbobi.

Babarugbo, gbobi je, gbobi.
Orisa, gbobi je, gbobi.

Translation: *Olufon*, please, accept kola nut.
Orisa, please, accept kola nut.
Babarugbo, please accept kola nut.
Orisa, please accept kola nut.

Example 3. *Obatala* Festival: Evocative drum verse at the beginning of rituals



Part of the drum invocation may contain an entreaty:

Yoruba Text: *Bala, dabo, dabo.*
Orisa, gbebe, gbebe.
Gbebe, Karoju sodun.
Orisa, gbebe, gbebe.

In the ultimate end, May *Orisa* accept our entreaty.
Accept our entreaty that we may
have a successful festival,
May *Orisa* accept our entreaty.

The *ijuba* (homage) performed at the beginning of an *efe* ceremony is a verbal acknowledgement of the existence of superior forces and a call to those forces to remove all obstacles or impediments that might stand in the way of the supplicants. As male and female members of the guild sing the following homage song at the *efe* ceremony, they are acknowledging in the *ike* chant mode the supremacy of mother earth.

A,e.....eee
A,e.....eee
Ile yi mo juba e o
A,e.....e

A,e.....
A,e.....e.

When the *efe* finally enters the *agbo* or *oja gelede* (public quadrangle), he also chants the following homage:

Yoruba Text: *Iba Olu-Igbo.*
Iba Olu-Igbo.
Iba abero ona o.
Iba, o nri mi peeleyo mi a seba sa sa.
Iba, o nri mi peeleyo mi a seba sa sa.
Iba a gbe mi leke okun yewuyewu.
Iba a gbe mi leke okun yewuyewu.
Olojo oni, ye mo juba, ki nto maa lo.
Iba Iba, a juba.
Kiba mi se warasasa o.

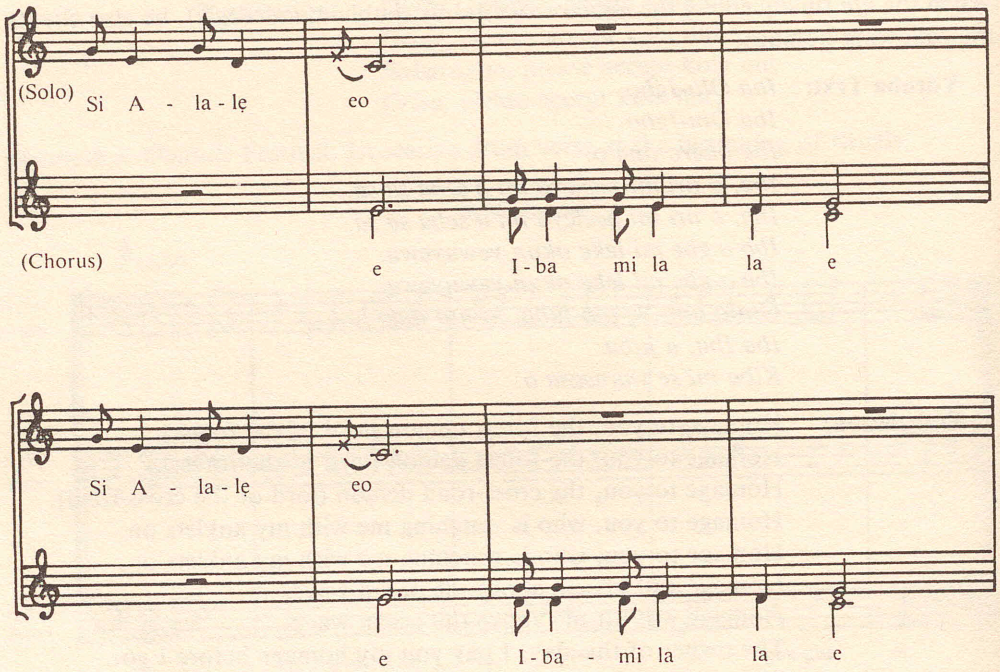
Translation: Homage to you, the forest demon (lord of the forest).
Homage to you, the forest demon (lord of the forest).
Homage to you, the cross-road demon (lord of the cross-road).
Homage to you, who is watching me with my anklets on.
Homage to you, who is watching me with my anklets on.
Homage will lift me above the ocean waves.
Homage will lift me above the ocean waves.
The owner of this day, I pay you my homage before I go.
Homage, homage, I pay my homage.
May my homage be accepted with the lightning speed.

Both the invocation and homage paying are necessary first steps in the ritual process of worship. The ordinary Yoruba individual has a strong conviction in the phenomenological. Natural events such as the seasonal variation of the sun and the moon are normal. Unnatural events such as plague, epidemics, drought, and famine are abnormal and symbolize disfunction or disequilibrium in the cosmology. Consequently, divinities have to be invoked and appeased through the medium of sound as they are believed to be capable of causing intervention in the normal functioning processes between the higher systems of the cosmology and man's lower earth systems.

THE PANEGYRIC AND THE HISTORICAL

Historical affirmation is an important aspect of certain festivals. Many festivals in a number of Yoruba towns include the historical narration of the enthronement of the present group of rulers and the defeat or subjugation of earlier groups or original inhabitants of the town. Thus in almost every Yoruba town, one can historically identify the "settlers" and the "aborigines" Therefore, during historical festivals, Yoruba leaders not only remind their subjects of their conquests and exploits, but it is not uncommon for conquered chiefs to come and pledge their loyalty to the king. At the *Igogo* festival in Owo, the *Olowo* reminds his subjects of his historical enthronement through the following song (see Example 4 and song text):

Example 4. *Igogo* Festival: A historical verse



Yoruba Text		**Translation**
Solo:	*Si alale e o?*	Who is the owner of this land?
Chorus:	*E, Iba mi la lale o.*	My father is the owner of this land.
Solo:	*Si alale e o?*	Who is the owner of this land?
Chorus:	*E, Iba mi la lale o.*	My father is the owner of this land.
Solo:	*Titi lo de Eko o.*	All through the way to Lagos.
Chorus:	*E, Iba mi la lale o.*	My father is the owner of this land.
Solo:	*Titi lo de oke Owo.*	All through the hills of Owo.
Chorus:	*E, Iba mi la lale o.*	My father is the owner of this land.
Solo:	*Si lale o?*	Who is the owner of this land?
Chorus:	*E, Iba mi la lale o.*	My father is the owner of this land.

Besides historical affirmation through songs, historical allusion and descriptive eulogy also feature in the *oriki* rendered at festivals. The vocal eulogy to the divinities is known as *kiki orisa* (praising the *orisa*). Each divinity has its praise epithets which not only describe its qualities and attributes, but they also narrate the history, exploits and personality of the divinity. Below is a short extract from the praise epithet of *Ogun*, performed by a hunter, in the *ijala* chant mode.

Yoruba Text: *Ogun niye, Oko mi*
Oko Masude.
Owarawuru Oosa to n je gba eko ma bi
Oko Odewale.
Ogede dudu ti nsomo e ko derelere
Omo ewe opon logun.
A ma a bale a maa ro kankan.
Omo ewe ogungun bale
Won a ro gbanhanra gbanhanra.
Oosa n po fowo da
Ti nba omo re leru
Ngbona n ge won lowo
N tutu, n ro pese.

Translation: *Ogun* is overlasting life, my husband,
Husband of Masude.
The fearless deity who devours two hundred earthworms without vomiting,
Husband of Odewale.
The green banana which hangs its fruit plentifully,
Ogun is the offspring of *opon* leaf.
He falls on the ground and stands up quickly again.
Offspring of *ogungun* leaf who falls on the ground and sounding *gbanhanra*.
The *orisa* of the city of Ipo who pushes forcefully with his hands and frightens his own children.
When he is hot, he cuts their fingers.
When he is cool, he soothes them.

The panegyric and historical role of music is very important for kings who claim authority through the history, custom and tradition of their origin. Atavistic ancestors, lineages, totems, towns, cities, communities and individuals are not left out in the vocal and historical eulogy that characterizes *oriki* songs performed at festivals. Below is an extract from the *oriki* of the royal mask of Ede that is performed in the *iwi* chant mode during the annual *Egungun* festival. The extract recapitulates how the *Eso* warriors, of whom the king is a descendant, fought bravely and fiercely to defend the town against intruders.

Yoruba Text: *Omo oju oro o*
Oyewole won o je se eye ko tomi
Elegiiri ko je ki odo Oba ko toro
Kaka ki n pe Oba a ba mi.
Maa ni Kajagunla o maa gbe mi lo
Atajagunla atajagunla.
Ko sohun ti firan oko mi se.
Omo ogun buru eruwa ko sun gbe
Mo ba jigan rode.
Eku ose, omo atulagbo

Baba Ola Eegun
Oyewole, oko mi ti n be nibe lo tokunrin.

Translation: Offspring of the water lilies,
Oyewole, they do not let the bird's feet touch water.
The teeming eligiiri birds never allow Oba river to be peaceful.
Instead of asking Oba to draw me, I shall prefer Ajagunna, its tributary to carry me away.
Both big and small rivers, there is nothing they can do to my husband's generation.
The one, when battle is hot, Savannah does not sleep in the forest land.
I follow *jigan* to the public.
Thou mantled one, one wrapped up with cloak.
Father of all masquerade,
Oyewole, my husband inside it, is a capable man.

THE SATIRICAL AND THE ENTERTAINMENT

Just as kings, individuals, towns, corporate groups, social institutions and events are praised and romantically glorified, so also are they derided, satirized and condemned at festivals if the prevailing social conditions at the time of the festival demand such. On such occasions, no one is spared from the pangs of bitter satire and derision, for the festival provides members of the society with an avenue for uninhabited self-expression through music. During the 1979 *opeppe* night of the *Oranfe* festival at Ondo, the *Osemowe* (paramount ruler) was the focus of bitter satire for suspected involvement in the 1979 elections. The *Egungun* festival of the same year was cancelled at Lagos because of anticipated satirical songs that had been specially prepared against the institutions of the society by festival participants. In 1981, the *Ajwulaje* of Ijebu-Ode made headlines in the newspapers when he abruptly stopped the *Agemo* festival of Ijebu-Ode. As he puts it, the festival has been turned into a political forum of "abuse against me."

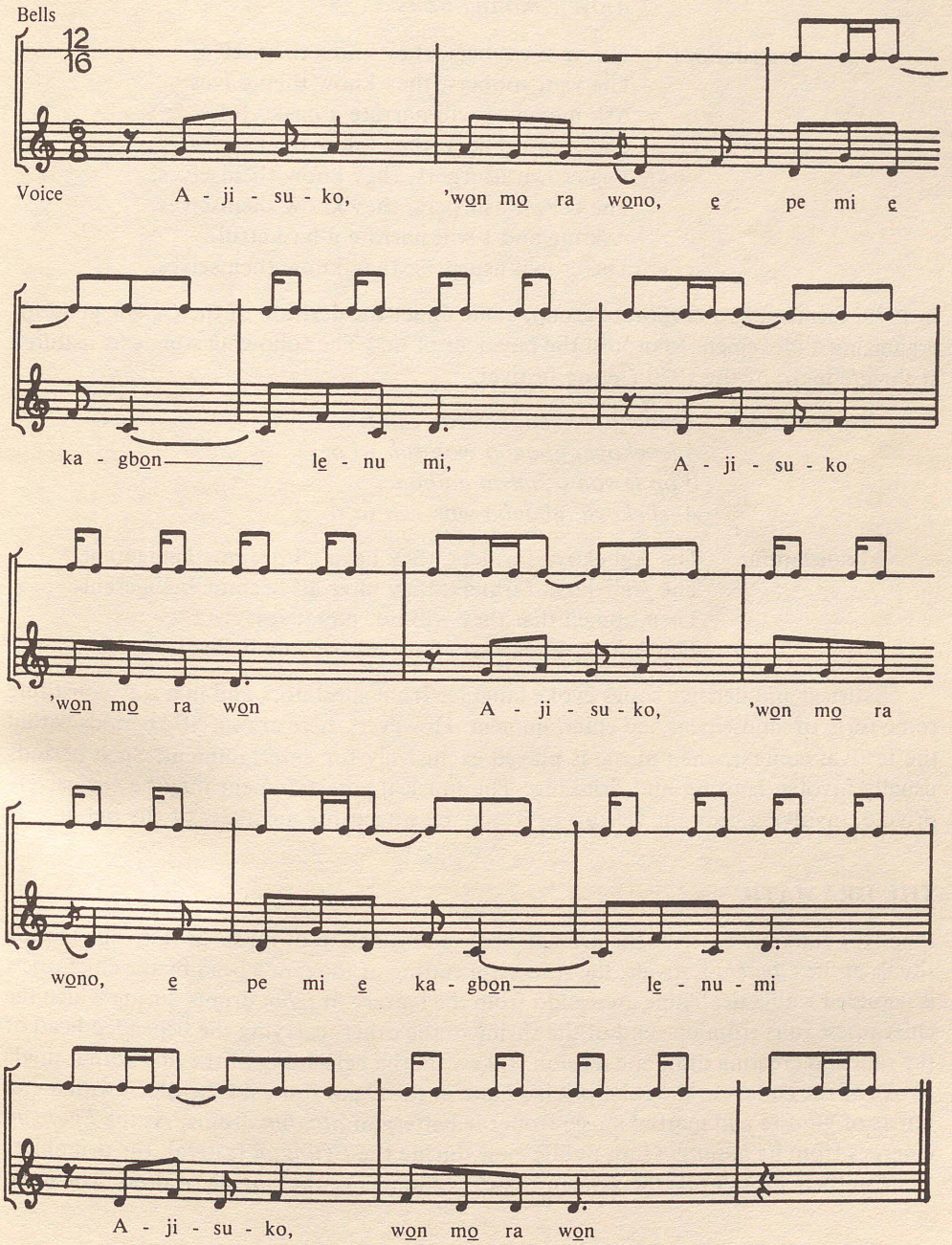
Corporate groups and privileged groups in the realm of government may also be the focus of satire. In 1957, the colonial administration at Lagos, through one of its Nigerian medical officers, had announced the cancellation of the *Adamu-Orisa* festival at the last moment on the grounds that the staging would aggravate the epidemic of smallpox that was then raging in the city. The organizers as well as the inhabitants of Lagos interpreted this political move as a "slap" in the face of Lagos tradition. They defied the instruction and, in the evening when the festival was coming to an end, created the following song which they sang through the streets of Lagos:

Yoruba Text: *Eyin to jogun arun o,*
Oluye, Olumo.
Eyin to jogun arun,
Eyo yi se, tabi ko se lele o?

Translation: Ye who are possessed by disease,
Hear me, understand me.
Ye who are possessed by disease,
Is this *Eyo* festival not a smashing success?

The following song (see Example 5 and song text below), which featured in the *Agemo* festival song of 1967 at Ijebu-Ode, focuses on "yam robbers" and "crown usurpers"; it is further illustration of the satirical role of music at festivals.

Example 5. *Agemo* Festival: A social criticism verse



Yoruba Text: *Awon ajisuko, won mo ra won.*
Awon ajikuso, won mo ra won o.
E pe mi, e kagbon lenu mi,
Ajisuko, won mo raa won.
Ajoyeji mo ra won.
Ajoyeje mo ra won o.
E pe mi, e kagbon lenu mi o,
Ajoyeje mo raa won.

Translation: The yam robbers, they know themselves.
The yam robbers, they know themselves.
Ask me and I will narrate a basketful,
The yam robbers, they know themselves.
The crown usurpers, they know themselves.
The crown usurpers, they know themselves.
Ask me and I will narrate a basketful,
The crown usurpers, they know themselves.

In 1970, farmers, as a corporate group, came under the derision of the *Gelede* guild for organizing a movement to protest the payment of tax. The following song was featured at the *efe* night of the 1970 *Gelede* festival.

Yoruba Text: *Agebokoya, gbogbo won ran ri o.*
Agebekoya, gbogbo won ran wi o.
Won lawon o sanwo anibode.
Agebekoya, gbogbo won ran wi o.

Translation: The Agbekoya farmers, they have all become belligerent.
The Agbekoya farmers, they have all become belligerent.
Then opined that they will not pay taxes.
The Agbekoya farmers have all become belligerent.

Satirical and derisive songs evoke laughter from spectators and in a way constitute some form of amusement and entertainment. However, there are specific periods within the festival context when music is played exclusively for entertainment. Such periods usually involve feasting and drinking. The musical entertainment may be exclusively private, involving only the *Aworo* or it may be staged for members of the public.

THE DRAMATIC

Finally, I can only describe the dramatic role and function of music at festivals. During rituals at the *Obatala* festivals, the successful cutting of the ram's head by the chief priest is heralded with a deafening crescendo from the battery of *igbin* drums during which the chief priest runs from one end of the shrine to the other, carrying the beheaded head of the ram and creating dramatic tension. Likewise, the beheading of the dog with a single stroke of the cutlass in the chief priest's hand at the *Ogun* festival is heralded with awful bursts of gunfire and martial music from the battery of *dundun* drums. As the *Egungun* emerges from its *ilesanyin* into public view during the *Egungun* festival, the drummers flourish their sticks while the women chanters commence the singing of *oriki*. The *ijuba*

chanting of the *efe* dramaturgist during the *efe* ceremony of the *Gelede* festival is punctuated constantly with staccato sounds from a battery of *aran* or *ososo* drums.

CONCLUSION

The custodians of Yoruba festivals place a high premium on music and by extension musicians. Music is organized and produced at festivals by individuals and corporate groups either through the religious and social obligations of belonging to a corporate group or by contractual agreements between organizers and musicians. It has been fully documented in this paper, through the description and analysis of the cluster of human activities and behavior surrounding the festival, that the role and function of music at festivals are varied and diverse. Not only is it through music that appropriate moods are created for the expected behavior of participants, but the institutions of the society are socially controlled and anti-social behavior checked through musical performance. It is a means through which kings affirm their authority over their subjects and aristocrats grow proud of their pedigree. Costumes and traditions of origin are musically reenacted for transmission to the younger generations as well as for posterity. This is not to say that every Yoruba festival is surrounded by music. There may be a few "silent" festivals.[6] However, for many festivals in Yoruba towns and cities, the general convention points to much pomp and pageantry; the more elaborate the staging of the festival, the more important the provision of music.

NOTES:

1. During annual festivals, new songs usually emerge in each community. The songs often deal with issues prevailing in the community during the past twelve months since the celebration of the last festival.
2. The Yoruba *dundun* drums, for example, are said to have been introduced to mark the *Bere* festival during the reign of Alaafin Asipa (ca. 17th century). The beaded calabash drum (*agbe*) was introduced during the reign of Alaafin Onisile (ca. 1800 A.D.).
3. The *agogo* ensemble here is conceived of as a family consisting of male and female member. Its analogic use at the *Ifa* ceremony is to help promote procreation, one of the functional objectives of annual *Ifa* festivals.
4. Communication with Roland Abiodun of Owo.
5. An informant and a specialist in the *orisa* tradition of the Yoruba people.
6. "Silent" here does not mean there are no sounds. It is a Yoruba metaphor used to express a low decibel level of sound and musical event.

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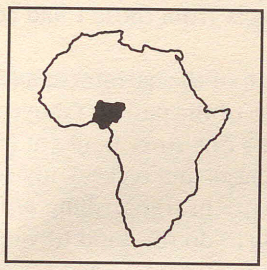
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5

ÀLỌ́—YORUBA CHANTEFABLES: An Integrated Approach Towards West African Music and Oral Literature

GERHARD KUBIK



STATEMENT: There is hardly any work on West African music written since the 1950s that would not have shown in some places J. H. Kwabena Nketia's influence. Many authors, even when the name Nketia does not appear in their list of references, have assimilated some of his ideas either first-hand or through the filter of others. Many have also cross-checked their own research results with his findings before publishing them.

If you travel with Kwabena Nketia, as I had the privilege to do in 1970 from Legon to Yaoundé (Cameroon), no matter what work you may have accomplished yourself, you are bound to be his student, and you discover that you listen and look, whenever he says something, as if captured by an irresistible magic. Nketia's professional charm is inescapable. But what conquered my heart was when in 1973 he apparently had so much confidence in me that he allowed one of his female colleagues and protegés to accompany me on a field trip to Togo . . . □

INTRODUCTION

The material which forms the basis of this paper was collected during my research work in western Nigeria in 1960 and 1963.[1] It comprises 171 items—stories containing songs—of which 132 were collected in 1960 and 39 in 1963. The total collection as such, although long written up in manuscript form, is yet unpublished. Some excerpts, focussing on the music of these chantefables, appeared in an article entitled "*Àlọ́*—Yoruba Story Songs" published in *African Music*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1968, and smaller portions appeared in Kubik 1961a, 1961b, 1965 and 1983 (with a modern transcription of "Antere," story No. 34 in the collection).

During both stays in Nigeria I was a guest of the family of the late playwright Duro Ladipọ, staying in his house in Oshogbo. My acquaintance with *àlọ́* chantefables was a result of this stay. Upon arrival in Nigeria in August 1960 I embarked on the study of some better known aspects of Yoruba music, for example *àpàlà*, and the performing techniques on drums such as *gudugudu* and *kànàngó* with the help of Omo-Ọba E. A. Laoye, Prince of Ede, and another tutor in Oshogbo.

Shortly thereafter, however, my Stuzzi Magnette 671 B tape recorder[2] broke down and, as it was impossible to get it repaired in Nigeria, *àlọ́*, a more intimate genre of music/oral literature, turned out to be a musical form into which I could venture, even without the facility of a recording machine. Technology was replaced by human aid, in the form of dozens of friends in Oshogbo and surrounding towns, who showed their willingness to teach me *àlọ́* by rote, until I learned to sing the songs. Above all, it was members of the Duro Ladipọ family who helped me, in particular Duro's young brother Gboyega Ladipọ, who worked with me almost daily. Later, Gboyega himself collected more of the oral literature in the town of Ogbomosho, where he was employed as a teacher. He is now a Canon at the Anglican Church in Oshogbo. Both Duro and Gboyega introduced me to their acquaintances in the neighborhood and my collection began to grow fast. I can also never forget Duro's twin sisters, Taiye and Kehinde Ladipọ, who contributed and regularly practiced songs with me, besides teaching me the elementary lessons in the study of Yoruba.

Our excursions to neighboring towns such as Ila, via Ilesha and Ijebu-Ijesha in September 1960 proved extremely useful, with informants such as D. B. Awoniyi and his (then) eight-year old son Akin Awoniyi, N. A. Oladeinde and others telling me stories that were in Ijesha-dialect and often different in musical aspects from those I had collected in Oshogbo.

The transcription of Yoruba music directly from the mouth of the narrators and informants was very exacting in the beginning. But with the help of the patient Gboyega, who spent many hours with me each day in the attic of Duro's one-story house at No. 40, Catholic Street where I was living, and his willingness to check and recheck my collected materials, I gradually developed an astonishing expertise in transcribing *àlọ́*. I doubt, whether today, twenty-five years later, I would be able to do this kind of work. Even the early forms of my *àlọ́* song transcriptions reveal that at that time I had already begun to introduce a few modifications to conventional staff notation, in order to make it a better tool for the transcription of African music. Essentially these modifications were:

a. Employment of *relative notation*, i.e., all the songs, mostly pentatonic, were written at the same relative pitch, thus dispensing with accidentals (♯ and ♭), and making pitch lines more easily comparable with each other.

b. Employment of *reduced bar lines*, i.e. bar lines that do not cross the staff, which would allow one to avoid making *àlọ́* and other Yoruba genres look like "syncopated music." With the use of reduced bar lines, pitch sequences are phrased according to their apparent internal structure, regardless of the metric scheme suggested by bar lines crossing the staff.

c. Employment of the concept of a *form* or *cycle number* written at the beginning of a score, replacing the European-style time signatures. The adoption of a cycle number such as ⑫, ⑯, ㉔ etc., always encircled, made it possible to write polymetric or asymmetric patterns and combinations of these without the difficulty created by having to phrase them within inferred Western-style single meters.

My transcription method for the *àlọ́* in those days is preserved in the scores of my 1968 publication in *African Music*. Point b is now obsolete, as I have since been able

to develop a system that is much more convenient, because it also eliminates subjective phrasing (see Kubik 1983 and Transcriptions at the end of this paper). But back in Oshogbo in 1960 it helped me immensely. Towards the end of my stay I could transcribe at such a fast speed from a live performance, that in many cases narrators would only have to sing the song once to me; after writing down the words, I had simultaneously got down the melody.

Two years later, when I returned to Oshogbo and to Duro Ladipọ, who in the meantime had started his Theatre Company and the Mbari Club (replacing his Popular Club of 1960), I began to work in a manner different from my earlier style, perhaps a little more conventionally. Equipped with a new tape recorder, my major objective was then to go from house to house and record *àlọ́*—especially from older people—in its contextual setting. Members of Duro Ladipọ's Theatre Company accompanied me on those tours, in particular Lamidi Gbadamosi (now Ademola Onibonokuta) and Yinka Adeyemi. The latter was also most helpful in transcribing some Yoruba texts from my tapes. To all of them I would like to express my gratitude.

The driving spirit of those years, Duro Ladipọ, is no longer among us. I wish he could have seen some of the fruits of this work.

THE LANGUAGE

Yoruba, today, is the native language of up to 40 million people settled in the southwestern part of Nigeria and adjacent areas in the Peoples' Republic of Benin (formerly Dahomé). There is also a Yoruba diaspora in West Africa with sizeable pockets of Yòruba speaking communities found in urban centers across Nigeria, and as far West as Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (see Nketia 1958). Yoruba as a language was first written down in the middle of the nineteenth century by Christian missionaries, long before the onset of modern linguistic studies in Africa. From those times, Standard Yoruba has inherited a peculiar orthography, with a slightly "French" bias, in which the texts are literally studded with diacritical marks.

Like most languages, Yoruba has regional variants. For example, the so-called Ọ̀yọ́-dialect, the language of the former kingdom of Ọ̀yọ́, is distinct, particularly in grammar from the kind of Yoruba spoken, for example, in the seaport of Lagos with its agglomeration of people with extremely diverse ethnic backgrounds. The dialects of the Ijesha and Ekiti are also different from Standard Yoruba.

Yoruba possesses seven vowels: /a/, /e/, /ẹ/ (phonetically ɛ), /i/, /o/, /ọ/ (phonetically ɔ), and /u/. In addition, there are the nasalized vowels: /an/ (phon. ã), /on/ (phon. õ), /in/ (phon. ĩ), and /un/ (phon. ũ). Very rare is the sound [ɛ̃], represented in Yoruba orthography as /en/. Open and closed e and o are not represented in Yoruba by means of phonetic symbols, as is the case in other West African languages, for example, Ewe, but by setting a point under the respective letters for the open variants; hence ẹ and ọ. Together with the tone marks, absolutely necessary in Yoruba, for which the "French" symbols of "accent aigu" (´) and "accent grave" (`) are used, Yoruba displays the kind of orthographic picture we find today in newspapers and books. There is a further sound represented with a dotted letter, namely [ʃ], pronounced with *spread* lips. This is notated as /ṣ/, an example being "Abureṣe" = a name.

Nasal vowels are represented in Yoruba following a French orthographic pattern

by adding an -n to the vowel whose original sound value is maintained, for example, *ẹ̀rin* (pronounced ɛrĩ), the elephant, or *dáhùn* (pronounced dahũ), to answer.

The peculiar orthography of Yoruba creates some problems for the student of West African music, who wishes to compare musical terminology across the language areas of West Africa, even within the narrower framework of the so-called Kwa languages (see Greenberg 1966) among which Yoruba is classified. While Yoruba and the neighboring Fõ language spoken in the Peoples' Republic of Benin and in Togo, for example, have a certain number of common musical terms, this fact may be not recognized due to different orthographic systems. At least, in Togo, Fõ speakers tend to model their orthography on that of Ewe.

This includes mnemonic syllables used in teaching. For example, one of the hallmarks of Yoruba musical structures, the 7-stroke 12-pulse asymmetric time line pattern, often taught in Yoruba with the syllables *kɔŋ kɔŋ kɔlɔ kɔŋ kɔlɔ* would have to be written in the present Yoruba orthography as "kọn kọn kọlọ kọn kọlọ," /n/ standing for [ŋ]. This is obstructive to analysis, for, even more, /n/ in Yoruba orthography also signified nasalization of the preceding vowel.

This time line pattern is widespread along the Guinea Coast and it is as familiar from the Yoruba and Igbo of Nigeria as it is from the Akan speaking group of peoples of Ghana and Togo (Nketia 1962, 1975). If we wish to work comparatively and, consequently, adopt a *phonetic* transcription method of such syllabic patterns in a Yoruba song text, we would then have two orthographic systems in the same text.

In *àlọ́* songs we often encounter the use of syllabic phrases without verbal meaning, which have a playful or dance-like character and are often constituted by phonetical components similar to those in the drum-teaching syllables. In one version of the *àlọ́* song *Ọmọde mẹta nsere* (No. 111 in the list of collected items) the lead singer begins his text line with the swinging phrase *kɔŋ kɔlɔ lakɔ*, symbolizing the three playing children in the story, to which the chorus replies *kɔŋ kɔla*, maintaining its response throughout the song while the leader's phrases are changing. Would it be appropriate then, to write these patterns phonetically (as above), while the other text lines, with verbal meanings, would be written in Standard Yoruba orthography?

There is almost no satisfactory solution to this problem. Another problem is created by the fact that the labio-velar plosives [kp] and [gb] which occur in many West African languages are represented in an inconsistent manner in the present Yoruba orthography. While [gb] as in *gbàgbé* (to forget) is written in conformity with the usage in other West African orthographies, [kp] is represented in Yoruba by the sign /p/ only. The designation *àpàlà*, a familiar Yoruba music/dance genre, is therefore to be pronounced [àkpàlà]. Foreign readers, unfamiliar with West African languages have to note, moreover, that [kp] is *one* sound. The word must not be pronounced as "ak-pa-la" but as "a-kpa-la." (A useful guide to West African phonetics, including Yoruba, is the booklet by Dietrich Westermann & Ida Ward 1966:58–59).

Yoruba is a language where tone is used to extreme degrees and it has been quoted therefore, frequently, as a classical example of the nature of West African tonal languages (Beier 1954; Kubik 1983). As far as we know, Yoruba possesses three distinctive tonal levels, high, middle and low. Lack of awareness, or inability to use the tonal principles properly may catapult a non-Yoruba visitor into comic situations, as happened to me in 1963 in Oshogbo when I attempted to call a girl named Tìtì, living in the house-

hold of Duro Ladipọ, standing across the street, by using the tonal pattern *títì* which makes the word mean "street."

A further hurdle to be overcome by the learner of Yoruba is to realize that word *accent* and semantic or grammatical *tone* are distinctively different phenomena. In Yoruba, all syllables are accentuated approximately equally, regardless of the speech tones they carry. Vowels remain distinctive in all parts of a word, irrespective of their position, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a word. They have to be articulated in an identical manner and with a completely even accent.

YORUBA LITERARY AND MUSICAL GENRES

Studies based on Western categories projected onto Yoruba oral literature and music are bound to give limited, if not distorted results. Taxonomy and categorization of literary and musical genres in Yoruba generally goes across that in Western languages. In an article on "Africa and the Folklorist," Richard M. Dorson (1972:16–17) pointed to

> the vexing matter of folk-narrative categories
> and those slippery terms *myth*, *legend*, and *folktale*

and came to the conclusion that

> in the light of contemporary scholarship, *myth*, *legend*, and *folktale* have little utility as conceptual categories.

Even the paramount terms "music" and "oral literature" are no less vexing. In the Yoruba language there is no comparable categorization and these realms are, in fact, so intimately connected that any evaluation of Yoruba material within the framework of such categories can easily lead the student away from reality. The discussion should therefore be based on categories found in the Yoruba language itself, which should remain untranslated, with only a descriptive and brief explanation in English attached to them. Only by proceeding from the terminology in the language itself, the student has a chance to penetrate the Yoruba cognitive world. An *intra*-cultural approach of this kind (see Kubik 1984) is not easy and it is difficult to maintain, if the student also attempts to communicate his results *cross*-culturally, i.e. by writing them up not in Yoruba but in a foreign language such as English. Since none of the Yoruba terms has English equivalents that are absolutely congruent in their semantic field, any translation, even a descriptive one, is merely a crutch.

This has also been realized by several folklorists and oral literature specialists who are native speakers of Yoruba. Avoiding the term "oral literature," Ayodele Ogundipe (1972:213) in an article on "Yoruba Tongue Twisters" distinguishes the following "verbal forms in folklore" among the Yoruba—by no means an exhaustive list—offering approximate translations:

alo apagbe (folktales)
itan (myths and legends)
owe (proverbs)
orin (songs)
epe (curses)
ọfọ̀ (incantations)

Apparently, Ayodele Ogundipe, who was trained at Indiana University, Bloomington, collected her material in so-called "low-literacy areas" of Lagos: Ajegunle, Somolu and Apapa.

For a comparison Ulli Beier and Gerald Moore in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1974:238) enumerate the following Yoruba categories under the English paramount term "poetic forms"; they hold that

> the Yoruba distinguish between praise names (*oriki*); the poetry of lineages and towns (*orile*); oracle verse (*odu*); hunters' songs (*ijala*); the poetry of masqueraders (*iwi*); incantations (*ofo*); songs (*orin*); and improvisations (*rara*).

More categories, reported by other authors could be added, for example *ìmọ́*, a most interesting verbal play in question/answer form serving to promote "knowledge." This little known literary genre, not to be confused with "riddles" was communicated to me by Raji Lawani and Chief Saloro at Ila/via Ilesha in September 1960 (No. 119 in the total collection).

Many of the major categories can be further subdivided. For example, Duro and Gboyega Ladipọ said to me in 1960 that the category *orin* (translated as "songs") could be subcategorized in the following manner:

1. *àlọ́* (stories with songs)
2. *orin iyawo* (songs for marriage ceremonies)
3. *orin ikomo* (untransl.)
4. *orin apala* (songs of the *apala* dance)
5. *orin ṣẹkẹrẹ* (songs to be accompanied by *ṣẹkẹrẹ*, externally agitaded calabash rattle)

etc.

Often the semantic field of certain categories overlaps. Note, that for example, the term *àlọ́*, with which the present paper is concerned, appears as a basic category in Ayodele Ogundipe's taxonomy, and as a subcategory of *orin* in the taxonomy provided by Duro and Gboyega Ladipọ. Such discrepancies are not necessarily contradictory nor do they indicate any lack of a systematic approach in the "folk taxonomies." They simply express the fact that one may class the same matter simultaneously from different angles.

WHAT IS ÀLỌ́?

The term *àlọ́* in Yoruba may refer to two different genres of oral literary activity: (a) that which may be translated through the French term as *chantefables*, stories or tales containing a song to be performed by the storyteller, and the audience responding to him or her. It is understood in this sense in the Yoruba towns of Oshogbo, Ogbomosho, Iragbidji, Ilesha and others where I collected the material I will discuss here; and (b) *riddles* which, in certain zones of the Yoruba speaking area, is the better known meaning of the term. R. C. Abraham in his *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba* (1973:52) only refers to this meaning:

> *àlọ́* (1) riddle: conundrum (lọ́ A) (2) àló o!
> Here is a riddle to solve! reply is -àlò!
> (3) (a) ó pàlọ́ fún mi, he told me a riddle . . .

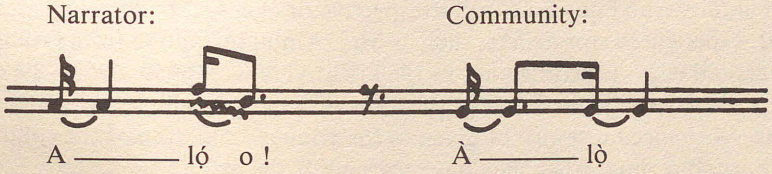
Some of Ulli Beier's acquaintances in Ibadan also understand the term *àlọ́* as riddles. Some others proposed to call the material which I had collected *orin itan ọmọde* (songs from stories for children) (Letter by Ulli Beier dated Dec. 25, 1960).

However, it is remarkable that all the storytellers and informants from whom I collected material in Oshogbo and surrounding areas in 1960 and 1963, insisted upon calling their stories not only *ìtàn* which is the broader, more generic term for any kind of narrative, but specifically *àlọ́*. This word was also part of the *opening formula* with which the teller of a Yoruba chantefable begins his or her performance (see for example, recordings B 8579, 8583–8591 and other recorded items, 1963/Kubik, in the Phonogram Archives, Vienna). The differences in opinion among informants from different areas of Yorubaland with regard to terminology certainly reflect the variation margin of Yoruba culture and its culture-and-language-internal interpretation, calling to mind that my collection of texts is in various dialects of Yoruba.

The word *àlọ́* itself seems to come from the *opening formula* which is the same in riddles and chantefables. And this probably also explains its usage as a designation for these two different genres. In a riddle session of children and youth, each riddle is introduced with the exclamation *àlọ̃ ó*! to which the other children who accept the challenge reply *àlọ̀* (see my recording of a riddle session on a farm near Oshogbo 1963, Ph.A. Vienna B 8984). In storytelling sessions the narrator begins each chantefable with the same exclamation and the community replies in the same manner.

In the years 1960 and 1963 chantefables were still told everywhere in the back streets of Oshogbo, some of whose houses were impluvial buildings having tiny courtyards, such as the house of the mother of Lamidi Gbadamosi.[3] As a rule, children and older people used to assemble in the house or the courtyard after sunset. Whoever knew a story began to exclaim "Àlọ́ o!"—and the assembled community replied "Àlọ̀" (with low tones) (Example 1).

Example 1.



Having thus won the attention and agreement of his audience, the narrator can now begin his story. First, however, he has to continue the opening formula with the following words:

Alo mi da firi o dá gba o dá gbo o dá leri . . .
My àlọ́ begins firrrrri, and it lands gggbà on . . .

At this point the narrator starts the story. At whatever point a song occurs, the community joins in with singing and handclapping. *Àlọ́* songs may be unaccompanied, or accompanied by handclapping. Musical instruments or other percussion equipment is not normally used. However, as we shall see later, certain Yoruba percussive patterns may

be structurally implied and present in the back of the mind of all participants, although no one actually strikes them. Only in one of my recordings there was instrumental accompaniment. The narrator accompanied his story with an *agidigbo*, lamellophone (Rec. B 8983 on Gbadamosi's farm near Oshogbo, 1963/Kubik, Ph.A. Vienna).

At the end of the story the narrator sometimes explains what the content is intended to teach, and then he is expected to say:

> *Bí mo bá kurọ, ka gogo mi o ma rò, bi nko bá kurọ, ka gogo mi o ro lẹmeta! ttó—ttó—ttó!*
> If I have not told the truth let my bell not ring, if I have said the truth, let my bell ring! ttó—ttó—ttó!

The "bell" (*gogo*) is not to be understood as a real iron bell, but the term refers here to a sound "like a bell" which the narrator produces as follows: At the end of the sentence spoken he puts his right index finger into the mouth, presses the tip of the finger bent like a hook against the inner part of the left cheek, just behind the corner of the mouth and plucks the skin of the mouth's corner with lips closed, pulling his finger quickly out. The result is a sound similar to that of a cork pulled out of a champagne bottle. He has to repeat this three times ttó, ttó, ttó! then everyone is satisfied, and acknowledges that his story must be a "true one," that is, one transmitted by tradition and not perhaps something invented by the storyteller himself. If he had lied, he would have betrayed himself through laughing, because it is impossible, while laughing, to let the "bell ring" in that manner. Departing from the literal translation of the sentence above, we can say, it communicates to the audience the following message: "If I have not narrated the true story as it is, let me be disgraced!"

As soon as the first storyteller, male or female, has finished narrating, the next one begins. Some are experts, although the telling of *àlọ́*, in contrast to some other forms of oral literature/music, is not considered to be a professional exercise among the Yoruba. It is an activity in which the role of the narrator can be taken over by anyone in the community who knows a story, irrespective of age, sex, or social position. While some aged, experienced storytellers, such as Mrs. Aminatu Amọpe from Oshogbo, who was 73 years old when I recorded her in 1963 (Ph.A. Nos. B 8959, 8962—8966, 8972—8973), may display the highest degree of perfection in storytelling and really captivate an audience, a chance must also be given to the youngest children of the community to come forward and show what they have learned of the art.

THE CONTENT OF *ÀLỌ́* CHANTEFABLES

A content analysis of the *àlọ́* is of equal interest to the researcher of oral literature, the Africanist, linguist, psychologist, educationist, social scientist and historian. In many of the stories an image of life in a pre-colonial Yoruba society is depicted which is highly urbanized. Indirectly, from the kind of environment into which the plots are set, we may gain important details about Yoruba cultural history.

From the 18th century onwards, the Yoruba kingdom of Ọ̀yọ had intensive trade connections with the north that extended through the filters of Nupe and the Hausa states up to the transfer points along the southern edge of the Sahara, such as Gao, Jenne and Timbuktu. Along these trade routes much cultural interaction took place and Yoruba culture did not remain unaffected. The majority of people began to live in towns with

their plantations located within a radius of several kilometers outside. A monetary economy had been introduced long ago. In times of economic distress caused by drought or belligerent events, everything had to be paid for, even water. Individuals who for some reason had decided to stay permanently outside the town, controlled certain aspects of the economy. For example, in *Baba ol'ódò*, *àlọ́* No. 104 in our collection, we learn that a small river or watercourse could have an owner.

In town, strict manners of social behavior used to prevail. In a sense the *ọba* (traditional ruler of a Yoruba town) and his counsellors had absolute authority, although the Yoruba system of government could be described from various angles as monarchy, oligarchy and also democracy, all in one (Ulli Beier in a lecture at IWALEWA House, Bayreuth, January 14, 1982). The power of the *ọba* and his staff included juridical authority. This is testified and illustrated in the plots of many *àlọ́* stories.

Thus, many of the *àlọ́* reveal to us something about social circumstances in precolonial Yorubaland and confirm by their mentioning of cultural objects that are now obsolete, that the narrative must have some antiquity. In the story of *Ará orun ará orun o* (Inhabitants of heaven, inhabitants of heaven, No. 43), we learn something about the value of cowrie shells (Yoruba money) in relation to a cup of palm wine, which the hero tries to sell to the inhabitants of heaven.

The educational value and function of *àlọ́* are obvious. *Àlọ́* make strong emotional impressions on the mind of a growing child and his or her emerging world view. Through symbols some of the stories show how one may cope with unknown forces in one's own soul. These forces appear personified in the stories. The moral of a story shows what *was* (and sometimes still is), the expected normative behavior in Yoruba society. The stories, however, do not only reflect social values, they also point to areas of conflict in Yoruba society.

It is possible to sub-categorize the material which I collected according to content, protagonists or motifs, although such categorizations were not proposed by any of my informants. Here it comes to light that under the term *àlọ́* many different types of stories are embraced which would sometimes, from a Western viewpoint, even be treated like different genres. While the category *àlọ́* itself was clearly defined in my research area as a narrative introduced by an opening formula, closed by an ending formula and, most importantly, containing a song and some other distinguishing features, it is useful to remind ourselves that some *àlọ́* would be described as trickster stories in University Campus terminology, others as "myths," or even "aetiological myths" and still others in none of these categories.

The main figure in the trickster stories is *ahun* or *alábahun* (resp. *alábaun*), the tortoise, richly represented in our sample. This character occasionally appears with an opponent or adversary, such as *ajá*, the dog, who is a kind of secondary trickster figure (see *Ajá ajá o ran mi leru*, No. 2 in the collection, transcribed in Kubik 1961b:199). Important characteristics of the trickster are his guile, his intrigues and his ability to find an exit in the most muddled situations; these qualities are combined with greediness, egoism and recklessness. On the sociopsychological function of the trickster figure in Yoruba society, Ulli Beier and Gerald Moore (1974:238) remarked:

> The Yoruba consciously poke fun at their own faults when they tell stories of the tortoise-trickster. Sometimes the tortoise's cunning defeats itself, as, for example, in the delightful tale in which the tortoise steals from the gods a calabash that contains all the wisdom in the world. He hangs it around his neck and is so eager to get home with it

> that, when he comes to a tree trunk lying across the road, he is unable to cross it because the calabash gets in his way; and in his anxiety he fails to think of putting it on his back. Frustrated, the tortoise smashes the calabash, and so, ever since that day, wisdom has been scattered all over the world in tiny pieces.

In the fictitious figure of the tortoise (the word *ahun* also means miser) a facet of repressed, asocial behavior is revitalized and reenacted at the level of fantasy.

A major part of the *àlọ́* does not belong to the trickster category. In this part we find a wide range of most diverse content motifs. For example, in one story (*Kinkin*, No. 4 in the collection) we learn about a boy who shoots a magic bird, in spite of warnings he receives from his parents, and he dies after eating it. In another story, *Ero ti nr'Ojeje* (Travellers are going to Oje market, No. 49 and 125) we learn about a childless woman who receives medicine from an *Ifá* priest for giving birth to a child. After her child is born, she fails to live up to the conditions under which the medicine was given to her. There are stories in which the motif of devouring occurs, sometimes in the form of a child-swallowing python or a crab; and there is a story about a hunter whose three dogs can speak (*Adú ajá mi o*, No. 121).

Man is not only a victim of his own lack of reason and the ill will of his fellowmen, but he is also thought to be exposed to evil forces from a superhuman world. In particular, defenseless and unsupervised children live in a dangerous environment, as is shown in the story of *Adejumo* (No. 105 in the collection). As in so many other *àlọ́* the didactical message in this story is that parents should never leave their small children somewhere behind without someone to look after them. The story aims at putting a bar to the thoughtlessness and lack of care of some parents. The audience notices from the first few sentences of the story where the injustice is, namely that the father had gone on a journey, leaving his seven children behind on a farm for many days without any guardian. There lives however a wizard inside a papaya tree who takes advantage of this. The danger is near, just next to the house. Every day he comes to kidnap one of the children. What exactly he does with the children remains unsaid in the story; but the children never come back and it is obvious that he eats them up.

The father returning from his trip employs a magical device to debilitate the wizard. He claps a pot without bottom on his head. The wizard however, is stronger. It does not work. Eventually the father tries the same method with the papaya tree in which the wizard lives and which therefore is within his magic radiation zone. But he only reaps mockery, the wizard compares the father with "God." This part of the story is based on dream symbolism. Whatever the father tries to undertake, he is condemned to fail. In this manner the mistake once committed is punished *irrevocably*. The father loses all his children except one. No revision of the sentence is possible. The same applies to several other Yoruba stories such as the one of a woman who leaves her child behind in the rain.

A fantastic horror motif which appears in some of the *àlọ́* is the borrowing of body parts from animals or plants in the forest by creatures from another world (*ọrun*), who—so equipped—appear as human beings in the world of man. Gullible individuals who follow these attractive beings into the bush, discover with dismay, how these creatures gradually disintegrate, by giving back all their borrowed body parts to the original owners. This archetypal motif appears in *Mahinlola d'ẹ̀hin o!* (No. 59) and *Ade yo d'ẹ̀hin o!* (No. 117), two stories which are merely variants of the same theme. It has also entered modern Yoruba literature (Daniel O. Fagunwa 1949a and 1949b) and Amos

Tutuola in his novels has used it (*The Palm-Wine Drinkard*, 1952, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, 1954). Here, much of the content motif repertoire of the *àlọ́* has been worked into longer narratives and made available to a foreign readership in a kind of English that is spoken in the streets of western Nigerian towns and that is very different from the Standard English used by Western-educated Nigerian writers.

Some *àlọ́* would not be called stories or folktales from the viewpoint of Western literary taxonomy, but categorized as myths; for example the story of *Ol'ọrun*, the owner of the sky, and *Aiyé*, the earth creature (*Retenrete*, No. 114). In this story it is explained, why sky and solid ground (earth) are separated from each other today. There are many *àlọ́* containing themes which bring them close to aetiological myths, for example also in the story of the woman, who receives a child from the *bàbaláwo*, the priest of the *Ifá* oracle, which can only subsist on eggs (No. 49 and 125). When she leaves it alone with the second wife of her husband, the latter gives it bitter wateryam to eat. The dying child then follows his mother to the market, where she is selling goods, and in a dramatical scene—reinforced by the story's song—it gradually sinks into the ground. The mother wants to save her child and hold it back, but by doing so she tears off its head. For a long time the mother then wanders about with the head of her dead child. Every tree to which she offers it as a present, refuses to accept it, until at last the oilpalm (*ọ̀pẹ*) feels pity with the woman and takes it. The head of the dead child transforms into the fruit of the oilpalm which plays such an important role in Yoruba economic life.

In a performance of *àlọ́* at the fireplace in the evening, literary, musical and sometimes even theatre-like aspects play an equally important role of the event. Some of the latter have been made use of in modern Yoruba theatre such as the plays of Kola Ogunmola and Duro Ladipọ. Among these aspects one may point out the partition of roles between leader and chorus. In the *àlọ́* the voices of the leader and the responding chorus may represent conflicting personalities in the plot. Different characters in the story may be allocated to the voices of leader and chorus. For example in the story *Ajá ajá o ran mi leru!* (No. 2) the dog's reply to the tortoise's demand to help it carry the load, is performed by the chorus. In the story *Ará ọ̀run ará ọ̀ o!* (No. 43) the lead singer changes his role, once singing with the voice of the palm wine seller, then with that of the heavenly inhabitants, to whom the former wishes to sell his products. The audience (chorus) then assumes the role of the "onlookers" or "people" who witness the event from outside like in a theatre. It is interesting that the chorus in some of the historical plays by the late Duro Ladipọ, such as *Ọba koso* (the king did not hang himself) also often assumes such a role.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION OF THE *ÀLỌ́* SONGS

As in other cultures, a major function of the story songs in *àlọ́* is to underline dramatic stituations. Within a plot, a song therefore often appears at moments of crisis or turning-points. Sometimes a song portrays the character of a protagonist by textual and/or musical means. And often also, in the story songs something is articulated, hinted at or leaked, which must not or could not be said in ordinary language. The story song in such cases makes the "voice" of another perceptible level audible, warning the hero and passing to him a truth he cannot, or not yet, see, as he is captivated by the things of a superficial reality and thus catapulting himself into immeasurable dangers. Things to come are reflected back into the present and the audience realizes what the hero is in for.

In such a manner the tortoise in one of the stories (No. 19) actually reveals to the dull elephant that it will have to die. The tortoise sings: "Tomorrow at this time the cooking pot will smell pleasantly and blood will be spilled. . . . " The audience understands the announcement, the elephant in the story notices nothing. Or in the story song *Adeyo d'ẹ̀hìn o!* (No. 117, Adeyo go back) it is said that the ghost-elephant is returning into the forest. Without directly pronouncing that this "beautiful man" will give back his borrowed, fascinating body parts to their owners, this is hinted at by metaphors such as the following: "The teeth of the mouth *are like* the gourd," "The skin of the body *is like* a banana," "The staff of money is like the *ìrókò* tree."

As a rule the *àlọ́* chantefables contain only one song. According to how the plot develops, the song may recur either in its basic form or in a textual variant. Generally songs are in leader/chorus form, because one of the objectives is indeed to promote audience participation, keep everyone attentive and thus prevent the audience losing interest and getting tired. Some *àlọ́* also have extensive solo passages in their songs, for example *Oba ni a tu'ṣọ pẹbẹ* (the king has told us to take off our clothes) (No. 124).

The chorus phrase remains unchanged or essentially unchanged throughout the song. It can therefore be learned by the audience relatively quickly and occasionally the narrator assists the responding audience, teaching those who do not know the song how they should reply. The leader of the song, identical with the narrator of the story, on the other hand develops his text lines according to the plot of the story.

In principle *àlọ́* songs have fixed texts, and at least they are little changed by the same narrator in subsequent performances. In contrast to *oriki* (described as "praise names," "praise poems") and several other types of Yoruba oral literature, there is hardly a margin for improvisation in the *àlọ́* songs. However, one can observe considerable variation from person to person and from place to place. This is well-demonstrated in our recordings, when I had an opportunity to record the same *àlọ́* several times, for example *Ajá ajá o ràn mi lẹ́rù* in 1960 (Ph.A. B. 5184) and 1963 (Ph.A. B 8583) or *Antere* (Ph.A. B 5175 in 1960, Ph.A. B 8974 and B 8975 in 1963). (For the latter see also transcription in Kubik 1983:375–378).

Many chorus phrases do not have verbal meaning, but consist of syllable sequences. However, these are not "nonsense syllables," they *do* have a meaning, although not a verbal one, in that they may stimulate by their timbre and rhythmic character and their tonality certain associations in Yoruba speakers. In some instances these are difficult to follow up and to define in precise terminology, in others the kind of associations are easier to detect. Often word elements from the leader's text lines are woven into the chorus phrase, producing dance-like, in any case movement-stimulating patterns of syllables. Examples are the phrase *Ijumọ kenkẹ ijumọ re* in the story of *Adejumo* (No. 105); here the word *Adejumo*, the name of the father of the seven children kidnapped by a wizard, is woven into a dance-like pattern. Also *d'ẹ̀hìn* (go back) in the story of the girl Mahinlola who follows disguised spirits into the bush, is worked into the chorus phrase: *D'ẹ̀hìn terere d'ẹ̀hìn* (No. 59). In a similar manner another chorus phrase, namely *Erin yéyé erin yèyè* in the story of the dull elephant following the tortoise which traps it, the word *ẹ̀rin* (elephant) is contained, while the syllables "yéyé . . . yèyè" which have no verbal meaning vividly depict the clumsy movements of the elephant soon to meet his fate (No. 19).

The interlacing between syllables and a few real words in the chorus phrases also allows for subtle allusions. The chorus phrase *Tere natere* in the story of *Baba ol'ódò*

(Owner of the watercourse) (No. 104) has been constructed from syllables out of the name of the physical father of the young girl in the story, *Láḍẹjo Awẹ́lé Oniterena*, who eventually gives in to the advances of the owner of the watercourse, where she went to fetch water. The last three syllables of the name *Oniterena* have been worked into *Tere natere*. Sometimes the verbal meaning of a chorus phrase is no longer known to the contemporary storyteller, such as for example the reply *Sinda wá eregeko* in the story of the hunter and his three dogs: *Adú aja mi o!* (No. 121). My informants were unable to explain the meaning of such chorus phrases and it is possible that they are in lesser known dialects of Yoruba; or come from neighboring languages, which would be a worthwhile hint at migration of a story; or alternatively, they are composed of ancient and now obsolete word elements. Such questions can only be pursued from case to case.

A good number of chorus phrases in the *àlọ́* songs are constructed upon onomatopoeic ideophones. These can characterize a person, a plot or even a certain motional pattern. *Gbinrin*, for example, is one such onomatopoem, representing in the story of the three kings' daughters, *Mo ri kẹ̀kẹ́ kan* (No. 41), the sound of metal or iron falling to the ground; in the actual story it is an iron hoop or wheel (perhaps from an old bicycle) used by the three girls for playing. In the chorus phrase of the song, this onomatopoem is processed into the phrase *Gbinrin ajalubale gbinrin* (Rec. Ph.A. No. B 5183). The leader's phrase and reply by the chorus follow each other immediately. Sometimes they overlap. Extensive overlapping can be found, for example in the story *Eleluju* (No. 47) from Igbajo near Ilesha. As a result simultaneous sounds emerge.

TONAL AND HARMONIC PATTERNS

In the cultural radiation area of what once was the kingdom of Ọ̀yọ́, including the town of Oshogbo which developed from a military camp of the kingdom in the 19th century, the tonal system is pentatonic. The Yoruba have this tone system in common with several other peoples in the Savannah region of West Africa, for example the Fõ, and it may be an old Western Sudanic heritage. In any case, the type of pentatonic system we find in use today among the majority of Yoruba speakers must *not* be considered as an Islamic-Arabic musical trait filtering into Yorubaland via the Hausa culture area in the North; although it is likely (Kubik 1961b:196–197) that Yoruba pentatonism was corroborated by contacts with the North and, with the extension of power of the Ọ̀yọ́ kingdom, pentatonic music gained considerable ground during the nineteenth century at the expense of heptatonic Yoruba musical styles, today confined to the southeastern Yoruba speakers (Ijesha, Ekiti etc.). We can write down the Yoruba pentatonic system quite comfortably in staff notation with the notes C,D,E,G,A or C,D,F,G,A (even C,D,F,G,B♭), because whole tones and minor thirds are clearly conceptualized as different interval sizes within a scalar pattern, although not necessarily in relation to Yoruba speech tones.

The Ọ̀yọ́ tradition of Yoruba music is represented in our collection by the major part of the *àlọ́* songs, due to the fact that the material mainly comes from Oshogbo and surroundings. In its present distribution area the pentatonic zone in Yorubaland, however, ends rather abruptly in the vicinity of the town Ilesha. Here is something like an invisible border separating the southeastern Yoruba speakers from those in the area mentioned. It was here at the fringe of the southern Nigerian forests, where the conquests of the Ọ̀yọ́ kings and later the cavalry regiments of the Fulɓe came to a halt, because of insurmountable ecological barriers.

From Ilesha up to the area of Benin and and into the Niger Delta there is then a zone of predominantly hexatonic and heptatonic music combined with multipart singing, in either two and often in three parallel lines. The system behind this multipart harmony has not yet been completely clarified musicologically, nor has its history. However, there seem to be tendencies towards equal treatment of parallel thirds in their intervals, such as is also found in the musical cultures of other West African peoples living in a forest ecology. This means that the "thirdness" of an interval as such is the significant quality, and major and minor thirds, although they can be measured in recordings, may be exchangable in some of these cultures, i.e. they are conceptualized not as important distinctions, but rather as intervals that can be substituted for each other, or else may also be approximated in intonation towards each other. However, while in Baule music of Côte d'Ivoire, for example, there are definitely *neutral* thirds (neither major nor minor), this is not necessarily so in all the West African heptatonic multipart styles.

Examples for *àlọ́* songs from the Ijesha speaking area in western Nigeria include:

a. *Yè só mu 'rù fín 'mi?* (Who will give me my tail?), No. 39 from Ijebu-Ijesha. This song displays what we may call a kind of "resultant heptatonic scale," i.e. all the combining voices together constitute the heptatonic range of this system, but individual voices both of the leader and chorus do not exceed the range of a fourth or fifth (see also transcription extract further below). This could be a significant trait and it could contain a clue to understanding the genesis of this system and its history. The chorus in this song displays parallel harmony in thirds.

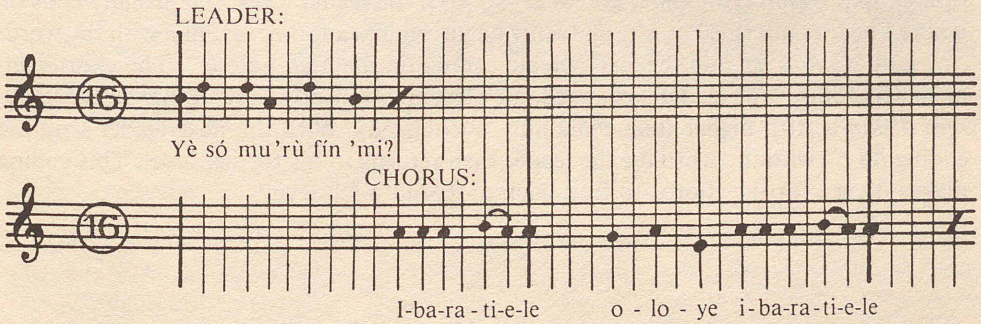
b. *Eleluju ma mã ku o!*, (No. 47) from Igbajo near Ilesha. The tonal material in this song is hexatonic with intervals allowing us to render the notes as e'', d'', c'', b', a', plus a somewhat dampened g'. Leader and chorus overlap extremely. Except when using the basic text phrase *Ma mã ku o!* the leader resumes his singing immediately after the middle of the chorus phrase is reached by the responding audience. The simultaneous harmonic sounds resulting from this process should not be explained solely as a consequence of the intersecting (overlapping) between leader's and chorus' voice parts. Although formal and rhythmic concepts seem to be the point of departure in this particular case, leading to the configuration discussed, it is also true that among the Ijesha people harmonic ideas are so deeply entrenched in their musical culture that any kind of overlapping would automatically adjust to consonantal ideas. This by contrast to explicitly unison- and octave-oriented musical cultures. It is evident, therefore, that the consonant sound combinations in this song are not present merely by chance.

c. *Adú aja mi o!* (Adú, my dog! No. 121). This *àlọ́* song contained in the beautiful story of a hunter and his three dogs, which was told to us by N. A. Oladeinde from Ijebu-Ijesha, contains elements pointing to the beginnings of *juju* music in western Nigeria. Mr. Oladeinde told me that he had learned the story and its song in 1935. In the chorus phrase we suddenly discover what may be interpreted as a rumba rhythm and also, most strikingly, we find a kind of diatonic melodic line. In contrast to the "traditional" Ijesha heptatonic system, here it is one voice by itself, specifically the leader's voice, which runs through the whole range of one octave. The chorus is sung in unison, which is perhaps a sign that this song marked the penetration of a heptatonic tradition into western Nigeria which was

different structurally from the local one, thus making the traditional harmonic singing style difficult to apply.

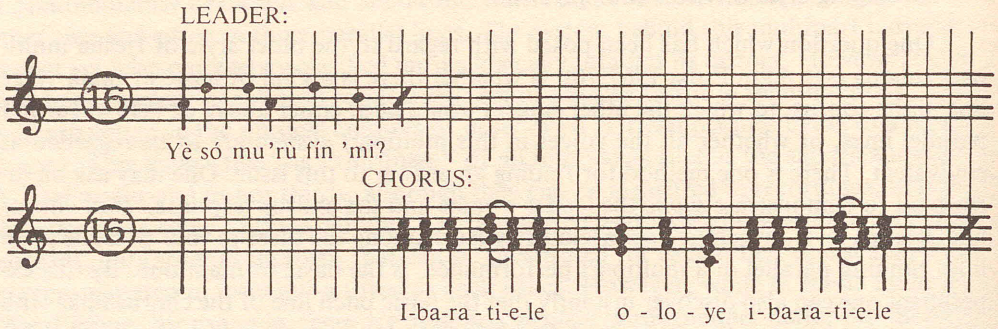
One question which has been posed with regard to the older style of Ijesha multipart singing (see Akin Euba 1967:70), is whether there is a kind of basic or main voice line in the chorus, to which the other singers would add, either above or below, further parallel lines, or whether all the voices in this multipart system are to be regarded as equivalent. There is one method for finding an answer to this issue. One may ask an informant to demonstrate *alone* the leader's voice and the chorus response. *That* chorus line or pitch level, which he unconsciously selects among the three to four possible pitch lines running parallel in a multipart performance, *is* the basic or main one. By this experiment one can also discover instantly that the basic pitch line of the chorus links with the leader's phrase at the *same level*. Incidentally, this is analogous to the musical behavior we shall discuss further below when looking at transposition of a chorus phrase provoked by a leader's change of his pitch level. In the Ijesha multipart singing style the basic chorus phrase, to which harmonically parallel lines may be added above and below, is the one in the middle, standing at the same pitch level with the leader's phrase. We can show this by reproducing a short extract from the *àlọ́* song *Yè só mu 'rù fín 'mi?* (No. 39). The basic form of the chorus phrase in relation to the leader's basic phrase is as follows (see introduction to the transcriptions section on page 156 for an explanation of the system of notation used):

Example 2. Elementary pulses: 320 M.M.



The basic chorus line is the one with which a chorus member singing alone would invariably link "in unison" with the leader's phrase. More voices, with other chorus members beginning to share, are then added above and below in intervals perceived as consonant. These additional voices are basically euphonic in concept, they are equivalent with the basic one and have equal right, but are only collaterally dependent on the voice of the leader.

Example 3.

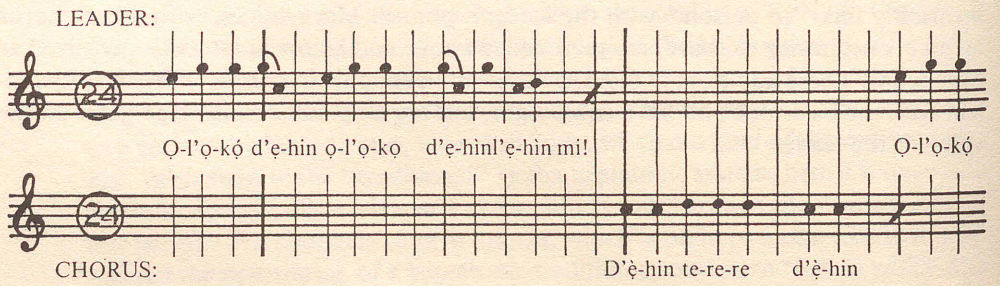


If only one harmonic line is added to the basic chorus' line, then, at least in this song, it is the lower third. Parallelism of the lines is obligatory in this musical tradition because of the highly tonal character of the Yoruba language.

An interesting phenomenon in the *àlọ́*, perhaps related with tonal relationships even in the pentatonic and unison singing areas of Yorubaland, is *melodic transposition*. In some *àlọ́* songs the chorus phrase may suddenly be transposed a fifth upwards during a performance to follow the changing tonality of the leader. In one song of our collection *Ọl'ọkọ d'ẹ̀hin* (Hoe seller go back! No. 53), the leader's text line usually ends on a note I have transcribed as *d*''. Suddenly he introduces another text line with the words . . . *kan 'dò kan 'ró* and the last syllable ending on the high note *g*''. The chorus immediately follows the leader's changed pitch level by transposing its response *D'ẹ́hìn terere d'ẹ́hìn* a fifth higher (text remaining unchanged). With the next leader's phrase ending on *c*'' with the word *èjè* the leader then returns to his former level. This ending makes it easy for the chorus to find back to its old pitch level.

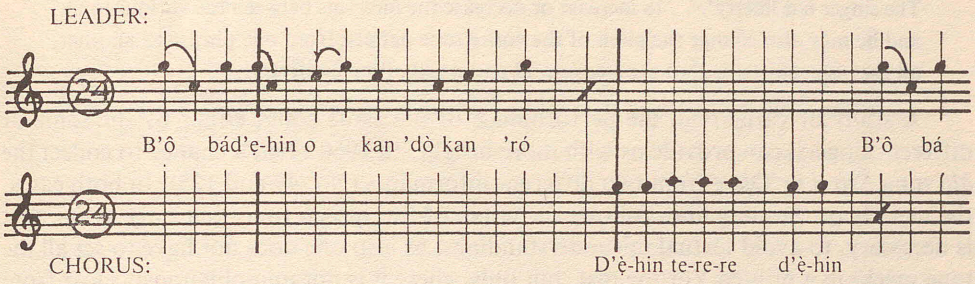
Example 4. Extract: *Ọl'ọkọ d'ẹ̀hin!* (Hoe seller go back!)

a) basic leader-chorus tonal level — Elementary pulses: 225 M.M.



Example 5.

b) transposition of chorus phrase provoked by new leader's phrase ending on a high note



It seems that this transposition model is firmly established in the pentatonic tradition in which most of the *àlọ́* songs operate. Besides the example given above, it also occurs here and there in some other songs. The scheme is that the note written as a c'' becomes a g'' in transposition and d'' turns into an a''. If there is an e'' it must be transposed a sixth upwards, becoming a c'''. Transposition takes place within the tonal framework of the specific type of pentatonic system on which Yoruba music is based, i.e. a system allowing for two interval sizes between neighboring steps, whole tones and minor thirds. Transposition of the chorus phrase is induced by a leader's text line ending on a word with high notes. A systematic screening of my material has revealed that in many of the pentatonic songs from the Ọ̀yọ culture area, leader's phrases usually end on a c'' or d'' (in our notation). Then the chorus joins by what we may call *unison linkage*, i.e. on the same note. If a leader's phrase, as a result of the tonal structure of a changing text, ends on another note, the chorus reacts by following the leader to the new pitch level, transposing its response.

SPEECH TONES AND PITCH LINE

In their pitch lines the *àlọ́* story songs follow more or less strictly the principles of the tonal character of Yoruba (Etundayo Phillips 1953). One can show this impressively with the song *Mo ri kẹ̀kẹ̀ kan* (No. 41, Rec. Ph.A. Vienna No. B 5183). The story's plot is about three kings' daughters, among whom two have personal names which are identical in their consonants and vowels. Only by the speech tones can they be distinguished. The two daughters are called: *Opobípòbí* and *Òpóbìpóbì*. In order not to mistake them for each other, the tones have to be maintained in the song melodically, otherwise the audience would not understand which of the two daughters is referred to.

On the other hand, there is also a certain liberty or perhaps margin of tolerance with regard to the tone principle when a Yoruba text is to be sung. One cannot derive the melody of a song to be composed, directly from the speech tones of the words in the text, in the sense of a rigid text/melody relationship. The actually sung (or set) pitches are thus not absolutely predictable from the angle of the text. The sung intervals are, in fact, preconditioned by the three speech tones distinguished in Yoruba (high, middle and low) only approximately, and the singer can be irresolute as to whether he would aim at the interval of a whole tone or a minor third, for example. One singer may prefer this,

another that rendering of a text melodically. Ulli Beier in his article on "Yoruba Vocal Music" (1956:23) states:

> The singer has liberty . . . to increase or decrease the intervals between the various tones, and he may also change the pitch of the entire tone pattern from one phrase to another, all that is required is that the basic tone pattern shall be preserved.

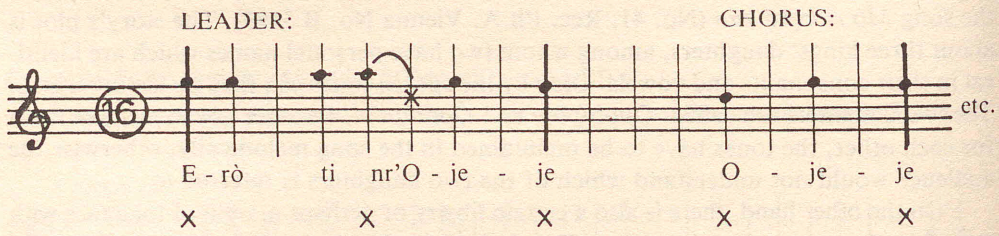
A study of variants in the performance of the same song, either by the same or different singers, can provide us with more insight. In 1960 I had a chance to collect the *àlọ́* song *Èrò ti nr'Ojeje* from two different informants (No. 49 and 125). In both cases, the melody of the sung lines follows the curve of the speech tones but only as far as it is necessary, to avoid textual misunderstandings, as also one does not have to set all the tone marks in a printed Yoruba text, but only where it is not unambiguously clear from the word context in a sentence, what is meant. The tonal language, thus determines most of the melodic movements in their *direction*, but not necessarily always in the actual size of the intervals. Etundayo Phillips (1953:1) expressed it with the following words:

> Yoruba speech is supposed to have only three tones. There are some who go further to assert that these three tones are fixed and can be represented by Doh, Me and Soh. These ideas are quite erroneous.
>
> The positions of the tones may be principally three, but not only may each of these, especially the medium, be slightly higher or lower, but the speech tones do not strictly follow the three Solfa tones.

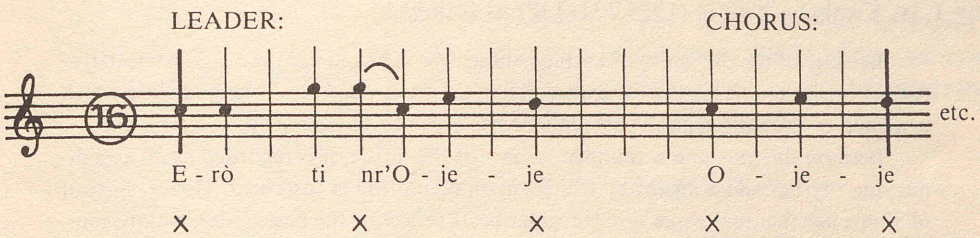
In the *àlọ́* song *Èrò ti nr'Ojeje* (Travellers are going to Oje market) the same text was sung to me on two different occasions by two different narrators from the same town. In each case the chorus adjusted its response melodically to the intervals each singer preferred.

Example 6. *Èrò ti nr'Ojeje* as sung by Regina Olusọla from Oshogbo (No. 49)

Elementary pulses: 280 M.M.



Example 7. *Èrò ti nr'Ojeje* as sung by Taiye Ladipọ from Oshogbo (No. 125)



TIME LINE PATTERNS

Another, no less interesting subject is the rhythm of the *àlọ́* songs. Rhythmically, the story songs develop along an implicit or actually performed series of handclaps. Sometimes the narrator and lead singer begin to clap hands alone and the audience may join him or her from the moment it enters with the response phrase. Even when there is no actual handclapping—as in most *àlọ́* I have recorded—the songs are mentally referred to a clap beat, or just a series of reference points in time.

It was startling, however, when I found that one can add to most of the *àlọ́* songs one or another of the so-called asymmetric time line patterns known in Yoruba music and elsewhere in West Africa. One can merely "think" them, or actually strike them and they fit perfectly. This I did not discover through abstract analysis of rhythm patterns from transcriptions in the study, but informants, Gboyega Ladipọ in particular, suggested such patterns to me, while teaching me *àlọ́* songs. Obviously, this was a teaching device, and Gboyega said to me on more than one occasion, that such time line patterns could be struck to accompany the songs. It is remarkable, however, that in actual performances, none of the participants usually struck a time line on objects. I only have three tape recordings where this happens: *Antere* (Ph.A. B 8974, 8975) and *Ọba Alaran bẹwe, Kinkin!* (B 8981, No. 4), all made in 1963. In all my other recordings, accompaniment—if there is any at all—is in the form of clapping a simple regular beat. Nevertheless, the complex, asymmetric time line patterns somehow are implicitly present, as a possibility, as a guiding accentual pattern and they are, without doubt, vaguely in the mind of the performers. Moreover, they steer the rhythmic shaping of the leader's phrases and the motional response of the participating community. In my transcription, I have paid attention to this and notated the time line patterns, even if they are not objectified by actual performance.

The term time line was originally coined by J. H. Kwabena Nketia and regularly used by him in lectures in Legon in the 1960s (personal communication by Atta Annan Mensah 1972). A typical time line which one can put underneath some *àlọ́* songs is the ubiquitous 7-stroke 12-pulse pattern, in Yoruba often referred to with the word *omele* (usually translated as "accompanying rhythm," "accompaniment"). The melodic accents of the leader and the chorus sometimes run parallel, sometimes against the implied time line pattern. The time line is a most important concept in the music of speakers of

Kwa languages in West Africa, as well as in the Western strain of the speakers of Benue-Congo languages (from eastern Nigeria up to southern Zaïre and Angola). It is defined by J. H. Kwabena Nketia (1975:131–132) as follows:

> Because of the difficulty of keeping subjective metronomic time . . . African traditions facilitate this process by externalizing the basic pulse. . . . the guideline which is related to the time span in this manner has come to be described as a *time line*.
>
> Because the time line is sounded as part of the music, it is regarded as an accompanying rhythm and a means by which rhythmic motion is sustained. Hence, instead of a time line that represents simple regular beats reflecting the basic pulse, a more complex form may be used. It may be designed as a rhythmic pattern in additive or divisive form, embodying the basic pulse or regulative beat as well as the density referent. Instead of a regular group of four notes, groups of five, six, and seven notes may be used in duple or triple rhythmic patterns.

SHIFTING A PHRASE

One tonal unit (mora) in the syllable sequences of the *àlọ́* texts normally corresponds with one elementary pulse in the music (symbolized by the vertical lines through the staff in our transcriptions) i.e. the smallest rhythmic unit in the musical event. The elementary pulsation has been described by various terms in the literature, by A. M. Jones (1954) as "smallest units," by myself as "elementary pulses" (Kubik 1972), as "fastest pulse" by Koetting (1970) and as "density referent" by Mantle Hood (1971).[4]

From the above relationship it follows that the text phrases, with their diverse lengths and internal structures covering one or another number of elementary pulse units, are not necessarily metrically related to the handclaps. The word syllables evenly strung together and forming a short text line may, for example, cover an *uneven number* of pulse units. If such a text line with a syllable number of, let us say, 7, 9, 13 etc. units is repeated without a caesura (empty pulse) between, it follows that in the repetition its relationship to the beat has totally changed. From this comes the impression, often gathered by observers who are unaware of the text component and only look at the "rhythm," that different metrical entities seem to alternate and follow each other irregularly.

The truth, however, is that *entire phrases* of a specific internal structure are shifted against the beat or handclaps in defiance of even the boundaries of the cycle number of usually 12, 16 or 24 elementary pulses. In the performers' conceptualization these text lines are coherent entities. They are not conceived as being composed of metrical particles, such as 2+3+2 etc. (see the theory of "additive rhythms" by A. M. Jones 1954, 1959), nor are they to be understood as hemiola style duple-triple alternations.

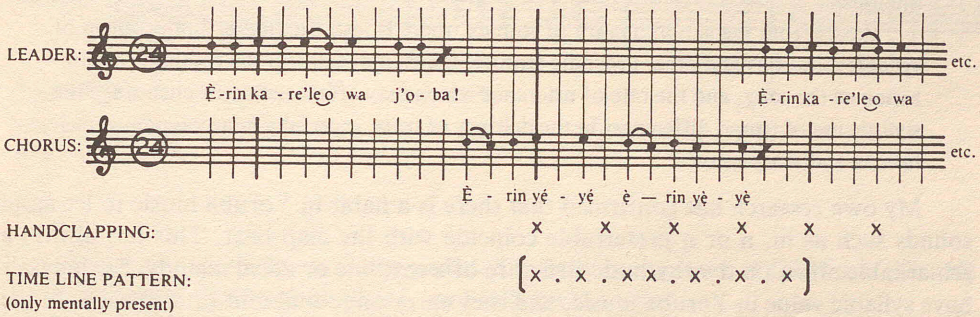
There are many examples in my *àlọ́* collection where some leader's or chorus' phrases are shifted as a whole against the beat (see *Ará ọrun ará ọrun o*, No. 43, or *Ọl'ọkọ d'ẹ̀hin*, No. 53). A particularly instructive example for this compositional technique is the chorus phrase *Ẹ̀rin yéyé ẹ̀rin yèyè* in the story about the dull elephant who succumbs to the dirty tricks of the tortoise (No. 19). As the elephant walks along in the plot, the responding community sings the phrase *ẹ̀rin yeye* (Elephant, *yeye!*) in repetition, but the second time with different notes for *yeye*. The phrase covers exactly 7

pulses which is an uneven number. Together with its repetition, therefore, it covers 14 pulses and *crosses the Beat* of the 2 × 12 = 24 pulses cycle.

One can observe in my transcription following below, how the words "ẹ̀rin yeye" are shifted against the beat in the repetition. The result is a) an offbeat effect and b) in this particular case a rhythmic corroboration by the voice line of the twelve-pulse time line pattern mentally present in the participants (not actually struck).

Example 8. Extract: *Ẹ̀rin yẹ́yẹ́, ẹ̀rin yẹ̀yẹ̀* (Elephant, *yẹ́yẹ́!* elephant *yẹ̀yẹ̀!*)

Elementary pulses: 240 M.M.



TIMBRE SEQUENCES AND ACCENTUATION

A further technique leading to offbeat accentuation in the *àlọ́* and many other Yoruba and West African song genres is the constructive use of timbre sequences in rhythmic structure. Timbre sequences arise naturally by the sound repertoire of any spoken language. This implies that any melody sung to words, also displays patterns of timbre sequences imposing an accentual structuring on the vocal line and creating the impression of "melodic phrasing." Accentuation in Yoruba music is often created this way, i.e. by exploiting the configurations of timbre values constituting the syllablic sequences of a text line, rather than by physical stress. For this reason, it makes an essential difference whether one sings a Yoruba song to its proper words or not.

Language, timbre and rhythm are closely interrelated in Yoruba musical culture. Even the organization of rhythm, timbre and accent sequences, apart from the tonal aspects of melody, are intimately linked with structural characteristics of the Yoruba language, in particular with phonology. This is not limited to Yoruba, but has been observed in the broader realm of the Kwa family of languages and beyond. J. H. Kwabena Nketia (1970:7) stressed that there is

> the distinct colouration of vocal timbre which is a concomitant of the phonetic characteristics of the language in which songs are sung. The structure of a tone language, particularly in respect of pitch levels, and the use of such features as on-and-off glides of

pronounced falling and rising tones of varying speeds may be reflected in the singing where vocal music follows intonation closely.

Similarly speakers of a language with a high incidence of nasality due to the presence of nasal vowels and a high percentage of nasal consonants, or one with pronounced glotalization which is allowed free rein in the music, or a language with certain consonantal features which are marked in speech cannot but show this peculiarity in their singing, unless like Pygmies and Bushmen they sing mainly to "vocables." Just as one may identify a spoken language through sheer memory of the impressions of its sounds, so may one identify the vocal style of an ethnic group from the memory of the total sound impression formed by a combination of musical and phonetic features of the texts of the music.

Apart from the actual quality of sounds, there is also the interesting problem of syllable durations and other prosodic features which may control the rhythmic organization of the song, and the rate of utterance which may affect tempo or encourage the stylistic use of tempo differences in the delivery of texts, especially in accompanied recitations and story-songs.

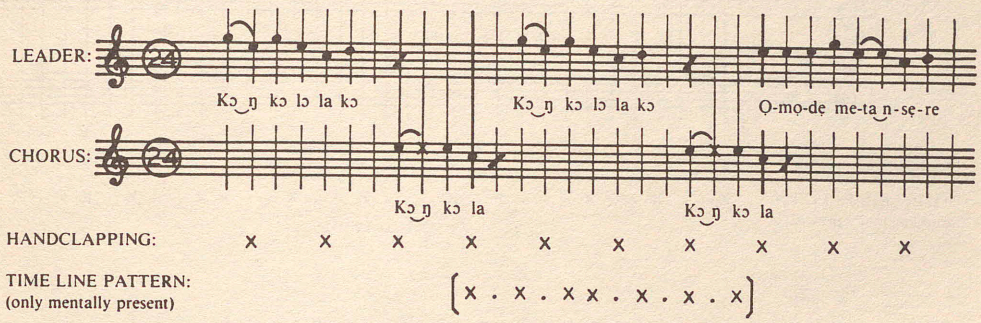
My own research has confirmed that there is a habit in Yoruba music to let nasal sounds such as m, n or ŋ preferrable coincide with the clap beat. This has always a remarkable effect on the rhythmic structure of a text line or vocal melody. Such nasals have syllabic value in Yoruba music, and they carry one tonal unit (mora) each. In the temporal dimension they represent one elementary pulse. Their timbre is muted, or dampened, if compared with the aggressive plosives (p, t, k). Their falling on the clap pulse is, of course, brought about deliberately by Yoruba composers. And since the nasal consonants appear muted in their timbre quality, they also appear unaccented and human auditory perception recognizes such a note as almost a rest. The immediate result is that, by contrast, the neighboring syllables in the text line seem to gain considerable prominence. A syllable commencing with a plosive gains extra prominence if it is preceded by a syllabic nasal. It appears to be accented and sharper in timbre. Sound combinations such as m-te, n-ta, ŋ-ko etc. are treated as consisting of two syllables in Yoruba—unlike some Bantu languages where nasal plus plosive may be homorganic.

This can be demonstrated by examples from our *àlọ́* collection. For example, in one of the songs *Ọmọde mẹta nsẹre* (Three children are playing, Second version, No. 118) a verbally meaningless phrase is sung at the beginning of the story song, based on syllables also used in teaching time line patterns *kɔ-ŋ-kɔ-lɔ-la-kɔ*, to which the chorus replies *kɔ-ŋ-kɔ-la*. These are related to the clap beat in such a manner that the nasal [ŋ] falls on a clap beat. The accents generated by the plosive [k] then come out prominently and the result is a lively offbeat phrasing:

Example 9. Extract: *Ọmọde mẹta nsẹre* (Three children are playing, No. 118)

(Syllables are written here in phonetic script, *not* in the Standard Yoruba orthography.)

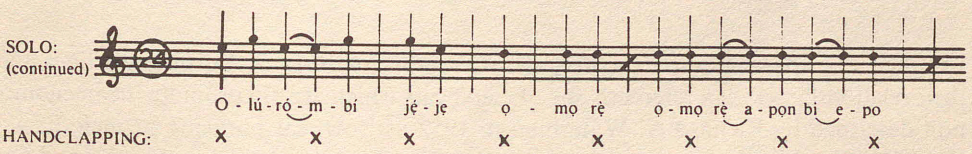
Elementary pulses: 300 M.M.



Many more examples could be added. Similarly in the story of *Olúrómbí* (No. 56) the nasal [m] in this word is syllabic and falls on the beat:

Example 10. Extract: *Olúrómbí* (Olú will bear children, No. 56)

Elementary pulses: 225 M.M.

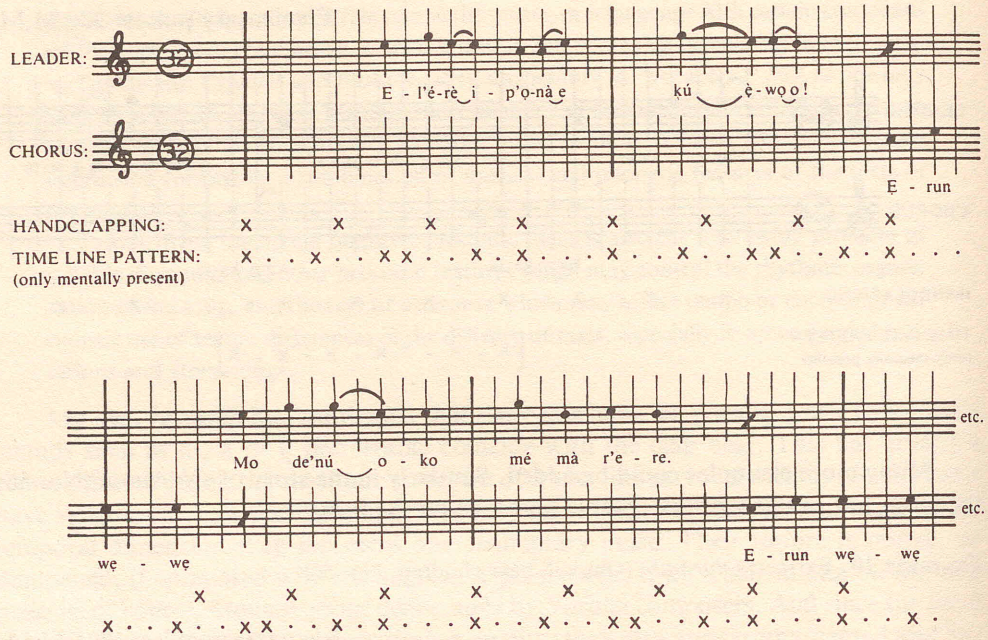


A further formative effect on the structure of the vocal rhythm comes from vowel juxtaposition. Equal or different vowels, if they carry the same speech tones, merge musically into one note (see syllables 13–14 and 16–17 in Example 10). This may be expressed in staff notation by the tie, though it disguises the fact that the notes tied together are sung to syllables having different timbre. When vowels are tied together in a song, i.e. follow each other seamlessly, each one retains its rhythmic value; but the first vowel tends to stand out more prominently in auditory perception.

If it is placed on an offbeat, and if this placement is shifted and recurs several times within a text line, the result is a complex rhythmic structure, actually only created by melodic and timbre accents. Example 11 shows an elaborate vocal rhythmic-melodic text line which is to a great extent the result of juxtaposed vowels. The example is taken from one of the tortoise trickster stories *El 'érè ip'ọnà e kú ẹ̀wo o!* (Owner of the beans near the road, greetings! No. 36 in the collection, Rec. Ph.A. B 5177).

Example 11. Extract: *El 'érè ip'ọnà e kú ẹ̀wo o!* (Owner of the beans near the road, greetings!) (No. 36)

Elementary pulses: 270 M.M.



Thus, besides melodic structure, it is the timbre patterns of Yoruba text lines and their relationships with a reference line of clap beats which greatly promote the phenomenon described by Richard A. Waterman in 1952 as "offbeat phrasing of melodic accents." As we have shown by examples in Yoruba language, offbeat effects—and not only in Yoruba but in many other West African cultures—are created through constructive use of the phonetic components of syllable sequences forming the text to which a vocal melody is sung. Consequently, if one removes the original text from a Yoruba song, the characteristic sequences of timbre accents are removed with it, a warning to anyone who would want to play the transcriptions at the end of this paper on a piano.

FORM IN THE ÀLỌ́ SONGS

As in many other musical styles in Africa, the prevalent form is the short *cycle*. It can be defined in each case by a form number, i.e. the encircled number at the beginning of our transcriptions, indicating its length in terms of the elementary pulsation, the primary time units in the songs. Some other *àlọ́* songs have composite cycles, with extensive stretches of solo singing, to be followed by a shorter leader/chorus cycle, only when the solo song is concluded (see, for example *Olúrómbí*, No. 56). Occasionally there are peculiar, even irregular forms such as in *Ọba ni a tu'ṣọ pẹbẹ* (No. 124) and more rarely, forms that may be called strophic.

In many *àlọ́* songs the first line of the leader's text assumes a central or key role. It is almost like a title. It provides the basic theme and is, therefore, often repeated. After several textual deliberations it usually recurs at the end of the story song, forming a kind of frame (*Ọmọde mẹta nsẹre*, No. 111, and *Ará ọrun ará ọrun o!*, No. 43). One *àlọ́* in our collection, *Baba ol'ódò* (No. 104) has a strophic form with three lines, each containing a leader's phrase, followed by a chorus' response. This is strangely reminiscent of a blues form, and was the subject of some thoughts in an early paper of mine (Kubik 1961a). The *àlọ́* song *Ma d'enia* (No. 44), the humorous story of the monkey who wanted to become a human being, also has a strophic form—in this case with four lines in this order: A A B A, the last line sung by the chorus. Here however, as in any study pursuing the historical ramifications of a musical tradition or of individual traits, general problems of stability and change have to be taken into account (see Kubik 1986). For example, to what extent has the *àlọ́* tradition as a whole been stable during past centuries and in which specific realms has it changed? What internal innovative changes took place and which borrowings were made at different times from other West African (or Nigerian) cultures?

This is very difficult to assess, if one has a synchronous regional sample at hand, such as the stories I collected from different narrators in 1960 and 1963 in a relatively small area of the Yoruba speaking country. It is only possible to gain some clues by examining variants of the same stories in the collection, and assess the relative degree of diverging development. Here, it is important to note that the songs in a story, with a relatively fixed text, always serve the individual narrator as a kind of memory aid. It is easier to remember the wording of songs than that of a narrative. If someone forgets a story, it is then often possible for him to recall it with the help of the song which he remembers. The songs, therefore, greatly contribute to stability and conformity of the tradition, although they are not unchangeable. The extraordinary variety and richness of motifs and song types, as well as the existence of numerous variants of the same story, clearly demonstrate, that *àlọ́* is not a historically rigid tradition among the Yoruba, but one that has been capable of innovation and regeneration at any point in history, and of assimilating contemporary trends in Yoruba music.

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I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. Mosunmọla Omibiyi-Obidike, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Ibadan (Nigeria), for having looked at parts of the manuscript for possible inaccuracies in Yoruba spelling and translation, to Dr. David Rycroft, London, for having checked the linguistic sections for terminology and to Mrs. Elizabeth Glasser, London, for editorial reading of this manuscript.

NOTES

1. August to October 1960, and June to September 1963.
2. This was the first battery-driven tape recorder commercially available in the decade after the Second World War. It thus became possible from the mid-fifties onwards to introduce a new, in those days revolutionary, style of culture-oriented fieldwork, challenging the colonial "expedition" style. I carried this recorder on my first study tour through Africa, October 1959 to October 1960, in a rucksack which was my only luggage. In this manner I travelled on foot and hitchhiked through twelve African countries in East, Central, and West Africa.

3. Lamidi in 1963 was an actor in the theatrical group of Duro Ladipọ whose very beginnings I had the privilege to live through. He has changed his name since and is now known as Ademola Onibonokuta, well known in Nigeria for his playing of a lithophone and an instrument composed of tuned bells.
4. The latter term, although it has been used both by J. H. Kwabena Nketia (1975:132) and by Robert Kauffman (1980:396), incorporates the notion of "density," which is an idea alien to African kinetic conceptualizations. Translated into Yoruba, and probably any other African language, the term "density referent" would make no sense.

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TRANSCRIPTIONS

Àlọ́ like many other types of oral literature in Africa do not have what may be called titles. In conversation with Yoruba speakers a story (*ìtàn*) is often identified by a short descriptive indication of its content, for example, *Ìtàn omoge kan ti gbogbo enia fe lati fe* (the story of the marriage of a much-desired girl with a moth (rec. B 8584/1963, Kubik, Ph.A. Vienna). It is also possible to identify a story by the first line of the leader's phrase in the song belonging with it, i.e. *Ajá ajá o ran mi leru . . .* (Dog, dog, help me to carry!, No. 2). Finally, one can also use the chorus phrase for identification in some stories. Lacking a "traditional" title, I have therefore used in the transcriptions usually the first text line of the song for identification. These headings are meant as a help for the reader to refer to each story quickly, if necessary, and obtain the minimum information about narrator, tape references, etc. A list of the oral literature I collected in Nigeria in 1960 and 1963, in chronological order from No. 1 to No. 171, has been deposited in the Phonogram Archives of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, and can be obtained on request.

Lacking space, neither the total list nor the original Yoruba narrative texts can be reproduced in this paper. This will have to wait for publication in the form of a monograph embracing the whole collection. I am giving in this paper a small sample of nine *àlọ́* stories transcribed, with the narrative texts only in English, but the songs both in Yoruba and English.

With regard to the transcription of *àlọ́* songs, the main problem has been how to transcribe them "emically correct". On the emic/etic dichotomy in cultural research see Pike 1967; with regard to music, Simon 1979, Kubik 1983, 1985). Working from this background, my present transcription methods are based on the following reflexions: Any musical culture or performance style operates within an intraculturally accepted margin of tolerance, allowing for variation or deviations from an unstated norm to the extent that the *identity* of the tradition is not lost. From one performer to the next and even in performances by the same persons on consecutive days, there are allowances for deviations. There may be differences in pitch intonation (sometimes up to a semi-tone), in rhythm, in the order of text lines, in the tempo, in the accentuations and so on.

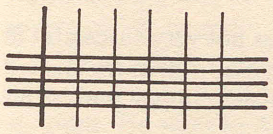
Unless one aims at the specific study of the margin of tolerance, it is pointless to transcribe what is considered insignificant from the conceptual angle of the culture concerned. For example, if pitch fluctuations of up to 20 cents ± are acceptable to a singer on different occasions, there is no point in accounting for them in a transcription. Omotayo Adeyemi, an old lady in Oshogbo who in 1963 told us the story of the lame boy *Abureṣe* (Recording in Ph.A. Vienna B 8586) used an interval in one place during her song which came very close to a semitone. In the next repetition, this interval was much wider. Obviously, in this case there was no concept of semitones in the pentatonic system in which she performed this particular song. The "semitone" was the maximum deviation from a norm of interval relationships that were relatively broadly conceptualized. It was just the limit of what was still acceptable.

In an emically correct transcription it is necessary to base one's assessment on what is significant in the culture itself and on what the culture itself distinguishes as different entities or categories of intervals, sounds, patterns etc. In the present case I am using an adapted form of staff notation, devised earlier (see Kubik 1983), which is suitable for

the notation of several kinds of African music. Problems, especially in phrasing, created by the durational values and the duple-division character of traditional Western staff notation, are eliminated by the present system which uses the following symbols:



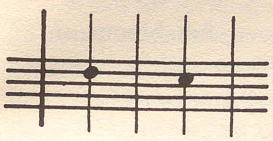
The five lines in this transcription system have the same pitch meanings as in Western music, since the Yoruba pentatonic scale, in particular, is virtually indistinguishable from the Western notes C,D,E,G,A. However, the notation is *relative*, i.e., only the intervals are represented correctly, the overall pitch level can be changed ad lib.



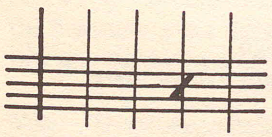
The vertical lines, crossing the staff, represent the elementary pulses, i.e., the smallest time units in a African musical piece. *Reinforced* vertical lines have a function similar to bar lines and indicate the inception of a metrical series.



The number at the beginning of the staff, always encircled, is the form or cycle number (see Kubik 1961b:199). In notations of African music it replaces the conventional Western time signatures, indicating the number of elementary pulses covered by the cycle on which the composition is built.



A dot in the appropriate place on the line or between indicates pitch and marks the note to be sung. This is not different from Western staff notation. However, here this symbol does *not* express duration. No stems or flags are attached to the dots. The note suggested by the dot is to be sung at the exact point of time marked by the vertical line which crosses it. And *it is to be held on until its validity is revoked by a new symbol.* The new symbol may be another dot anywhere on the staff or the sign for stop.



This is the sign for stop. Where it is set the sound producing action is to be interrupted up to the appearance of a new dot on the staff. Although dot and stop signs are not durational symbols, they do have a minimum durational value, namely one elementary pulse.

This system guarantees accuracy of timing and allows for accurate reproduction of the *àlọ́* songs so transcribed. It also removes the phantom of "syncopation" arising when conventional staff notation is used for the transcription of African music. In this system the factual duration of a note is exclusively determined by the position of the following symbol.

Vocal meslisma is a prominent trait in other forms of Yoruba music, e.g. *ṣakara*, but does not play a significant role in the *àlọ́* story songs. Its virtual absence in this tradition underlines my suggestion that there existed "pre-Islamic" pentatonic styles in Yoruba speaking areas. In our notation system therefore, additional symbols expressing melismatic techniques were dispensable.

I. ***Árá ọrun árá ọrun o!*** (Inhabitants of heaven, inhabitants of heaven!) No. 43 in the collection

Sung by Gboyega Ladipọ, m., 20 years old; told by Duro Ladipọ, m., 30 years old; recorded in Oshogbo, August 1960. Tape recording of the song, No. B 5185 in the Phonogram Archives, Vienna.

Once there lived a palm wine tapper called Agbelugogo. He was not very successful in selling his product and therefore not very wealthy. Somebody advised him to try and sell his palm wine at the door to the heavens and thus win the heavenly inhabitants as his regular clients.

Agbelugogo took a few calabashes full of palm wine, travelled to the gates of heaven, and began to sing:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Árá ọ̀run árá ọrun o!*	Inhabitants of heaven, inhabitants of heaven!
CHORUS:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Árá ọ́run árá ọ́run o!*	Inhabitants of heaven, inhabitants of heaven!
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Tani np'árá ọ́run o?*	Who is calling the inhabitants of heaven?
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Emi Agbelugogo!*	It is me, Agbelugogo!
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Kil'o wa ṣe nilẹ̀ yi o?*	What did you come to do in this town?
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Ẹmu ni mo gbé wa.*	I have brought palm wine.
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Èl'èlo l'ẹmu rẹ o?*	What is the price of your palm wine?
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Ọkọ kàn ẹgbẹ'wá.*	Each calabash costs 2000 cowries.
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*

L.:	*Gb'ẹmu s'ilẹ ki oma lọ o!*	Put down the palm wine and go!
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*
L.:	*Ará ọrun ará ọrun o!*	Inhabitants of heaven, inhabitants of heaven!
CH.:	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere*	*Inanga ntere guntere inanga ntere.*

Agbelugogo put his palm wine in front of the heavenly gate and went home. When he came back the next day, he found 2000 cowrie shells. From now on he brought palm wine every day and very soon he became a rich man. He did not tell anybody about the source of his income.

Many people wondered how this poor man could have become so rich in a very short time and they became inquisitive. The tortoise in particular was plagued by envy and very annoyed. He went to Agbelugogo, offering his friendship. The tortoise was not satisfied until the palm wine tapper agreed to take him to the gates of heaven.

As usual, after arrival at the heavenly gates, he sang his song and then left, together with the tortoise. But the tortoise was still unsatisfied. He also wanted to see the people who would drink the palm wine. In the meantime he had learned the song. Secretly, on the next day, he went alone to the gates of heaven, put a calabash with palm wine down and began to sing.

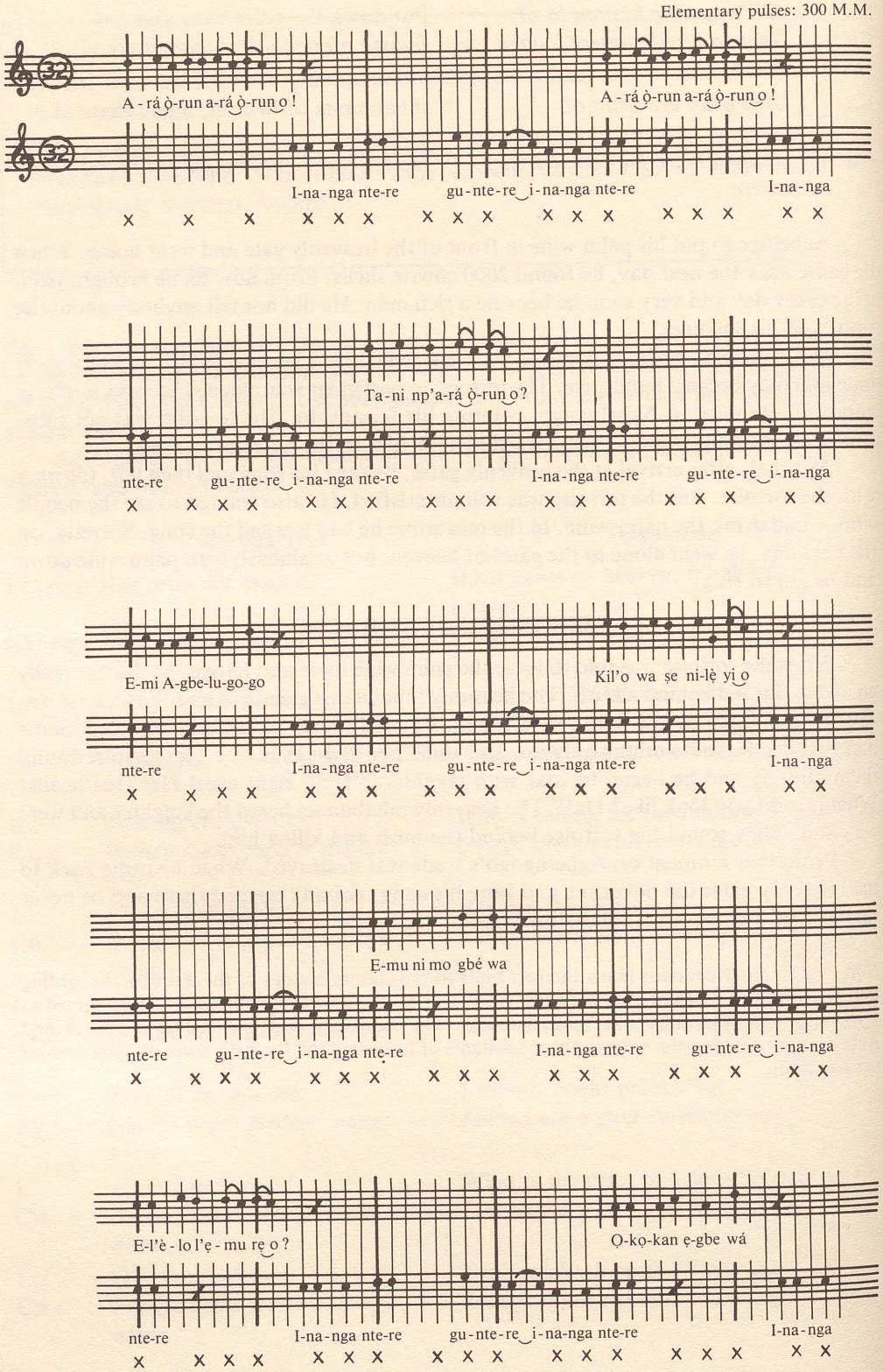
REPETITION OF THE SONG

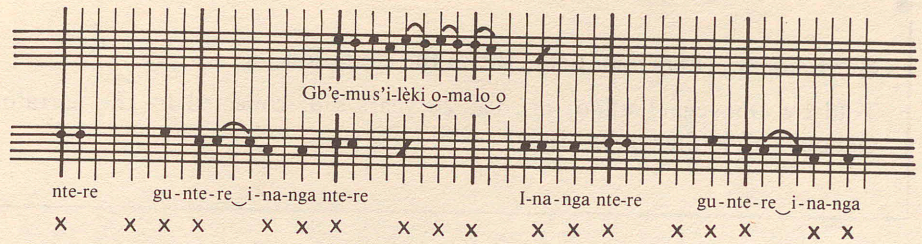
When the tortoise was told to leave the palm wine there and retreat, he did not really go away, but hid behind a bush. The heavenly inhabitants came out and the tortoise discovered that these people were very different from all beings he had seen on earth. Some had two heads, some others only one leg, some had eight eyes . . . The tortoise found them all ugly and he began to roar with laughter. "Hey, eight eyes! Hey, ten heads! Whatever do you look like? Ha!" The heavenly inhabitants heard the laughter and were very sad. They found the tortoise behind the bush and killed him.

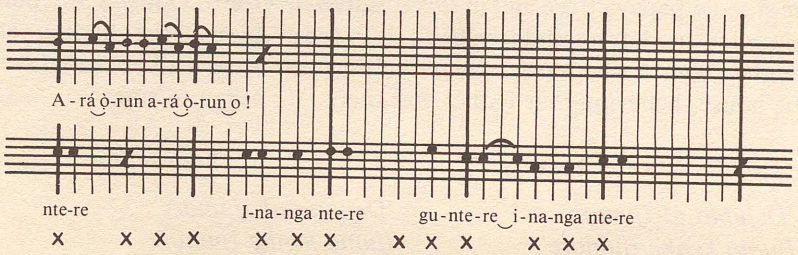
From that moment on Agbelugogo's trade was destroyed. When he came back to the heavenly gates the next time and sang his song, nobody opened them and he never saw any of the heavenly inhabitants again.

Note: This story contains many indirect hints to the culture history of the Yoruba. According to the centuries-old urban culture of the Yoruba, heaven with its inhabitants is also imagined as a town, similar to traditional Yoruba towns. The monetary unit was the cowrie shell and Agbelugogo sells his palm wine to the inhabitants of heaven at the fantastic price of 2000 cowries per calabash.

Elementary pulses: 300 M.M.




Gb'ẹ-mus'i-lẹ̀ki o-ma lo o
nte-re gu-nte-re i-na-nga nte-re I-na-nga nte-re gu-nte-re i-na-nga


A-rá ò-run a-rá ò-run o!
nte-re I-na-nga nte-re gu-nte-re i-na-nga nte-re

II. ***Adejumo*** (Adejumo) No. 105 in the collection

Told by Gboyega Ladipọ, m., ca. 20 years old; collected by the narrator in Ogbomosho in September 1960.

There was once a man whose name was Adejumo and who had seven children. Next to their house stood a papaya treee and in this tree lived a wizard. One day Adejumo went on a long journey and left his children behind. In the evening all the children sat by the fire and ate their yam. The wizard came out of the papaya tree and appeared before the door of the house, believing that Father was there. He began to sing:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*'Dejumo o! Ijumọre*	*'Dejumo o! Ijumọre*
CHORUS:	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*
L.:	*'Dejumo o! Ijumọre*	*'Dejumo o! Ijumọre*
CH.:	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*
L.:	*Ò bá bun mi lọmọ kan! Ijumọre.*	Please give me a child! Ijumọre.
CH.:	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*
L.:	*O di pì, mo gbé kan! Ijumọre.*	I am taking one! Ijumọre.
CH.:	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*	*Ijumọ kenkẹ Ijumọre*

While singing this song the wizard caught one of the seven children and kidnapped it.

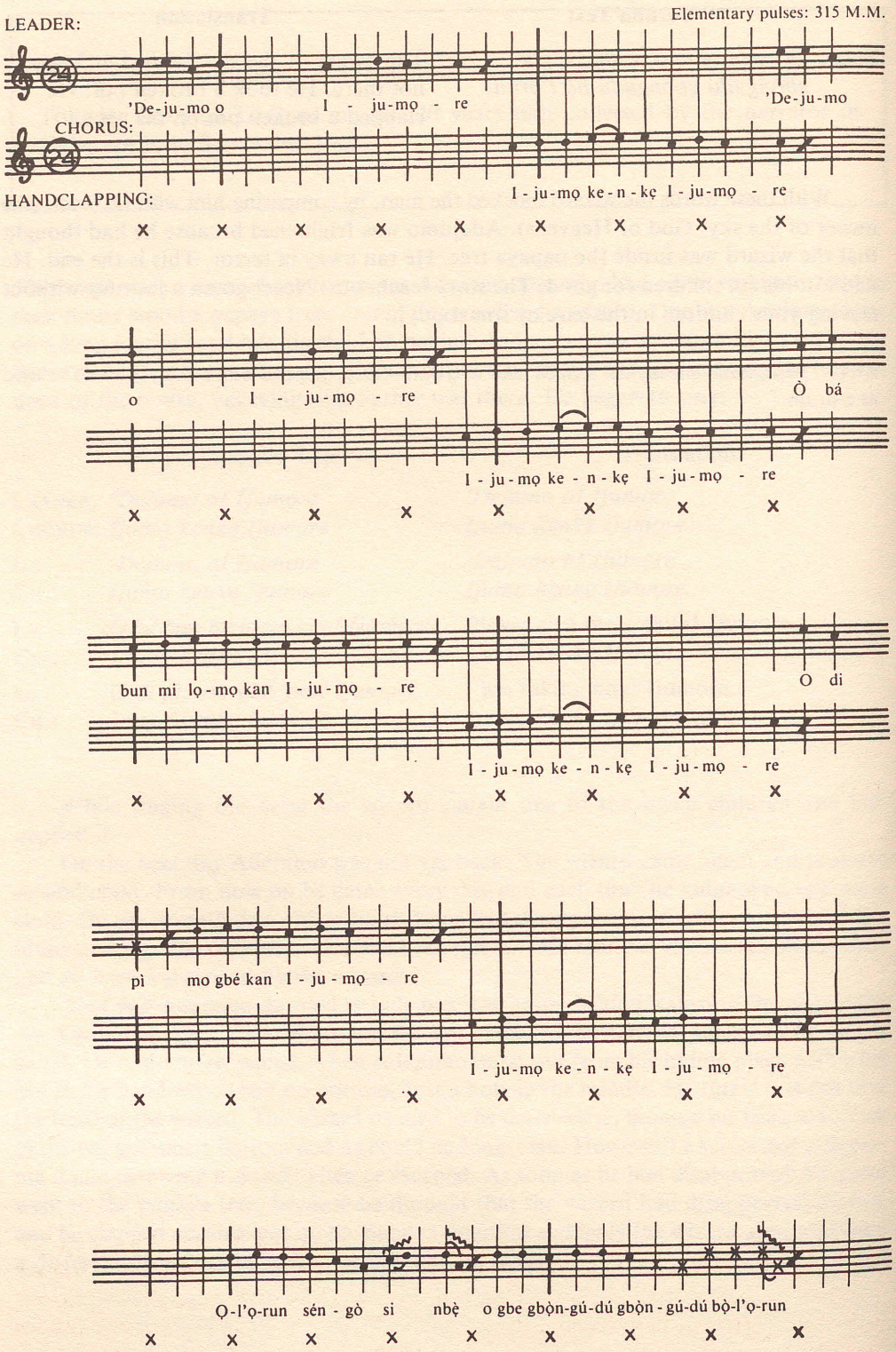
On the next day Adejumo was not yet back. The wizard came again and took the second child. From now on he came every day and each tim he kidnapped one more child. On the seventh day—after six children had disappeared—Father came home late in the evening. The only boy, who had been spared, told him everything. His six brothers had all been kidnapped by the wizard.

That day Adejumo decided to hide near the house behind a shrub. The wizard did not know and came back to kidnap the last child. As he arrived, he began to sing as usual. He had not yet ended, when Adejumo burst out from his hiding place with a big pot in his hand which had no bottom, just a hole in the middle. He threw this pot over the head of the wizard. The wizard seemed to be defenseless, because his head was stuck in the pot without a bottom and he could no longer see. However he succeeded in breaking it and throwing it down. Then he escaped. As soon as he had disappeared Adejumo went to the papaya tree, because he thought that the wizard had disappeared in there and he clapped another pot on the papaya tree. But suddenly the wizard appeared from a different direction, laughing terribly and he sang:

Yoruba Text	Translation
SOLO: *Ọl'ọrun sé ngò si nbẹ̀, o gbe gbọ̀ngúdú gbọ̀ngúdú bọ̀ l'ọrun!*	The owner of the sky did it, but I was not there. He took a broken pot. He clapped a broken pot on his neck.

With these words the wizard mocked the man, by comparing him with *Ol'ọrun*, (the owner of the sky, God of Heavens). Adejumo was frightened because he had thought that the wizard was inside the papaya tree. He ran away in terror. This is the end. He had lost his six children for good. The story teaches us: Never go on a journey without leaving your children in the care of somebody!

Note: *gbọ̀ngúdú*—mostly the broken neck of a pot. A pot equipped with a skin, can also be used as a drum.


Elementary pulses: 315 M.M.
LEADER:
'De-ju-mo o I - ju-mọ - re 'De-ju-mo
CHORUS:
I - ju-mọ ke-n-kẹ I - ju-mọ - re
HANDCLAPPING:
o I - ju-mọ - re Ô bá
I - ju-mọ ke - n-kẹ I - ju-mọ - re
bun mi lọ-mọ kan I - ju-mọ - re Ô di
I - ju-mọ ke - n-kẹ I - ju-mọ - re
pì mo gbé kan I - ju-mọ - re
I - ju-mọ ke-n-kẹ I - ju-mọ - re
Ọ-l'ọ-run sén - gò si nbẹ̀ o gbe gbọ̀n-gú-dú gbọ̀n - gú-dú bọ̀-l'ọ-run

III. ***Adeyo d'ẹhin o!*** (Adeyo, go back!) No. 117 in the collection

Told by Grace Tinu Ladipo, f., ca. 35; recorded in Oshogbo in September 1960.

There was a man who had only one daughter. The girl's name was Adeyo and she was so beautiful that many men wanted to marry her. One day, two spirits of the other world, an elephant and a buffalo, transformed into human beings and came to visit Adeyo. When they arrived, the spirit-elephant—followed by the buffalo—said he desired to marry her. Adeyo replied she would like to think about it.

After both had left, the girl called upon her father and told him that she had found a husband. The father said he would like to see the aspirant. The following day both men came back, the transformed spirit-elephant and his companion, the spirit-buffalo. The girl introduced the elephant to her father.

The father, however, had serious objections. He said that he did not want his daughter to marry an unknown stranger, but rather someone whom he knew. Adeyo was very sad and she decided to enforce her marriage. Her father said that in this case he would not be responsible for anything that would happen to her.

Shortly afterwards the girl followed the two strangers. As they walked along the path to an unknown destination, the spirit-elephant and his companion began to sing:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Adeyo d'ẹhin o!*	Adeyo, go back!
CHORUS:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Adeyo d'ẹhin o!*	Adeyo, go back!
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Ẹ̀rin ni nre gbo hun.*	The elephant is going into that forest.
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Efon ni nro dan hun.*	The buffalo is going into that grassland.
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Elin ẹnu ti 'tórò*	The teeth of the mouth are like the gourd.
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Awọ ara t'ogèdè*	The skin of the body is like a banana.
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.
L.:	*Opa ajé t'ìrókò*	The staff of money is like the *ìrókò*-tree.
CH.:	*Mele d'ẹhin.*	I cannot go back.

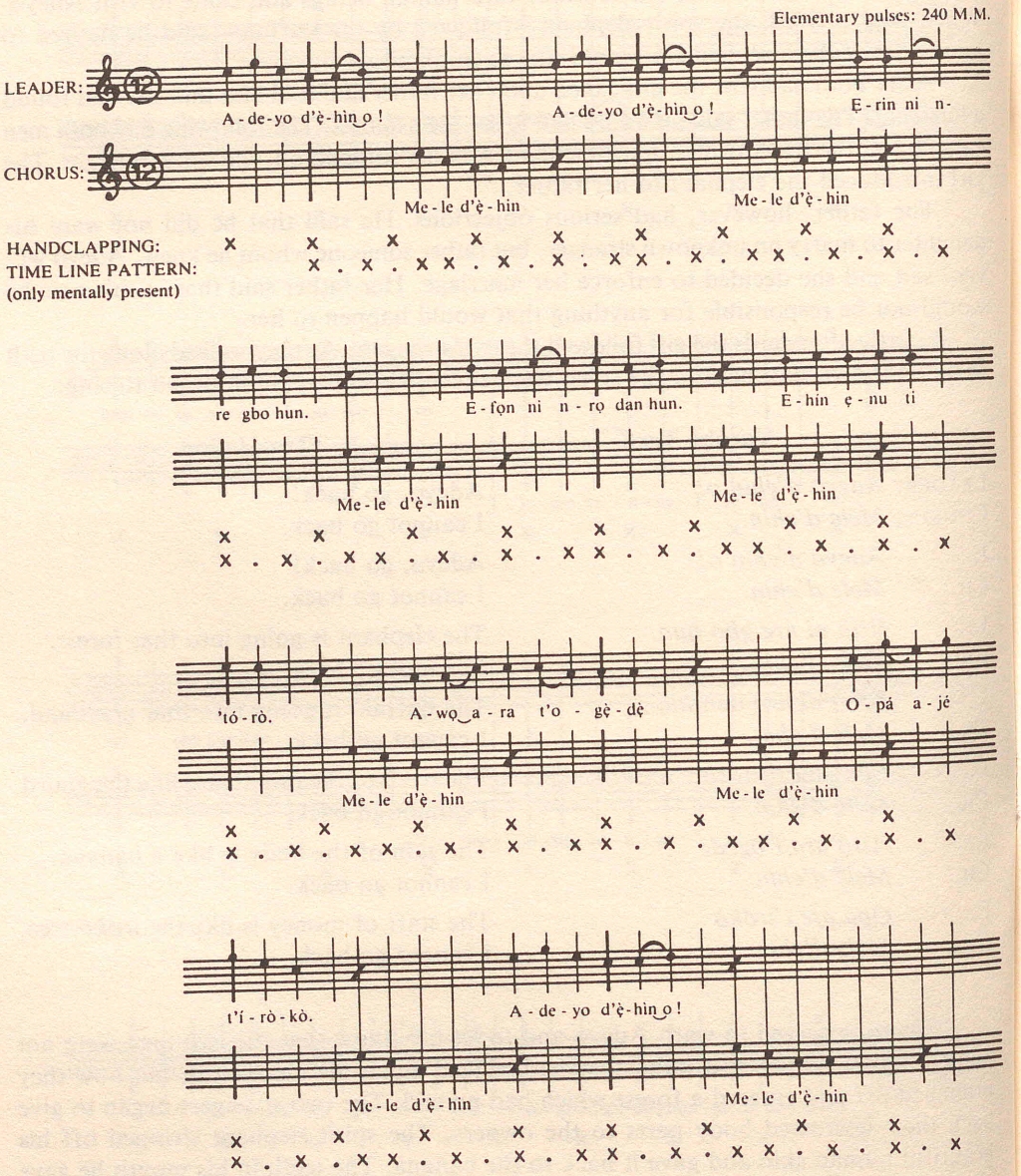
This song served to warn Adeyo and to let her know that the two men were not human beings. Up to that point they had walked along the main road, but now they branched off and entered a forest which had no end. The two strangers began to give back their borrowed body parts to the owners. The spirit-elephant stripped off his beautiful human skin and gave it back to the banana. The teeth in his mouth he gave

back to the gourd and the staff of money, which the handsome young man had carried, transformed into an *ìrókò* tree.

After they reached their dwellings, the spirit-elephant and the spirit-buffalo called all their companions together. They killed the girl and ate her up.

Note: *Ọpá ajé* is a traditional staff of money which the handsome man into whom the spirit-elephant in the story had turned, carried along.

Ìrókò is a huge tree thought to house a spirit (*ọ̀rọ̀*). Bot. *Chlorophora excelsa*, Moraceae, or "African teak".



IV. ***Retenrete*** (Retenrete) No. 114 in the collection

Told and sung by Gboyega Ladipọ, m., 20 years old, collected by the narrator in Ogbomosho. Recorded in Oshogbo, in September 1960.

There was a time when *Ol'ọrun* (the owner of the heavens) and *Aiyé* (the earth divinity) both lived in heaven (*ọrun*). At that time the solid ground (*ilẹ̀ aiyé*) was already separated from the sky. On earth there lived a king who was very rich.

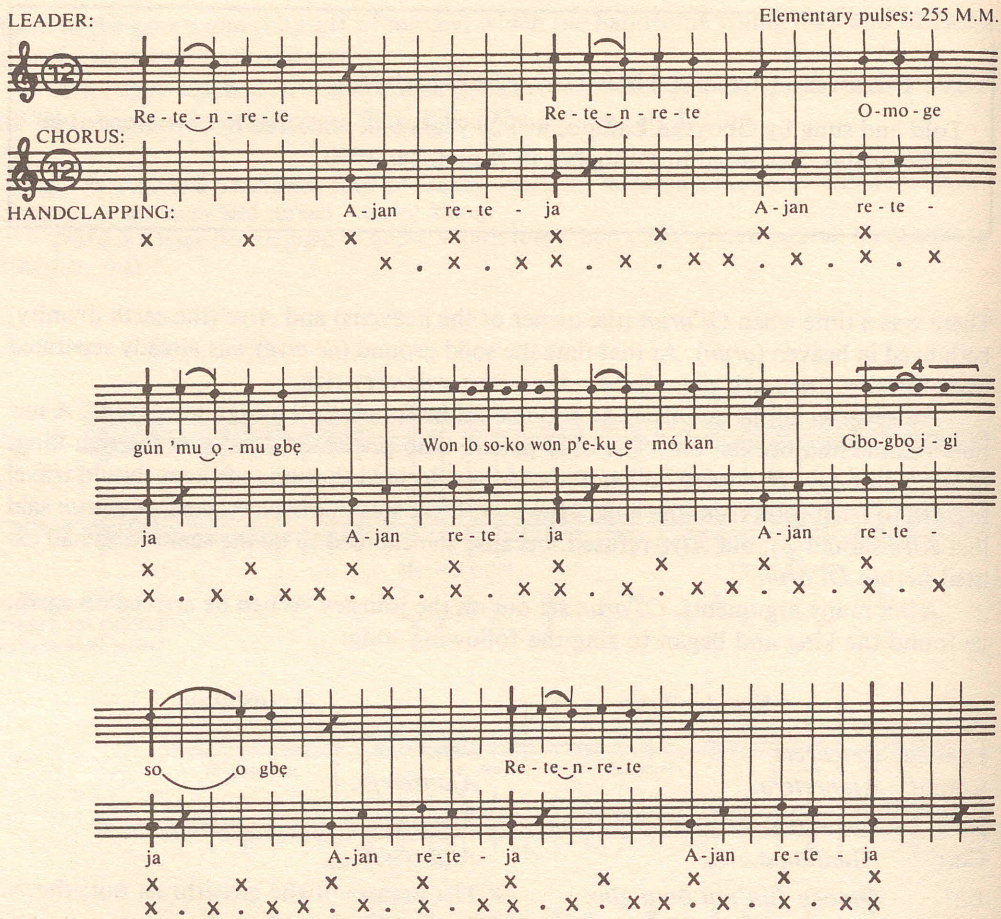
However in all the countries no food could be found, including the heavens. A terrible famine had broken out. The only person who possessed food was the rich king. *Ol'ọrun* and *Aiyé* discussed the matter and they decided that one of them should travel to earth to fetch food from the king. However, there was one disagreement. *Ol'ọrun* said that *Aiyé* should go, but *Aiyé* refused, because she claimed to be the senior and had existed before *Ol'ọrun*.

After many arguments, *Ol'ọrun* set out on the journey. When he arrived on earth, he found the king and began to sing the following song:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Retenrete*	*Retenrete.*
CHORUS:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*
L.:	*Retenrete*	*Retenrete.*
CH.:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*
L.:	*Omoge gún'mu ọmu gbẹ.*	The breasts of the girls thrust out; the breasts dry up.
CH.:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*
L.:	*Won lo soko won p'eku emó kan.*	They went to the plantation and killed one rat.
CH.:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*
L.:	*Gbogbo igi so o gbẹ.*	All trees bear fruit and dry.
CH.:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*
L.:	*Retenrete.*	*Retenrete.*
CH.:	*Ajanreteja.*	*Ajanreteja.*

The king gave *Ol'ọrun* all the food he possessed. After *Ol'ọrun* returned to heaven he did not share the food with *Aiyé*, but said to her that she should go to earth by herself and fetch some from the king.

Aiyé descended and went to the king, but the king said that all food was now finished. *Aiyé* became very weak and could not move again. She had to stay on earth (*ilẹ̀ aiyé*) and *Ol'ọrun* remained alone in heaven. This is why earth and heaven are permanently separated. Now *Aiyé* realized that she was the younger one and that the owner of heaven (*Ol'ọrun*) had created her.


LEADER:
Elementary pulses: 255 M.M.
Re - te - n - re - te
Re - te - n - re - te
O - mo - ge
CHORUS:
HANDCLAPPING:
A - jan re - te - ja
A - jan re - te -
gún 'mu o - mu gbẹ
Won lo so-ko won p'e-ku e mó kan
Gbo-gbo j - gi
ja
A - jan re - te - ja
A - jan re - te -
so o gbẹ
Re - te - n - re - te
ja
A - jan re - te - ja
A - jan re - te - ja

V. *Eleluju ma mã ku o!* (Eleluju don't die!) No. 47 in the collection

Told and sung by Adukẹ Labintan, f., ca. 30 years old, from Igbajo near Ilesha. Recorded in Oshogbo, in September 1960.

There was once a man whose name was Eleluju and who had only one son. His son, Eluju, often noticed that the father left their home late in the evening and stayed away for the whole night. He never allowed his son to follow him, because he was meeting with the members of a secret society to which he belonged. The meetings took place in a lonely area in the bush which could only be reached by climbing over seven hills . . .

The people of that society hated Eleluju and they were planning secretly to kill him. One day the father once again climbed over the seven hills, but this time his son Eluju followed him. However, Eluju was late and when he reached the secret place, his father had already left for home. The other members were still there, so Eluju hid behind a nearby bush to find out what was the real purpose of this society.

Suddenly he heard members talk about his father and he became witness of their secret agreement to kill him. The men stood up and began to dig a big hole on the spot where the father normally sat. Then they put a costly mat on top of it to make it unrecognizable. They cooked a soup from the meat of a vulture, which is forbidden to be eaten and into the red color of camwood, with which the society members used to paint their body, they mixed a pot of liquid pepper. In this manner they prepared a tortuous death for the boy's father.

After Eluju had watched all this, he hurriedly left his hiding place and went home. Totally exhaused he arrived there, only to hear from his mother that the father had once again set out on the journey to meet the members of the secret society. The boy was in despair. He knew now that all depended on whether he was able to intercept his father before he arrived there. He set out again on the journey over the seven hills. From one of the peaks he recognized his father as he was climbing the fifth hill and the boy began to sing:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Eleluju ma mã ku o!*	Eleluju do not die!
CHORUS:	*Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju*	Eluju, hurry up, Eluju!
L.:	*Ma mã ku o!*	Do not die!
CH.:	*Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju*	Eluju, hurry up, Eluju!
L.:	*A figún se bẹ má mã je o!*	If we cook vulture soup—do not eat!
CH.:	*Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju*	Eluju, hurry up, Eluju!
L.:	*A fata sosùn má mã kun o!*	If we mix pepper in the camwood—do not paint your body with it!
CH.:	*Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju*	Eluju, hurry up, Eluju!
L.:	*A tẹni pupa má jõko le!*	If we spread a red mat—do not sit on it!
CH.:	*Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju*	Eluju, hurry up, Eluju!

The father, Eleluju, had a dog with him. The acute ears of the dog heard the song of Eluju. The dog stopped and it did not want to move from the spot. The father, beginning to pay attention to the dog's strange behavior, suddenly recognized his son in the distance and became aware of the faint words of the song.

When his son arrived at the fifth hill, he told him the truth of what he had seen. Then he returned home. The father continued alone, accompanied by his dog, well-prepared for everything, until he reached the meeting place of the secret society behind the seventh hill.

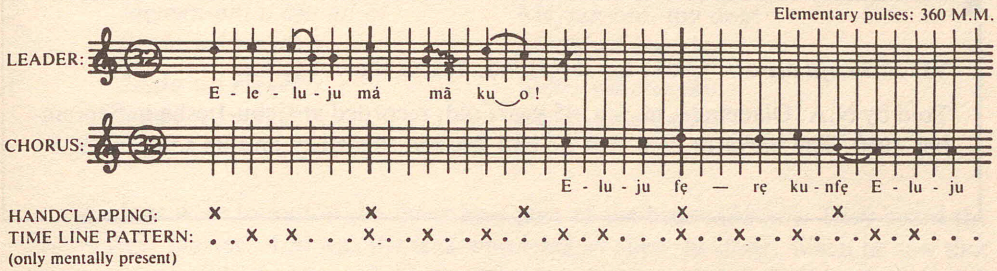
The people there greeted him and put the vulture soup in front of him on the mat, where he was expected to sit. Eleluju refused to sit down. Then the other people said he should paint his body. One of them took the pot with the red color mixed with pepper to pour it over Eleluju, but the father refused. He threw onto the mat a few pieces of food, after which the dog jumped, the mat gave way and the dog fell into the hole.

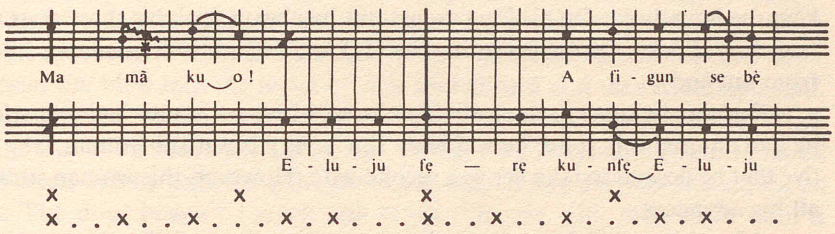
The people of the secret society were now extremely frightened. They left everything and ran away in panic. Thus, Eleluju had been saved by his son. When he arrived back home, he called his boy and thanked him, asking him to forgive him for the mistake he had made of not informing him about his membership of that society. This story teaches us that one must trust one's son.

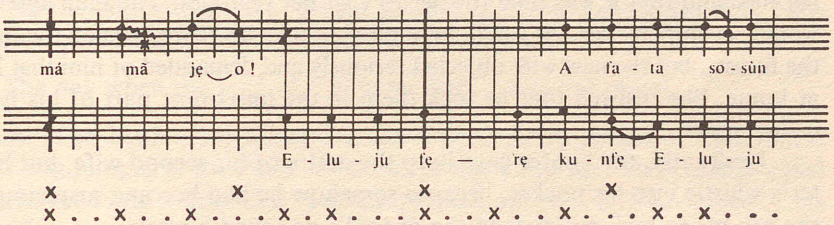
Notes: The chorus phrase *Eluju fẹrẹ kunfẹ Eluju* is a rhythmic pattern which cannot be translated literally, but the implication is that the son Eluju should hurry up.

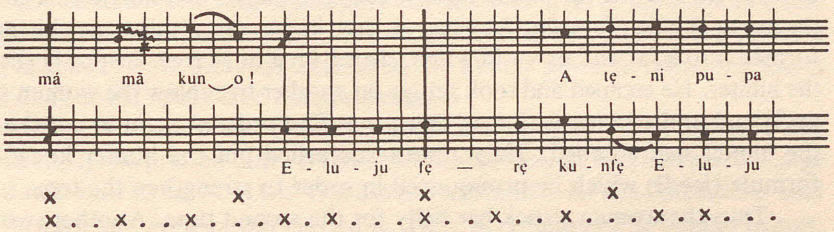
Camwood (in Yoruba *osùn*) is of red color and when pounded, the powder can be used to make a red paint for body decoration in rituals. In the story it also functions as a symbol of danger, explained Mrs. Aduke Labintan, the narrator of this story.

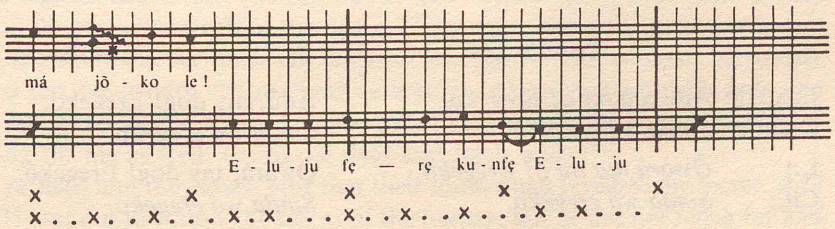
Among the Yoruba two secret societies are relatively well-known in the ethnographic literature: *ogbóni*, a men's cult of the earth, which even had certain political power over the king, and the *ọ̀rọ̀* association, in which a bull roarer is used as the voice of a "spirit" to scare away non-members and frighten the novices during the initiation ceremonies.


Elementary pulses: 360 M.M.
LEADER:
E - le - lu - ju má mã ku o !
CHORUS:
E - lu - ju fẹ — rẹ ku - nfẹ E - lu - ju
HANDCLAPPING:
TIME LINE PATTERN:
(only mentally present)


Ma mã ku o ! A fi - gun se bẹ
E - lu - ju fẹ — rẹ ku - nfẹ E - lu - ju


má mã jẹ o ! A fa - ta so - sùn
E - lu - ju fẹ — rẹ ku - nfẹ E - lu - ju


má mã kun o ! A tẹ - ni pu - pa
E - lu - ju fẹ — rẹ ku - nfẹ E - lu - ju


má jõ - ko le !
E - lu - ju fẹ — rẹ ku - nfẹ E - lu - ju

VI. ***Adú aja mi o!*** (Adú, my dog!) No. 121 in the collection

Told by N.A. Oladeinde, m., ca. 45 years old; recorded at Ijebu-Ijesha in September 1960. The narrator said that he had learned this story and its song in 1935.

Once there was a hunter. He often went into the forests while his wife stayed behind and kept the household. On his long excursions he always took his three dogs with him: *Adú* (meaning Black), *Ọwàrà* (meaning Steady) and *Mẹ́jeun-oni* (meaning I don't take food from anybody).

One day he came to the forbidden forest where no hunter had ever tried to go. After he had entered this zone, he suddenly saw a very beautiful woman. She was so attractive that he desired to take her as a second wife. However, this woman stubbornly refused all his advances.

After a long talk he succeeded in persuading her to follow him to his home. Then, for some time, the hunter and his two wives lived happily. One day, the new wife told her husband that it was time for her to visit her relatives. The man agreed and said he would accompany her. As usual, he wanted to take his three dogs on the journey through the forests, but the new wife objected seriously and demanded of him that he left his dogs at home. She insisted that he lock them in the innermost part of his house, which is called *àkòdi*.

Hesitantly, the hunter gave in to the desire of his second wife, but he put his hunter's whistle into his pocket, because somehow he had become suspicious. "Why does she ask me to lock my dogs in the *àkòdi*?" he asked himself.

The hunter and his new wife set out. After they had walked for a long time they came to the terrible forbidden zone called *igbó méjè—eluju méjè* (the seven bigger and the seven smaller forests). As soon as they had entered this zone, his new wife transformed into a fat and ugly old witch, sitting on a huge tree. Instantly she tried to catch the hunter. He escaped and took refuge on another tree. Now the woman struck her belly and two hundred men with axes came out. She ordered them to cut the tree up which the hunter had climbed. They almost succeeded but the hunter knew a magic word formula (*igèdè*) which he pronounced in order to strengthen the tree.

Thus the woman struck her belly for the second time. Another two hundred men with axes came out. When the hunter saw that they were becoming too numerous and would soon overpower him, he blew his whistle to call his three dogs.

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Adú aja mi o! Eregeko.*	Adú, my dog! Eregeko.
CHORUS:	*Sinda wá eregeko.*	*Sinda wá eregeko.*
L.:	*Ọ̀wàrà aja mi o! Eregeko.*	Ọ̀wàrà, my dog! Eregeko.
CH.:	*Sinda wá eregeko.*	*Sinda wá eregeko.*

L.:	*Méjeun-ọni o aja mi o!*	Mẹ́jeun-oni, my dog!
CH.:	*Sinda wá eregeko.*	*Sinda wá eregeko.*
L.:	*Sinda wá eregeko.*	*Sinda wá eregeko.*
CH.:	*Sinda wá eregeko.*	*Sinda wá eregeko.*

The dogs were locked in the innermost part of the house (*àkòdi*). They heard the voice of their master. *Adú* was the first who tried to open the door. When he saw that this was not possible, he ran with his head against the door and died. Now *Ọwàrà* tried to open the second door. He also ran with his head against it and died. *Mẹjeun-oni* (= I don't take food from anybody) was the only one of the three dogs who had never accepted food from the new wife. He ran against the third door and he opened it.

Now *Mẹjeun-oni* blew into the noses of *Adú* and *Ọ̀wàrà* and they woke up again. All three dogs hurried in the direction from where the sound of the whistle came. When they reached the tree upon which the hunter was sitting, they killed all the four hundred men with their axes, one by one. Only the witch was spared and she was still sitting on the huge tree. The dogs began to crack and crush this tree with their teeth until it collapsed.

The hunter and this ghastly woman fought each other for life or death. *Adú* jumped at her. She killed the dog with an axe. *Ọ̀wàrà* jumped at her and she killed him. Now *Méjeun-oni* pronounced the words of a magic formula (*igèdè*):

The day when the king of this town died, I was not there!

This means "The death of my master can never occur in my presence." With these words the third dog jumped at the throat of the witch and killed her. The witch dropped dead and transformed into a huge dead animal. *Méjeun-oni* blew into the noses of his comrades and all woke up. Then the hunter and his three dogs carried the cadaver home.

When they arrived, the hunter's first wife wondered about the size of the animal. She asked herself, how her husband could have carried such a large animal alone and she became inquisitive. She did not know that the three dogs had helped him to carry it. Before they reached home the dogs had asked the hunter never to reveal the secret to anyone that they could speak like human beings.

On the next day, the hunter and his wife organized a big feast. After he had drunk much palm wine (*opẹ*) she pressed him very hard to tell her how he had carried this large animal. He did not want to say, but his wife asked incessantly. At last, the hunter said to her: "*Adú, Ọ̀wàrà* and *Mẹ́jeun-oni* carried it. They were talking like human beings. When my dogs had killed the witch, they asked me not to tell anybody."

When the woman heard this, she said to herself: "If this is so, then these useless dogs could also do my housework in the future!" So once, when the man was not at home, she called them in like servants. The dogs did not answer. This annoyed her greatly and she uttered terrible insults. "You useless creatures, when your master is here you work for him, but as far as I'm concerned, you only like to eat my food, you don't want to do something for me as well. Go to the river and fetch water!"

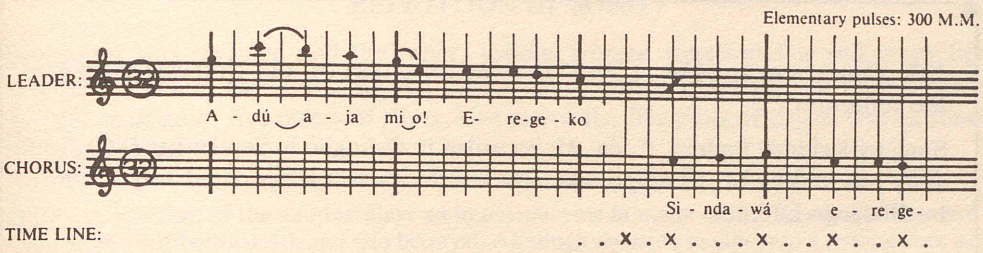
The dogs refused and they knew now that their master had revealed the secret. *Adú* was very sad. He set out to follow the traces of the hunter, but he did not reach far and

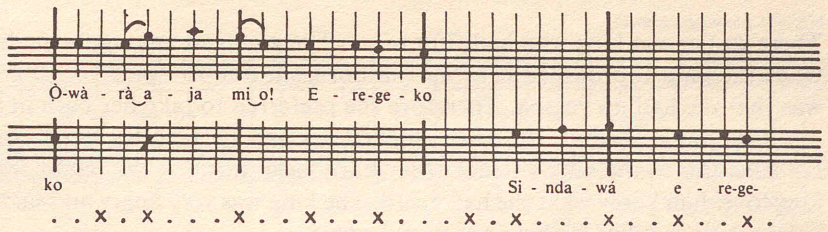
died on the way. *Ọwàrà* set out to follow the traces of the hunter. He passed the place where *Adú* had died and came to a forking of the path, from where three smaller paths ran in different directions. Since he had eaten food from the woman, he could not recognize which way his master had taken and so he died there.

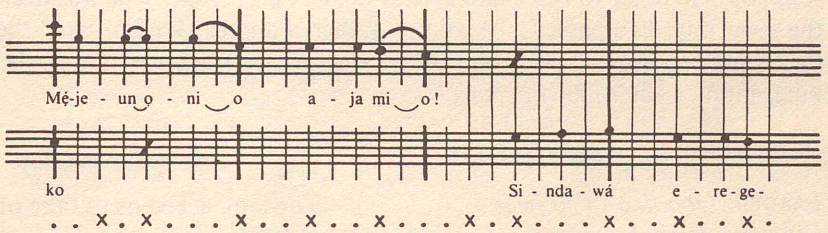
Mẹjeun-oni was the strongest of the three dogs. He alone reached the plantation to which his master had gone, but he could not see him and he only shouted the following words across the fields: "You have revealed our secret! From this day on no animal will ever speak again." And then *Mẹjeun-oni* died. The hunter heard these words from afar. When he came to the spot, his dog was already dead.

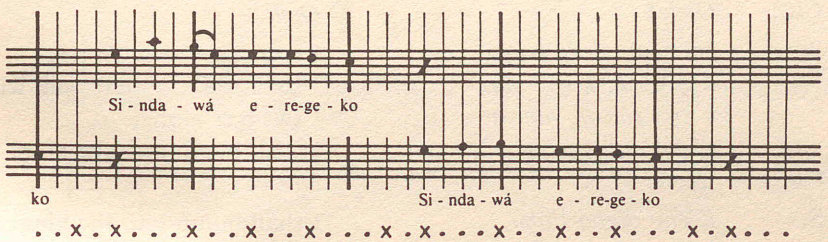
Notes: *Àkòdi* is the open, uncovered innermost space in a traditional rectangular Yoruba house. This small inner "courtyard" is enclosed by a kind of inner veranda, onto which lead the inner doors of the house. Many of these houses also have an impluvium: a still smaller space, not covered into which rain water flows from the roofs and may be collected in a barrel.

Igèdè is a Yoruba term usually translated into English as "incantation." It is a magic word formula whose pronunciation may impose or dissolve a ban. The speaker formulates his desire in such a manner, as if it were a fact which had already happened. Hence the past tense in the sentence of the dog *Mẹjeun-oni*: "The day when the king of this town *died* . . ."


Elementary pulses: 300 M.M.
LEADER:
A - dú a - ja mi o! E- re-ge - ko
CHORUS:
Si - nda - wá e - re-ge-
TIME LINE:
. . x . x . . . x . . x . . x .


Ọ̀-wà - rà a - ja mi o! E - re-ge - ko
ko
Si - nda - wá e - re-ge-
. . x . x . . . x . . x . . x . . . x . x . . . x . . x . . x .


Mẹ́-je - un o - ni o a - ja mi o!
ko
Si - nda - wá e - re-ge-
. . x . x . . . x . . x . . x . . . x . x . . . x . . x . . x .


Si - nda - wá e - re-ge - ko
ko
Si - nda - wá e - re-ge - ko
. . x . x . . . x . . x . . x . . . x . x . . . x . . x . . x . . . x . x . . .

VII. ***Ọba ni a tu'ṣọ pẹbe*** (The king asked us to take off our clothes) No. 124 in the collection

Sung by Kehinde Ladipọ, f., ca. 25; recorded in Oshogbo in September 1960. The story not told by Miss Ladipọ was later sent to me in a letter dated July 1, 1961, by Gboyega Ladipọ

There was once a king who had fifty wives. The youngest among them always ran away when the king approached her. She did not want him to "play" with her. The reason was that she had no vagina. Therefore she preferred to take her bath in a secret place.

One day a slave of the king watched her and he saw the secret. Immediately he reported this to the king's senior wife. Early next morning the senior wife went to the king to let him know what she had heard. The king was very angry and said that he would have the slave killed if this news were untrue.

To clarify the case, the senior wife advised the king to call all his wives together in seven days in order to come and appear naked before him. This was decided and, after the seven days had passed, the women gathered and the king ordered them to take off their clothes and pass before him naked, one by one. Each woman, as she passed by the king, intoned the following song:

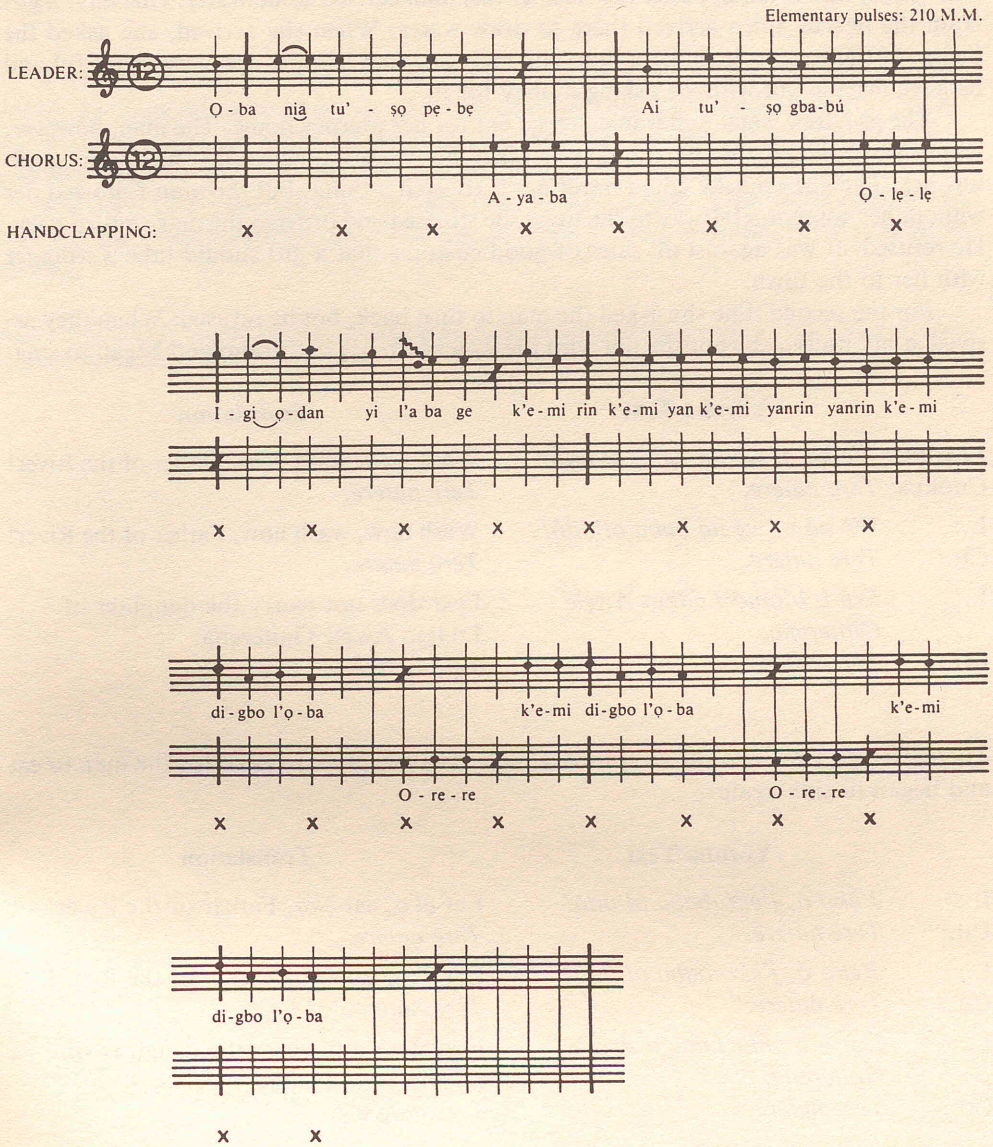
	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Ọba ni a tu'ṣọ pẹbẹ*	The king asked us to take off our clothes!
CHORUS:	*Ayaba!*	Queen!
L.:	*Ai tu'ṣọ gbàbú.*	We do not take off the cloth.
CH.:	*Ọlẹlẹ!*	*Ọlẹle*!
SOLO:	*Igi ọdan yi l'a ba ge*	Let us cut the *odan*-tree!
	k'emi rin, k'emi yan,	I shall walk, I shall walk with a swagger,
	k'emi yanrin-yanrin,	I swagger along,
	k'emi digbo l'ọba.	I shall bump into the king.
CH.:	*Orere!*	*Orere*!
S.:	*K'emi digbo l'ọba.*	I shall bump into the king.

The parade of the women began with the senior wife. Then followed the second, third, fourth and all the other women until the fiftieth, who was the youngest. When it was the youngest woman's turn, she was extremely timid and her lips trembled with fear. Only the king and his senior wife knew the reason for why all the women should appear naked before him. The other women, who did not know the reason were just waiting to see what would happen. When the youngest woman refused to take off her clothes, she was forced and she also sang the same song appearing naked before the king . . . .

REPETITION OF SONG

Her secret was revealed and the other, jealous women jeered at her and made her ashamed. The king gave the order that she should be killed. To the faithful slave he gave five pieces of gold, five pieces of silver, five garments, five pairs of shoes, five servants and five houses.

Note: Symbolism of the number plays an important role in many of the *àlọ́* stories. The number five may symbolize death and also betrayal. Although the story in Gboyega's writing does not end with a moral, it is evident that the sympathy of the audience belongs to the unfortunate girl, rather than the treacherous slave who denounced her before the king for a vile profit.



VIII. ***Baba ol'ókò*** (Father of the river) No. 104 in the collection

Told by Gboyega Ladipọ, m. ca. 20 years old; collected by the narrator in Ogbomosho in September 1960.

Once there lived a man who owned a small river. During the dry season all the rivers in the vicinity had dried up, only the river of this man carried some water. One day, a girl from the nearby town arrived there to draw water. When she arrived, she asked the owner of the watercourse for a pot. The man saw that the girl was very beautiful and he gave her the pot without asking money for it.

The girl drew water and wanted to set out for her journey home. The man, however, was so fascinated by her beauty that he asked her whether she would allow him to follow her. The girl said she could never agree to such a thing, but the man followed her without her consent. Halfway to the town she stopped and ordered the man to turn back. He refused. It was against all rules of good customs that a girl should take a stranger with her to the town.

For the second time she asked the man to turn back, but he refused. When they arrived at her house, she put the pot with the water into her bathroom and began to sing:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER:	*Wẹ́ ná o, wẹ́ ná baba ol'ódò!*	Wash now, wash now, Father of the River!
CHORUS:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*Wẹ́ ná o, wẹ́ ná baba ol'ódò!*	Wash now, wash now, Father of the River!
CH.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*Erù ò b'ọmọ Ládẹ̀jọ Àwẹ̀lé Oniterena.*	Fear does not worry the daughter of Ládẹ̀jo Àwẹ̀lé Oniterena.
CH.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*

Thereafter the owner of the river took a bath. The girl prepared *ẹ̀kọ* for the man to eat and began to sing again:

	Yoruba Text	**Translation**
L.:	*J'ẹ̀kọ o, j'ẹ̀kọ baba ol'ódò!*	Eat *ẹ̀ko*, eat *ẹ̀ko*, Father of the River!
CH.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*J'ẹ̀kọ o, j'ẹ̀kọ baba ol'ódò!*	Eat *ẹ̀ko*, eat *ẹ̀ko*, Father of the River!
CH.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*Erù ò b'ọmọ Ládẹ̀jọ Àwẹ̀lé Oniterena.*	Fear does not worry the daughter of Ládẹ̀jo Àwẹ̀lé Oniterena.
CH.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*

The man began to eat and after he had finished the girl began to sing for the third time:

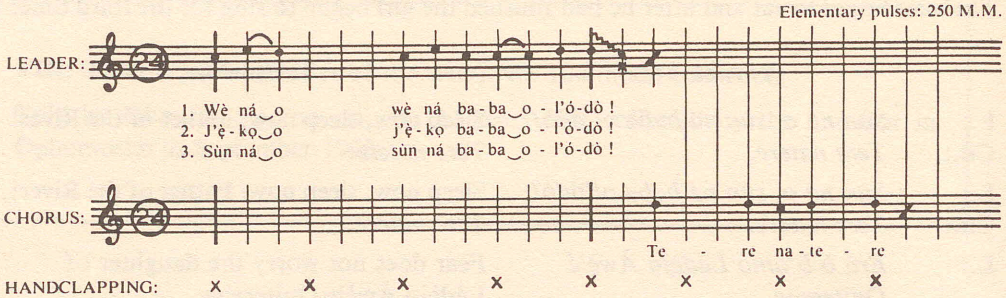
	Yoruba Text	Translation
L.:	*Sùn ná o, sùn ná baba ol'ódò!*	Sleep now, sleep now, Father of the River!
Ch.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*Sùn ná o, sùn ná baba ol'ódò!*	Sleep now, sleep now, Father of the River!
Ch.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*
L.:	*Erù ò b'ọmọ Ládèjọ Àwèlé Oniterena.*	Fear does not worry the daughter of Ládèjo Àwèlé Oniterena.
Ch.:	*Tere natere.*	*Tere natere.*

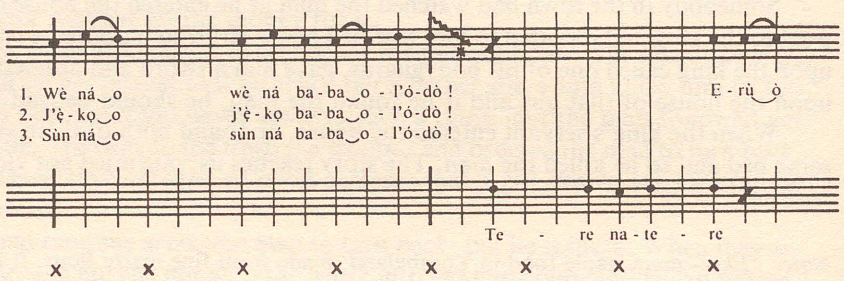
Somebody in the town had watched the man as he entered the house of the girl. He went to the king and reported to him that he knew a girl who harbored a stranger. Thereupon the king called one of his bodyguards, gave him a sword and ordered him to check upon the house of that girl and if he found the man, he should behead him.

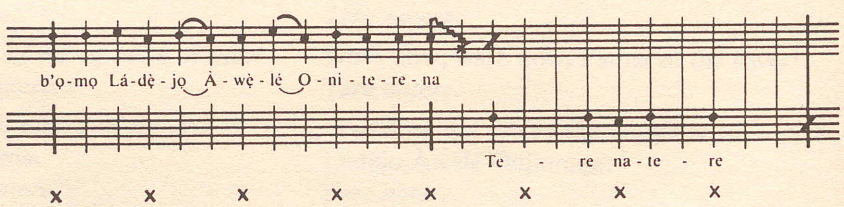
When the king's servant entered the house, he found both of them sleeping on the same bed and so he killed the man. The story teaches us: one must not violate the good customs.

Note: *Èko*—main staple food in Yorubaland, made from fine maize flour. It is usually eaten together with *èfó*, a kind of vegetable.

Elementary pulses: 250 M.M.







IX. ***Ma d'enia, ma d'enia*** (I am becoming a human being, I am becoming a human being) No. 44 in the collection

Told by a visitor to the Ladipọ family, aged ca. 40, unidentified. Recorded in Oshogbo in September 1960.

Monkeys have human feelings. A monkey went to Ọ̀runmìlà, the wise man of the *Ifá* oracle and asked: "How could I become a human being?" Ọ̀runmìlà said to him: "You have to lock yourself in a dark room inside a house and remain there for seven days, without talking to anyone. For no reason should you open the door or windows and talk to people."

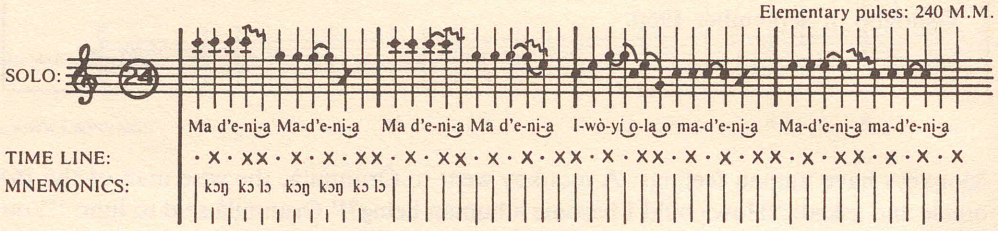
For five days the monkey remained in the dark room and prayed to God. On the morning of the sixth day he noticed how his monkey hair began to disappear in the palm of his hands and feet and in his face, and in the evening he could suddenly stand upright.

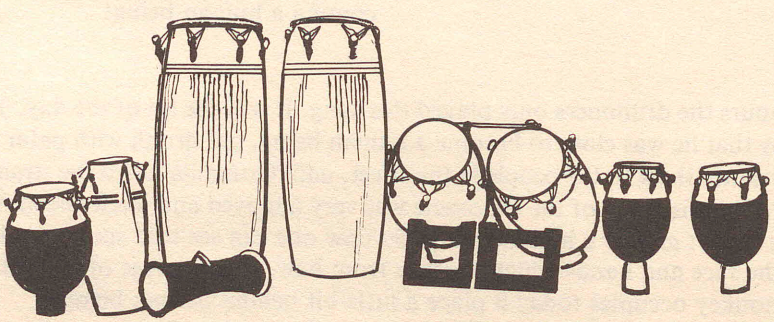
The room, in which the monkey had locked himself, was in a house situated near the main road. As it was Saturday, people were preparing festivities. At seven o'clock in the evening it happened that *dùndún* drummers passed by. The monkey became very excited. At one moment, he forgot what Ọ̀runmìlà had told him and he opened the door a little bit, looking out eagerly to discover what was going on. He got very excited by the festivities he saw. He now opened the window and called to the drummers, asking them to wait for him. "What do you want?" the drummers asked. "Play something for me!" the monkey said. The drummers replied: "Alright, we shall compose a new song." They began their drumming and the monkey came out into the street to dance and sing.

Yoruba Text	**Translation**
LEADER: *Ma d'enia, ma d'enia!*	I am becoming a human being, I am becoming a human being!
(monkey) *Ma d'enia, ma d'enia!*	I am becoming a human being, I am becoming a human being!
Iwòyí ọla o ma d'enia!	Tomorrow at this time, I will be a human being!
CHORUS: *Ma d'enia, ma d'enia!*	I am becoming a human being, I am becoming a human being!
(all)	

For hours the drummers only played this song. It was the hit of the day. The monkey, happy that he was close to become a human being, got drunk with palm wine and gave a big dance show to the people in the street, until Ọ̀runmìlà heard the strange noises from afar. The wise man of the *Ifá* oracle was very annoyed and made the monkey into what he is today: *almost* a human being. So now one can see that some monkeys have areas on the face and hands which are free from hair. It is because of lack of patience that the monkey occupies today a place a little bit behind human beings!

Note: The name *Ọ̀runmìlà* derives from: *ọ̀run mọn ẹni tí yíóò là* (only Heaven knows who will be saved) (see Abraham 1973:274). Ọ̀runmìlà is considered to be the power behind the *Ifá* oracle, and as a personality fulfilled with the wisdom of the Supreme Being (*Olódùmarè*).

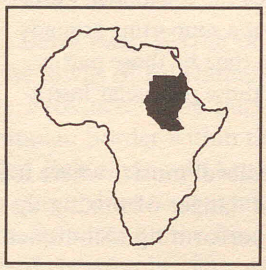




6

TRUMPET AND FLUTE ENSEMBLES OF THE BERTA PEOPLE IN THE SUDAN

ARTUR SIMON



STATEMENT: J. H. Kwabena Nketia is the first African scholar who has gained not only a worldwide reputation in the field of African musicology, but also in ethnomusicology. He was one of the first Africans to direct an institute for African music research in Africa, which was a very hopeful beginning for our discipline. Unfortunately the economic development in many African countries caused all these enthusiastic efforts of the past to lead to a depressing agony.

Kwabena Nketia has always favored the "juncture of the social and the musical," and "the need for a holistic approach to the study of music that takes into account not only the traditional preoccupation of comparative musicologists—scales, modes, tuning systems and their measurements, melodic and rhythmic analysis, polyphony and organology, but also the systematic study of the processes involved in music making" (*The World of Music* 1985:9). I think most Africans—musicians and scholars as well—will subscribe to this, as I would do so after having gained some modest experiences and insights in some African music cultures. □

INTRODUCTION

Apparently certain ensembles of wind instruments, the playing techniques, the musical structures, and even the social functions belong to an old stratum within the history of African musical traditions. To my knowledge the oldest European account of this kind of African instrumental music was made by Vasco da Gama in 1497.[1] As to South Africa, Kirby remarks,

> The first musical instruments of South Africa to be described by travellers were, so far as I can discover, flutes of reed which were played by bands of performers, each of whom was responsible for a single note (Kirby 1953:135).

Musical ensembles of this kind or of a similar structure, in which the players may produce two to three notes on their flutes or trumpets, can be found in many African cultures south of the Sahara. The interlocking playing technique of these ensembles is characteristically African: the single parts individually cannot stand alone; their composition, however, is ingenious. It is the group, and not the individual, that counts. This phenomenon is a composing technique in the true sense of the word, in

which single notes played on a range of flutes or trumpets are composed to resultant melodic cells and/or multiphonic sounds. The larger the ensemble, the more complex and dense the structure with interlocking polyphonic lines. In certain cases—especially those discussed here—this composing technique could be compared with that used in polyrhythmic drumming and percussion, where each player follows his own rhythmic pattern.

Although several scholars of African musicology have provided us with some insights into the structure of compositions for trumpet and flute ensembles,[2] many cultures have still to be covered. Kirby (1933) published a survey of South African reed-flute ensembles. The term "hocket technique," which was introduced by Nketia (1962) for this kind of interlocking playing technique, was taken over by several others.[3]

> Another technique is the use of ostinato: a simple rhythm figure is repeated over and over again in support of changing instrumental parts, or of the voice. Closely allied to these procedures is the hocket-technique—the technique whereby the constituent notes of a tune, a rhythm or a tone-pattern, or the constituent notes of a supporting ground-accompaniment, are played at the exactly appropriate point in time by those particular instruments that include them within their compass, or by those particular instruments that provide the required contrasts (Nketia 1962:44).

Since the term "hocket" was derived from European medieval music, where it can be characterized as a kind of device, Nketia was aware of the danger of mixing up the concepts of African composition techniques and European performing techniques by using it:

> In African music practice, the hocket is not merely a device but a technique of building up single or parallel linear structures in various types of interlocking patterns. The hockets are not arbitrary artistic devices; they are functional, in the sense that they arise out of melodic and polyphonic considerations. They are often a means to an end, not an end to themselves, and are used for achieving overall effects of continuity, for building up interlocking, and sometimes complex structures, out of relatively simple elements (Nketia 1962:52).

It becomes clear that the so-called hocket technique in African music is not equivalent to the "hoquetus" in European medieval music. Further, within these composition techniques there is no complete uniformity to be found in South, Central, West, and East Africa. If we compare the ensemble music of these regions, we will find many structural differences in detail. It is therefore not surprising that it will be impossible to find any African term which can cover all these different techniques of ensemble playing. However, the term *hocket* should be avoided, as should the comparison of certain African multipart techniques to the medieval *organum*, as referred to by Kirby (1933:360). Cynthia Schmidt (1984:195) mentions the Kpelle concept of "many voices coming together as one," or *ŋ̀óo é kɛ tɔnɔɔ* ("let the voice be one"), while Koetting (1984:162) tries "to demonstrate the conflict between the Kasena musicians' verbal explanations of what they do and an aural 'reality' that often seems to contradict them." At the end of his article he adds,

> The chordal structure of tunes is so clear and, with the exception of the Mayoro wubala, almost inviolate on paper, yet the musicians say nothing about this aspect of their music.

> I believe that analysis of African music at this stage should attempt to reflect the conceptualizations of the carriers of the tradition. In this case, if the musicians say the primary concern is that of a hocket-like interpretation of a single melodic line, then it behooves us to try to rationalize that concept in our analysis. In short, it is my belief that analytical data that runs counter to statements by the performing musicians would have been to disprove them overwhelmingly (Koetting 1984:171–72).

We will see that the idio-conceptual situation in Afro-Sudanese cultures in the southern part of the Blue Nile Province, which was formerly also called *Dar Fung*,[4] is not as promising as in other parts of Africa. A partial superimposition of the Arabic language over the local African languages makes the questions of terminology even more complicated.

THE BERTA

The Berta (also Bertha or Bartha, Berta) belong to a group of peoples who live south of the towns of Ed Damazin and Roseires in the southernmost part of the Sudanese Blue Nile Province.[5] One part of the Berta, however, had settled beyond the Sudanese-Ethiopian border within the Ethiopian Governorate-General of Wallagā, where they are called Bela Shangul (Arabicized as "Beni Shangul") by the surrounding peoples.

According to several authors, the Berta stretch along the Ethio-Sudanese border from Roseires on the Blue Nile in the north to Khor Yabus in the south.[6] Schuver, who visited the area in 1881, estimated (or probably overestimated) their number at 80,000 (Schuver 1883:3). This, however, was before the Mahdiya. In the 1950s Hilke and Plester (1955:178) mentioned estimations between 3,000 to 10,000 for the number of people within the ethnic groups of the region, the Berta belonging to the larger groups.[7] In a demography published by Cerulli (1956:14), we find the number of 10,000. There are almost no ethnographical records about the Sudanese Berta. Our information on the Ethiopian part is a little better due to the profound work done mainly by Triulzi (1975, 1981). Both the Sudanese and Ethiopian Berta have been seen as a cultural and historical ethnic unit. This is confirmed by Triulzi's findings on the origin of the Ethiopian Berta, who were forced to emigrate to the Ethiopian highlands from the Sudan because of overpopulation as well as harsh attacks by Arab slave traders in the nineteenth century.

> Most Bertha informants agree that their ancestors did not originate in the region they at present inhabit, but came from a mountainous region in southern Sinnar which they call Gerri, possibly to be identified with Jebel Gerri of the maps, southeast of the Sudanese town of Roseires. They also claim they were led to the Ethiopian escarpment by their eponymous ancestor, Berthu, son of Qithabuwa (or Qibuwa), who is said to have settled at Jebel Sude southwest of the present border town of Qessan (Triulzi 1981:182).

Although the name *Berta* could have been derived from a mythical ancestor named Berthu, our informants at the region of Qessan affirmed that the name means "slave." It remains unclear if this hints at the former slave raids or at a former class society among these people. Since the first descriptions by foreign travellers of the nineteenth century, which all date back to the so-called Egyptian period or annexion (1820–1822), we know

about a ruling class among the Berta generally called *waṭāwīṭ*, whose members originated mostly from the Islamic northern Sudan.[8] These traders gradually deprived the traditional leaders of the Berta, called *mek*, of their power. Russegger (1844:II,576) found many Donqolāwī *jallāba* in the Dūl gold areas of Belā Shangul in 1838.

> It is no wonder that these resident traders wielded increasing power in the communities where they had settled. They frequently intermarried with the upper stratum of Bertha families, and thus participated in ruling the district. . . . By the mid-nineteenth century, the half-caste descendants of these Arab traders, locally known as *waṭāwīṭ*, had, through intermarriage and a skillful policy of participation in internal politics, taken effective power from their Bertha protectors. As in other peripheral areas of the Nile Valley, the 'legend of the Wise Stranger, who teaches a barbarous people civilized habits,' and who founds a new (Muslim) dynasty through a marriage alliance with a local (Bertha) king's daughter, has found a fertile ground in the Belā Shangul region. Though folk-memory may well have added some colour to historical truth, the evidence here is that history has been altered by legend in details only (Triulzi 1975:59).

Obviously they took over from the former rulers symbols of rulership, such as the flute and trumpet ensembles. The music, however, had always been played by Berta peasants, and not by *waṭāwīṭ*.

> The Bertha in fact, have been dominated throughout the ages by alien groups (the Funj, the Sudanese Arabs, the Mahdists, the Ethiopians) who have attempted to impose on them their political institutions, their cultures, their religions, and not last, their history. The Bertha have resisted foreign intrusion by adhering to their own culture, using their own language, and performing traditional ceremonies which symbolized their adherence to Bertha cosmology and self-identity (Triulzi 1981:179).

Among the Sudanese Berta today a superimposition of the Arab language and Islam could not be overlooked during our research in 1982 and 1983, a development which was reinforced by official Sudanese politics at least since the autumn of 1983, when the Berta were forbidden to produce *merissa*, the local millet beer. Since this had been the case once before during the Mahdists' rule a hundred years ago, but without resulting in the traditional customs being extinguished, some hope for the future may remain.

The language of the Berta is characterized as an isolated unit, which is a dialect cluster.[9] "Morphologically their language has a closer resemblance to Sudanic than to Cushitic or Nilotic" (Cerulli 1956:17). It is not a tone language. To my knowledge the Berta language has not yet been studied and compiled on a linguistic basis. Most of the Berta today speak Arabic as well.

SOME REPORTS ON THE MUSIC OF THE BERTA AND THEIR NEIGHBORS

Most European travellers who visited the area in the nineteenth century were sent as geologists or geographers by the Egyptian government. They had no interest in nor even an opportunity of getting deeper insights into the customs of the peoples they were passing by. All ethnographical notes have to be considered as "chance glimpses." Some information on Berta music has been provided by the Austrian traveller Marno (1874) and

the Dutch geographer Schuver (1883). Marno summarizes his observation on half a page of his book:

> Als Saiteninstrument dient hier wie in den nördlicheren Gegenden die Rababah, eine primitive Guitarre. Blasinstrumente werden aus den Hörnern der Ochsen und Antilopen, gerade röhrenförmige Bulonq von ausgehöhlter Canna verfertigt, deren verschiedene Grösse und Stärke höhere und tiefere Töne bedingt. Ebenso Flöten mit einem surrenden Ton. Ausserdem ist die Kriegspauke, Noqarah, aus einem ausgehöhlten Baumstamm, oben und unten mit Ochsenhaut überzogen, in Gebrauch. Der Berta liebt Gesang, Tanz und das Lärmen auf seinen Instrumenten gleich allen Negervölkern. Die Nächte nach der Ernte werden, so lange der Durrahvorrath reicht, bei der daraus bereiteten Merissah singend, tanzend und musicirend verbracht. Ihre Weisen beginnen meist mit hohen, kurzen und enden mit tiefen, langgezogenen Tönen, welche mit den Hörnern und dem Bulonq accompagnirt werden (Marno 1874:73 f.).

He mentions the five-stringed lyre as a "primitive guitar" with the Sudan-Arabic name "rababah." An illustration is given on plate 7 of the book, where we also find three stopped flutes and the animal horn *buluŋ*. He also mentions the flute and trumpet ensembles of the Berta, but gives no correct names. His term *bulonq* does not stand for the straight-tubed *waza*-trumpets, but for the cow or antelope horns.

Schuver (1883:5), who visited the area only several years later, reports some impressions from a harvest festival which might be identical with a festival called *hokke* in the Qessan region, which I documented in 1983. A drum called "the large *nogara*" and characterized as a war drum is mentioned on page 90.

Robertson (1936:118) reports of a harvest festival of the Ingessana with dances accompanied by whistles called *bal*.

The former relation of the *waza* trumpet ensembles to traditional rulership is reported by Disney (1945), who attended the coronation of a Berta *mek* at Fazoghli in 1944.

> There was a large gathering of tribesmen, most of whom had brought their bands and were assembled in a big clearing beside the *mek*'s village. The bands were made up of various 'wood-wind' instruments, ranging in length from small pipes a foot long to huge bassoons of seven feet, built up from a series of gourds, held together by strips of bamboo, with their ends resting on the ground. There were also 'xylophones' [i.e. percussion sticks, correction by the author] consisting of pieces of wood (usually ebony) shaped like wish-bones, with sides about two feet long, hooked over the right shoulder and beaten with a horn held in the right hand, thus leaving the left hand free to hold a pipe and enabling the performer to play on both instruments at the same time. There was a wild dancing and mock fighting and brandishing of spears and shields, and beating of the *mek*'s three *nahas* drums (bull, cow and calf—the latter known as *shatam*) added to the general babel of sound (Disney 1945:37).

Before the Egyptians took over the control of the Sudanese Blue Nile area it had been part of the Fung Sultanate since the beginning of the sixteenth century.

> Apart from the royal officers special titles and distinctions were granted to vassal rulers and notables in greater or lesser degree. Most coveted was the title of *Manjil*, . . . which

> entitled them to wear the *Tagia Umm Qurain*, a copy of the two-horned cap worn by the King himself, as an insignia of rank, to have their own drums, and to wear a gold chain known as *heikali* (Paul 1954:22).

Another report by the German ethnographer Hilke (1959) provides us with some information about the music of the Ingessana.[10] The musical analysis is more or less futile and demonstrates the helplessness of the analyst, especially when the basic beat played on percussion sticks and rattles is recognized as being syncopated in relation to the trumpet patterns.[11]

Ethnomusicological research in this area has to be characterized as merely marginal, and little research on this topic has been published to date. The German ethnomusicologist Robert Günther (1972) wrote an article on the trumpet and flute ensembles of the Berta living on the Ethiopian side of the boundary. He (1972:62) provides us with a first characterization of this type of ensemble playing, which is confirmed by our findings: an interlocking and crossing of different rhythm patterns played on different pitch levels; an interlocking and crossing of different resulting melodic patterns; multisounds resulting when several pitches are played simultaneously.

Gerhard Kubik, who visited the Ingessana hills in 1977, published some information on the flute ensemble *bal* in his book on East African music:

> Die Kombination der Pfeifentöne erfolgt kreuzrhythmisch, jede einzelne Pfeife sowie das tiefklingende Kalebassenhorn spielen eine kurze kreuzrhythmische Phrase, die an einem festgelegten Punkt einzusetzen hat. Die Kombination aller Einzelstimmen ergibt eine resultierende Melodie, die das Thema des *bal*-Tanzes bildet. Dazu singen Männer wie Frauen (Kubik 1982:98 f.)
>
> (The pitches of the pipes are combined in a cross rhythm in the way that each of the pipes and the low sounding calebash horn play a short cross rhythmic phrase, which has to start on a fixed point. The combination of all single voices leads to a resultant melody, which is the theme of the *bal*-dance. Men and women are singing to it (Translated by the author).

The American musicologist Robert Gottlieb, who paid a short visit to the Ingessana hills and the district of Ed Damazin/Roseires in 1980, published an article on the musical scales of the Berta, Ingessana, and Gumuz (Gottlieb 1983:153–163). His awkward conclusions on an equipentatonic scale found by himself and its Southeast Asian parallels (the late Father Jones is awakened once more) are discussed later.

Another short article on the *waza* music of the Berta[12] was published by the Sudanese author Mustafa Salah (1982). Nothing is mentioned about exactly where Salah collected his data. Therefore it is difficult to comment on the terminology, and even more on the strange translation given by him.

For the sake of completeness we should mention another Sudanese publication by Ali Al-Daw, my research assistent, and Abdallah Muhammed (1985) in which some musical instruments of the Berta are described: the rattle *asɛzaghu*, the lyre *abaŋgaraŋ*, the *bal* flutes, and the *waza* trumpets.[13]

FIELD RESEARCH AMONG THE BERTA 1982/1983

The results published here are based on two field studies. Both field studies were supported by funds of the National Museums (Prussian Cultural Foundation, Berlin) and the Institute of African and Asian Studies at the University of Khartoum. Ali Al-Daw from the Folklore Research Centre (Department of Culture, Ministry of Culture and Information of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan) proved to be an excellent research assistant.[14]

The first study was carried out in November 1982 in the villages Uffud El-Nuweiri and Uffud El-Tōm on the banks of the Roseires reservoir approximately 44 km south of Ed Damazin. The second research trip took place from September to November 1983 in an area around the market place Qessan at the Sudan-Ethiopian border. As some of the larger Khors still carried much water and the rainy season was not over, the area could be reached only on donkeys. Therefore the amount of technical equipment had to be reduced to a minimum.

We recorded parts of a *tambura* ceremony and an Islamic *noba*,[15] as well as the harvest festival called *hokke*, which lasted from October 10 to 29, 1983. In addition, several dancing songs called *aguzó*, 17 songs with the lyre *abaŋgaraŋ*, 37 recording takes with 3 *waza* groups, and 26 recordings with the flute ensembles *bɔlo shuru* and *bal naggaro* were recorded as well. One example of *waza* music was published in Simon (1983, ex. 48).

THE *WAZA* TRUMPET ENSEMBLE

The *waza* trumpet ensemble is considered the most distinguished instrumental music of the Berta. The groups we recorded consisted of ten to twelve trumpets. The whole set of instruments, together with the percussion sticks *bali* or *baali*, is owned by one person and kept in his house. Considering the reports already mentioned, the *waza* music and the *bal naggaro* as well must have been related to former rulership or *mek*-chieftainship, and later to the class of the *waṭāwīṭ*[16] and maybe also to the *jallāba* here and there. This strong symbolism of the *waza*, however, can no longer be noted in those areas we visited. But there was always one owner of the instruments and one person responsible for the performances, without whose agreement no *waza* would have been performed. Every performance, which generally takes place after sunset, is a great enjoyment for the whole village. Usually a large crowd of villagers joins the musicians as a group of singers and dancers. This was also the case with those performances which were arranged especially for us.

Today the *waza* is played at public or communal events and family festivities (except funerals) which are celebrated on a larger scope. It does not seem to be played during the rainy season. The only live performance recorded by us was at a feast for the circumcision of a boy following the Islamic rite.[17]

The *waza* group together with some men and the women's chorus performed on one side in front of the compound of the family while a group of girls and women with two *daloka*-drums were sitting on another side not far away. Sometimes both groups played at the same time.

The *waza* instruments are made by experts. In one case noted 1982, the owner was also the maker.[18] The *waza* instruments are conically shaped trumpets which vary from about 50 to 180 cm in length. *Waza 1* from Uffud El-Nuweiri had the following measurements (in cm):

	length	ϕ bottom	ϕ top (mouthpiece)
1.	60	7	3,3
2.	67	7,3	3
3.	81,5	(10)	3,6
4.	88	9	3,4
5.	97	9,2	4
6.	110	14	3,5
7.	119	13,3	4
8.	133	12	4
9.	156	15	4,3
10.	174	13	5

The trumpets are made of conical segments of calabash which fit into each other like a telescope. These segments are splinted together with long pieces of bamboo and ropes (see Photo 1, a complete set of trumpets). The raw material called *agu* is carefully selected and dried inside the hut (see Photo 2). The trumpets are made in the same sequence as they are tuned. One starts with the first trumpet *wazalu* and proceeds to the following larger one. A complete set of *wazas* must consist of ten trumpets which are divided into two groups (trumpets 1 to 5, and 6 to 10). One or two additional higher instruments can be added.[19] These trumpets are called *mušāhir*, which means "announcer" or "proclaimer," and are the only ones with an Arabic name. The additions played on these instruments, however, are not important for building up the typical *waza* music

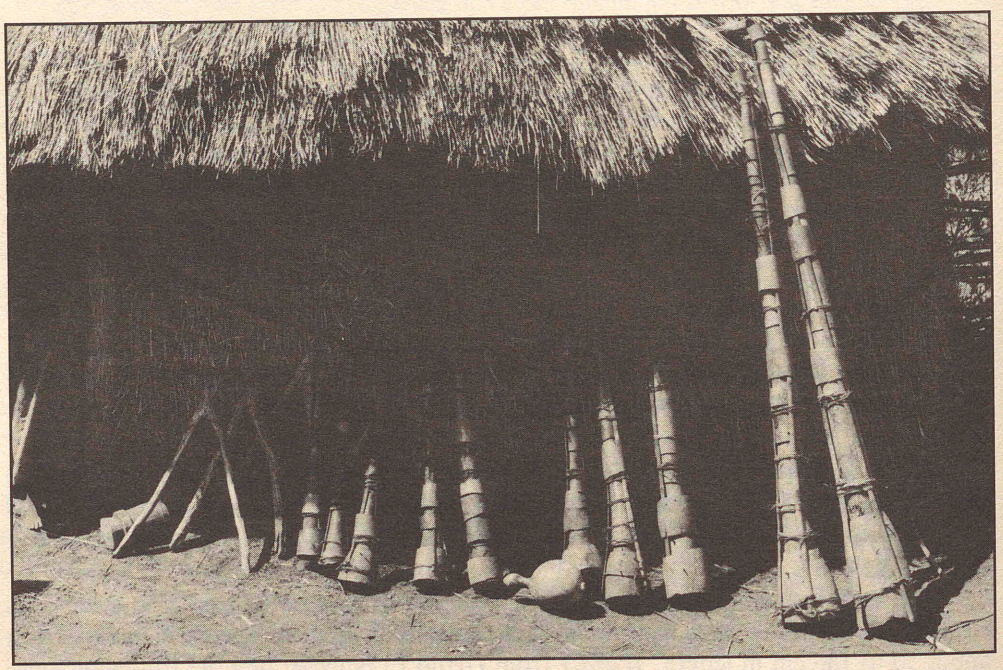


Photo 1. A set of *waza* instruments.

structure. In the *waza 3* group they were approximately an octave higher than trumpets 4 (*shoru*) and 5 (*ajilɔgi*). This may have caused the musicians to give these two highest trumpets the additional names *ashoro* and *ajilɔgi* (see Table 1 in the Appendix). The first trumpet, called *wazalu*, which literally means "*waza alu*" or "head of the waza," is the leading instrument of the whole set. Photo 3 shows the *waza 2* group from Uffud El-Tōm with the *wazalu* player in the middle leading the group. The high group of *waza 3* from Mitinjalo/Qessan with the *wazalu* at the head of the row can be seen on Photo 4. One of the *mušāhir* players from the same group is shown in Photo 5. The meaning of most of the other terms has to be verified in further studies as the explanations of our informants and those being published by Salah (1984) seem to be contradictory or even wrong.[20] Some of the instruments are distinguished by sizes such as "small" = *balə* and "large" = *danyi*. Those terms whose meaning is quite clear are given here: *waza mushaŋ* means "girl *waza*"; *ashənir* seems to be related with *shiŋgir* which means "donkey"[21]; *agundú* means "the back," and *asɛzaghu* means "the rattle," because this trumpeter also plays the rattle with the same name. In Table 1 all instruments are grouped from high to low according to their musical function.

Before the instruments are played they have to be prepared by pouring water through the tubes in order to close open parts between the gourd segments (see Drawing on page 194). Another preparation that I have seen once did not seem to have any practical reason, but evidently it had a ritual one. At an arranged session with the *waza 3* group, a man with a burning torch went to each trumpet and nearly touched it with the fire, as if he wanted to bless them. After this, burning arrows were thrown to the north, the west, and the south. This reminded me of a similar custom at the end of the



Photo 2. Calabashes, the raw material for making a *waza* trumpet, drying in a hut.



Photo 3. The *waza* 2 group from Uffud El-Tōm with the *wazalu* player in the middle. November 1982.



Photo 4. The high group of *waza* 3 from Mitinjalo. October 1983.

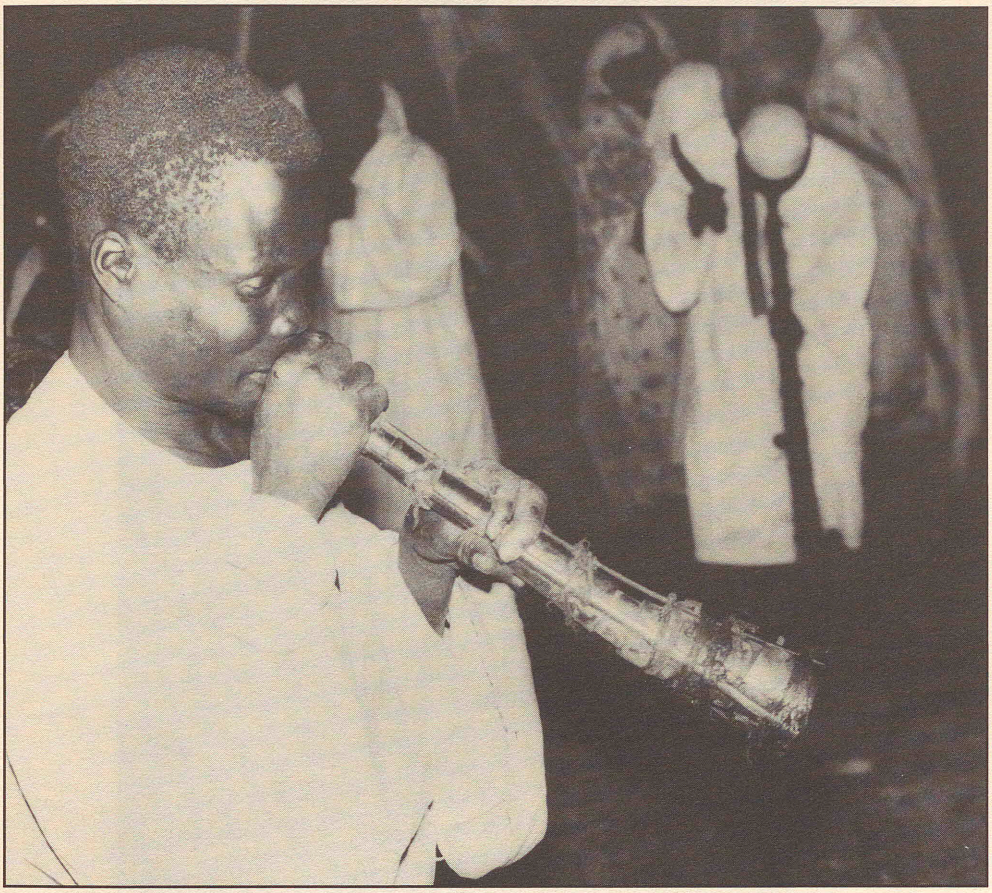


Photo 5. One of the *mušāhir* players from the *waza* 3 group.

harvest festival called *hokke*. There burning arrows were thrown against the rising sun after an entire night of dancing. While this might be interpreted as a symbolic act that marks the beginning of the dry season, the purpose of this custom still is not clear.

The trumpets are accompanied by several percussion instruments. The most important are the *bali* (or *baali*) played by the trumpeters 1 to 5. The *bali* is a wooden crotch, both ends having a length of 60 cm (± 3 cm), which is carried over the right shoulder and beaten with a cow horn called *buluŋ*[22] (see Photo 4). The trumpet is held with the left hand and the *buluŋ* with the right one. Another percussion instrument is a calabash rattle called *asɛzaghu* or *asɔso* played by trumpeter 7. Some of the women who participate as group singers and dancers wear leg rattles made of dried tree fruits called *atitish* (see Photo 6). Sticks and rattles provide the basic beats or pulses.



Drawing. The preparation of the trumpets for the performance.

THE TUNING OF THE *WAZA*: PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

According to our informants and musicians at Uffud El-Nuweiri, the *waza* is made and tuned in the sequence from high to low, starting with the *wazalu*. The additional trumpets are tuned in the end. The approximated octaves between the high group (1 to 5) and the low one (6 to 10) (i.e. between the trumpets 1/6, 2/7, 3/8, 4/9, 5/10) are evidently not checked.

The basic pitches of all trumpets and flutes recorded by us were analyzed with a Brüel & Kjaer high resolution signal analyzer type 2033.[23] The results are summarized in Table 2 (see Appendix). The pitches were recorded after the performances when the players were asked to play their pitch one by one into the microphone. The intonation

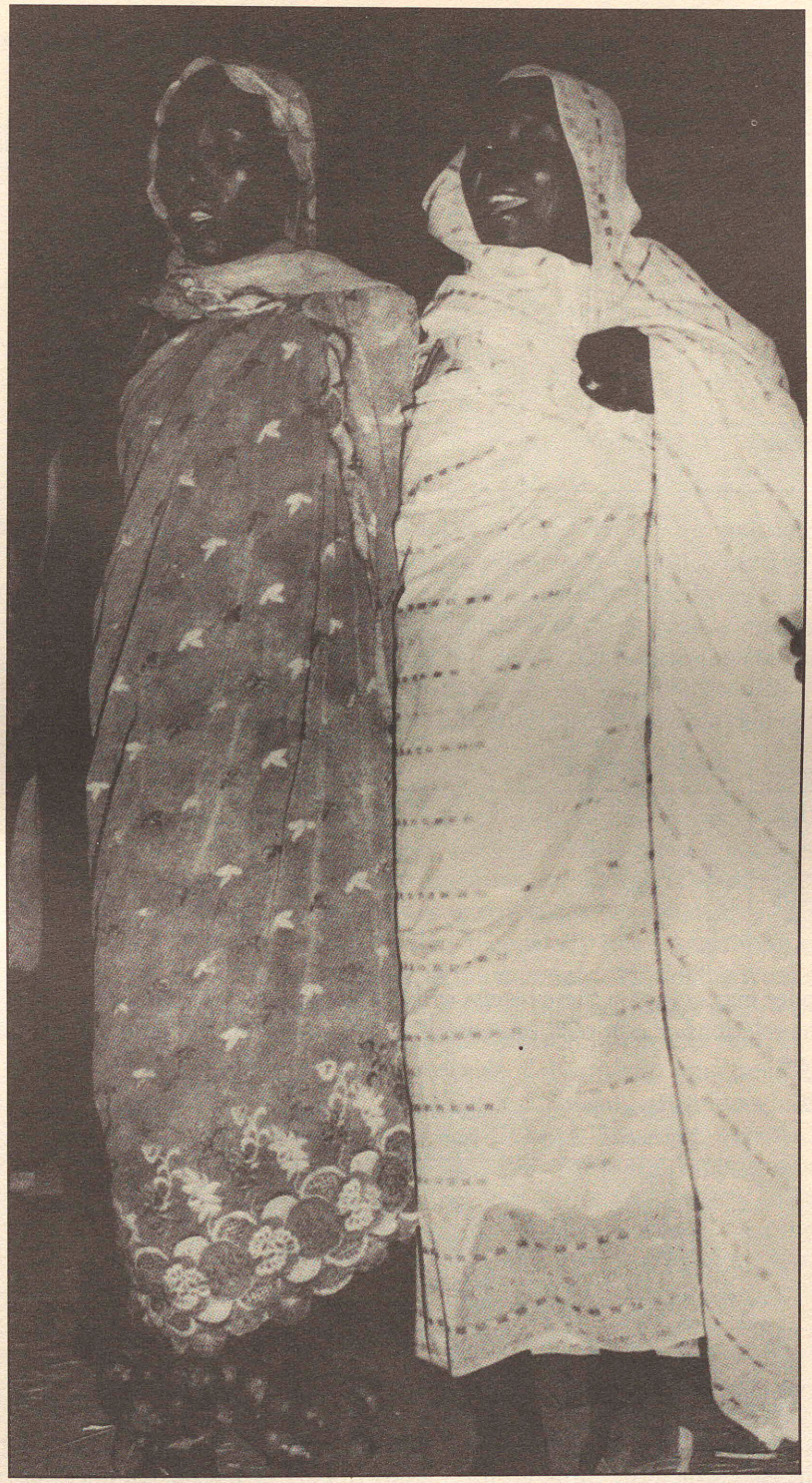


Photo 6. Women dancers/singers, one with leg rattles *atitish*, from the *waza* 2 group.

of the instruments can vary considerably. Some samples of a sequence of pitches by the same player may demonstrate this:

		Hz.	cents	max. difference in cents
waza 1	trumpet 5	138 142 142,5 142,75	8.530 8.580 8.586 8.589	59
	trumpet 8	96 94,5	7.902 7.875	27
	trumpet 10	71,5 75	7.475 7.392	83
waza 2	trumpet 7	118 121,5	8.259 8.310	51

According to Gottlieb (1983:158) the intonation is corrected by the players when playing together. But do they really play within an equi-pentatonic system as Gottlieb believes? Even when considering possible corrections as well as the existing tolerances of intonation which are given evidence here, the figures of Table 2 give us no right to postulate an equi-pentatonic system of the slendro type. What we find here has been defined by Kubik (1983:364) as an "elastic scale." Within the four *waza* groups we find the following intervals between the 10 main trumpets:

cents	occurrence of intervals
75–125	2
126–175	5
176–225	9
226–275	17
276–325	2
326–375	1

The reader may compare these results with those figures of the flute ensembles later on.

The relations or non-relations concerning the octaves between the high and the low group are:

Number Trumpets	*waza 1* cents	*waza 2* cents	*waza 3* cents
1/6	1106	1165	1114
2/7	1086	1125	1120
3/8	1035	1177	1118
4/9	1088	1195	1200
5/10	1105	1188	1138

THE STRUCTURE OF *WAZA* MUSIC

A performance of a *waza* composition generally begins with a woman singing once or twice the tune which the entire group is going to play. Then the trumpet players try to find their starting points. If this ensemble of one-pitched instruments is to produce a single melody then nearly each player must have another starting point or impact pat-

tern. The *wazalu* player opens by starting to beat the elementary pulses on his *bali* and then begins to play his part generally starting at the beginning of the time line pattern.[24] Next the *abunyelə* starts playing a cross rhythmic pattern against the *wazalu* (see the impact patterns given below). Although there seems to be no real rehearsal, it could happen when a new composition is to be played that it has to be practiced several times.

Three compositions of *waza* music and three others for the flute groups as recorded by us will be analyzed in order to show the musical structure. The transcriptions were made by Tiago de Oliveira Pinto in collaboration with the author based on an impact notation system specially developed for this kind of music.[25] The impacts of each instrument are notated in the horizontal lines. The pitch or frequency (Hz./c.p.s.) of the instrument is noted at the beginning. The vertical lines mark the elementary pulses, and the duration of the time line pattern is given by the respective number as 8, 12, or 16. It is principally a non-durational notation as only the impacts or starting points of the tones are notated which generally are short in a kind of staccato. Those sounds which are longer than a time unit or pulse are—as an exception—notated with a tie. If the line is interrupted the tone might be played two times at some parts of the performance. Notes or spots in brackets are only played in certain variants. The transcriptions show the basic melody as played within one time line pattern and the most remarkable variants (var.). The main notes of the melody as played by the instruments are marked by circles.

The two compositions (see Examples 1 and 2 in the Appendix) played by the *waza 3* group were recorded on October 21, 1983, at the village of Mitinjalo near Qessan. The names of the trumpets are listed in Table 1 and the pitch analysis in Table 2. The main players were: Fattur Lelo (32), leader and *wazalu* player, Ibrahim Mukhtar (37), Mahmud Duró (40), Azhari Darash (20), Kamaal Tinga (37), Arbaab Jaballah (25), Thabit Shodaad (36), Sultan Roda (24), and Al-Mahi Abdullah (40), who played the *diil* (One name is not understandable on my cassette interview but his age is mentioned at 27).

The compositions *Akharo* and *Aba Musa* were recorded analytically, i.e. trumpets 1 to 5 (melody high group) and trumpets 6 to 10 (melody low group) were recorded separately, and after this the whole group with the microphones moving from one subgroup to the other. This is generally not necessary as the performers themselves move around counterclockwise led by the *wazalu*, the women forming the "tail."

Akharo is one of the few compositions without a chorus and song (see Example 1 in Appendix). According to the musicians it is played at musical competitions. Compared with the other compositions the structure is rather simple. The form number or cycle number is 8. The word *akharo* is clearly expressed musically in the resulting movements of trumpets one and three or six and eight respectively. The coincidence of the high and low group of trumpets can be easily seen in the transcription. As only two pitch levels are needed in order to express the "high to low" movement of the word *akharo*, trumpets 4 and 9 support 1 and 6 while trumpet 5 plays a counter beat in order to add some "drive" to the performance. The *mušāhir* trumpets reinforce trumpets 1 and 2, trumpet 01 being 631 cents higher than trumpet 1, and trumpet 02 being 500 cents higher than trumpet 2. The different rhythm patterns and starting points of the single trumpets not only result in melodies but also in a polyrhythmic structure which enables every player to be on the right point at the right time. These patterns are not noticed by the listener, because he generally follows the resultant melody, and are the secret of the nuclear structure of this ensemble playing. In the tune *akharo* we find the following patterns (time line = 8):

trumpet	pattern	starting point on	remark
01	8	1	
02	3+5	4	cross rhythm
1	8	1	
2	8 (2+6)	5	
3	4+4	3	
4	4+4	1	
5	4+4	8	cross rhythm
6	like 1	like 1	
7	like 2	like 2	
8	like 3	like 3	
9	8	like 4	
10	8	5	

The composition *Aba Musa ladoya* ("Greetings by Aba Musa!") has a more complex structure (see Example 2 in Appendix). Both groups, high and low, coincide nearly perfectly. The additional trumpets 01/02 reinforce again—as in the tune *Akharo*—the *wazalu* (1) and *abunyelə* (here called *waza mushaŋ*) (2). The group singing is characterized by offbeat phrasing.[27] We find the following patterns (time line = 12):

trumpet	pattern	starting point on	remark
01	6+3+3 (4+2+3+3)	1	
02	3+6+3	12	cross rhythm
1	6+6	1	
2	3+3+3+3	12	cross rhythm
3	3+3+6	1	
4	12 (9+3)	10	
5	3+3+3+3	12	cross rhythm
6	like 1	like 1	
7	like 2	like 2	
8	like 3	like 3	
9	8+4	2	cross rhythm
10	like 5	like 5	

One of the most complex structures we found comes from the composition *Gera esharbeh* (see Example 3 in Appendix). The music and/or the text was composed by Rahma Jubaara from Uffud El-Tōm. The recording took place on November 23, 1982. The performers were: Ismail Osman (35), Juma'a Abdullah (38), Thabit Al-Araki (50), Mohammed Ibrahim (37), Juma'a Al-Rabbi (22), Alallah Mohammed (37), Fileil Ya'agub (25), Thabit Mohammed (18), Abdullah Ahmed (35), and Al-Rahma Jubartallah (38).

Gera esharbeh dirshonewtang maiodufa, which is the whole text of the tune, means "the woman slept on an old, dirty mat." It is a short melody which is repeated again and again. The repetitions are performed by two alternating groups. Typical for this kind of music, the first vocal line is sung in offbeat phrasing. There is a counter melody clearly to be heard at the end of the recording which is strictly on the beat (see group 3 in the transcription). These two vocal lines can be recognized in the resultant melodies of the lower trumpet group (see Example 3). The rhythmic patterns of the single parts are (time line = 8):

trumpet	pattern	starting point on	remark
1	2+3+3	1	
2	3+5	4	cross rhythm
3	4+4	1	
4	4+4	3	cross rhythm
5	5+3	2	cross rhythm
6	like 1	like 1	
7	5+3	3	cross rhythm
8	like 3	like 3	
9	4+4	4	cross rhythm
10	like 5	like 5	cross rhythm

THE *BAL NAGGARO* ENSEMBLE

The term *bal naggaro* means "flute-drum," *bal* stands for the flute and *naggaro* for the drum. It designates an ensemble of at least 10 end blown flutes up to a maximum of 19 to 21 flutes. The *bal* (also *balo*, *bɔlo*) are stopped and have no finger holes. One pitch is played on each flute. They are made from a special kind of bamboo. As this material was not available in our research area in the Sudanese part of the Berta region, the set of instruments recorded by us at Gaffillę near Qessan (October 23/24, 1983) was produced on the Ethiopian side. Nineteen flutes were presented to us, while actually only 14 instruments were played in the group on the recording evening (see Table 1). The 10 flutes of the main group (1–10) were, with one exception, wound round with leather in order to protect the bamboo pipes.

The kettle drum *naggaro* (Photo 7) also came from the Ethiopian side. The name, however, is related to the Arabic *naqqāra* (Amharic *nagārit*). In the Funj Sultanate and in Ethiopia these drums have been a symbol of status and rulership from the highest ranks down to the remote local chieftainships. The *bal naggaro* ensemble also had the same function. The instrument could not be played without the consent of its owner. The music, however, played in honor of the *mek* or his guests, served as entertainment for all participants. At the performance recorded by us, the flutists and the group singers, both women and men, formed a circle and then moved counterclockwise. Sometimes they changed direction by dancing an eight. The flutists arranged themselves according to sequence from high to low. Some of them laid their left hand on the shoulder of the foreman (Photo 8). The drummer stood in the middle of the circle beating his drum with two sticks. Some of the women played a rattle called *aseza* (*athetha*) which is identical with the *asezaghu* (*asɔso*) of the *waza* music.

The measurements and frequency analysis of the flutes can be seen in Table 3 (see Appendix). The occurrence of intervals (in cents) is as follows:

176–225 = 4 (major second)
226–275 = 4 (5/4 tone)
276–325 = 3 (minor third)
376–425 = 2 (major third)

The tuning is pentatonic but not equi-pentatonic. The attempt to look for a mathematically based tonal system seems to me to be useless and completely ethnocentric. The only statement that can be made is that there are small steps or intervals in a range of

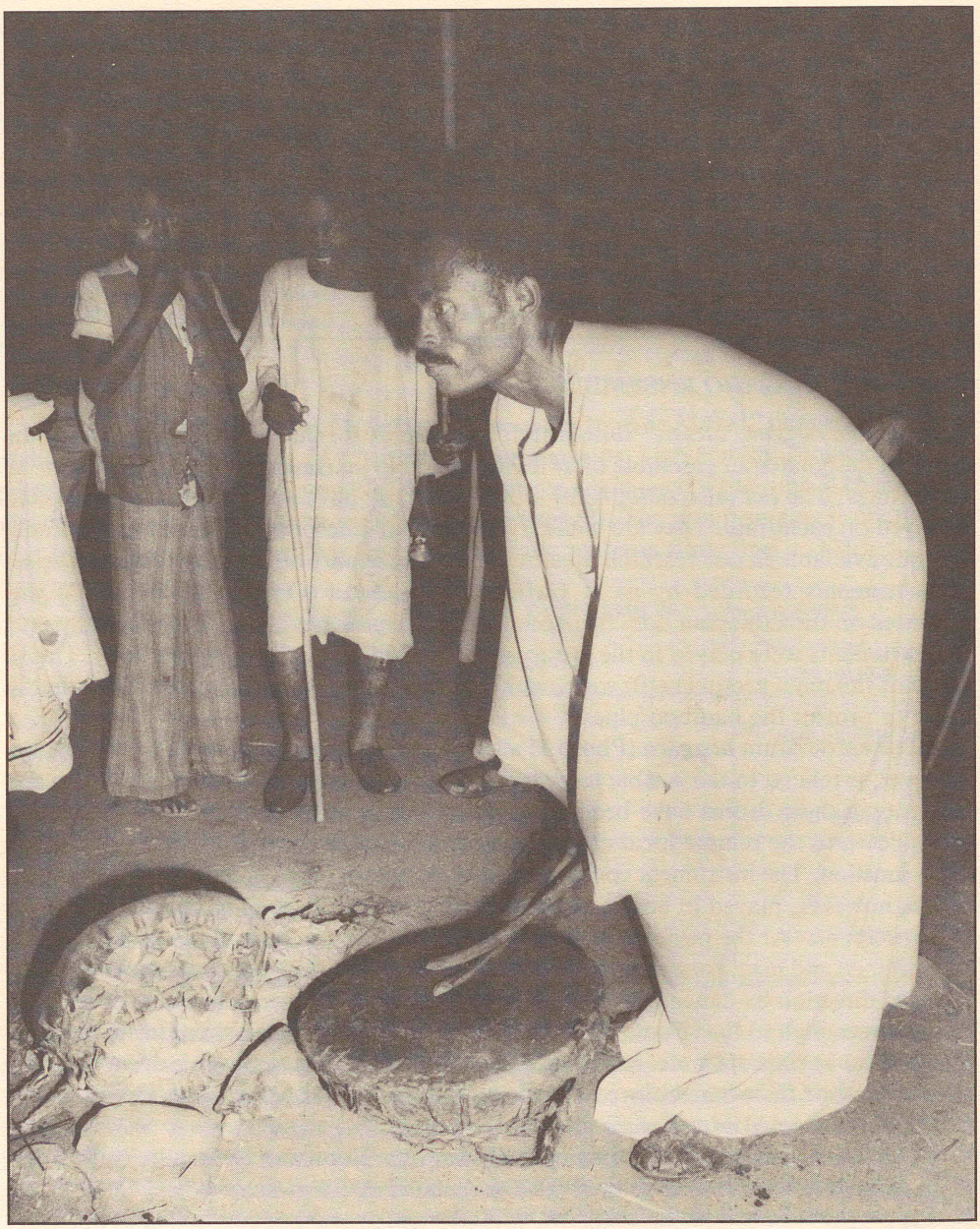


Photo 7. The *naggaro* player from Gaffillə. October 1983.



Photo 8. A part of the *bal naggaro* from Gaffillə. October 1983.

from 189 to 272 cents, and larger intervals from 286 to 409 cents. The relations concerning the octaves are (in cents):

(01–none)
(02–none)
1–6 = 1243
(2–none)
(3–8 = 1140)
(4–9 = 1135)
5–10 = 1232

The additional *telo* flute is approximately a fifth (679 cents) higher than the *talit telo*, the leading main flute of the high group.

The terminology of the instruments as listed in Table 1 is given here with the greatest reservation because it could not be cross-checked with other informants. The keeper of the instruments at Gaffillę seemed to be the only person around who knew the names as given here. To get an explanation was impossible. Some names also occur in the *waza* group (*mushaŋ*, *diil*, *ashənir*, *agundú*, *dəraŋ*). Some Arabic is found in *atani telo* ("second telo") and *talit telo* ("third telo"), *telo* being the Berta word for "the first."

THE STRUCTURE OF *BAL NAGGARO* MUSIC

The technique of ensemble playing and the structure of the resulting music is the same as in *waza* music. The impacts of the one-pitched flutes are linked together in order to build up melodic progressions which generally coincide with the group singing, but also counter melodies can be heard within this polyphonic structure.

The flute ensemble is divided into four subgroups. The two main groups are formed—exactly as in the *waza* ensemble—by two groups of flutes, each consisting of five instruments (nos. 1–5 and 6–10). Two additional high flutes (01/02) are generally played. These flutes, however, have no structural importance, but they add another tone color to certain pitches of the resultant melody. The ensemble is generally enlarged by additional low pitched flutes at large festivals and events in order "to make the sound of the group bigger." These flutes are characterized by their blowing noises which surmount a nearly inaudible tone.

Two compositions with a different character are presented here. The text of the first one *al-Khawaja balə* (see Example 4 in Appendix) was spontaneously created by one of the women as a reverence to me. *Al-Khawaja balə wasalotha la Gaffillə* means "the little Khawaja came to Gaffillə"; *khawaja* is a commonly used name in the Sudan for a European. The attribution "little" obviously had a teasing intention because it led to a growing amusement among all participants.

The flutes are arranged in the way that the main notes of the melody are hit (see Example 4). This, however, would not be possible if each player would not follow his own rhythmic pattern which is based on a time line pattern of 8 pulses. The rhythmic patterns of the flutes are as follows:

flute	pattern	starting point on	remark
01	5+3	5	
02	8	7	c.f. with flute 4
1	3+5	1	
2	3+5	2	cross rhythm
3	3+5	3	cross rhythm
4	8	7	
5	3+5	1	supporting flute 1
6	3+5	2	cross rhythm
7	3+5	1	like 1
8	like 3	like 3	
9	like 4	like 4	
10	like 5	like 5	
001	like 2 and 6	2	
002	4+4	3	cross rhythm

Offbeat phrasing can be noted in the group singing, while drums and rattles provide steady basic beats.

The composition *Bartha wayo* is, according to our informants, performed when the group has won a competition of music groups.[28] The time line pattern is 12 (see Example 5). Here the melody fits in with the subdivision of 2+3+2+2+3 pulses, a subdivision which is reinforced by the resultant flute pattern, especially in the lower group (flutes 3 to 5). The rhythm patterns of the single flutes are:

flute	pattern	starting point on	remark
01	2+3+4+3	3	cross rhythm
02	5+7	1	
1	3+9	1	
2	3+4+5	2	cross rhythm
3	3+2+2+4	12	cross rhythm
4	12 (8+4)	11	cross rhythm
5	12	10	cross rhythm
6	4+8	3	cross rhythm
7	like 02	like 02	
8	3+5+4	12	similar to 3
9	5+3+4 (3+2+3+4) var.	1	
10	like 5	like 5	cross rhythm
001	like 02	1	
002	5+7	3	similar to 01

THE *BƆLO SHURU* ENSEMBLE

Another flute ensemble with stopped one-pitched flutes without fingerholes is the *bɔlo shuru*.[29] The ensemble recorded by us on November 21, 1982, consisted of 13 flutes, of which 9 actually were played in the composition presented here (see Example 6). The flutes are accompanied by two percussion sticks *baŋ* (*bang*) played by the leader of the group. The names of the flutes are listed in Table 1. The meaning of these names has to be cross-checked by further studies. Only *tetelo* (= "the first") and *telelo danyi* ("the large first") can be confirmed.[30] At Uffud El-Nuweiri we found a set of *bɔlo shuru* flutes which was deposited at a ritual place within the village. These flutes had been played at the beginning of the rainy season in order to ask for rains and a good harvest. The *bɔlo shuru* seems to be more related to ritual beliefs than any other music of the Berta.

The *bɔlo shuru* music from Uffud El-Nuweiri consisted of two main groups of 2×4 flutes with several additional lower flutes of which only one was played in the composition presented here (see Example 6). The tuning of the flutes (see Table 3) underlines the subdivision of the two groups by separating them by an intervallic gap of 596 cents. Also the lower additional instruments are clearly separated by an interval of 539 cents. The octaves between the flutes were as following (in cents):

flutes/octaves
1–5 = 1174
2–6 = 1212
3–7 = 1152
4–8 = 1227
5–001 = 1170
(8–003 = 1163)

The time line pattern is 16. The end of the relatively short sequence of repetitions falls on beat 13. At this end almost all flutes come together in a tone cluster. The single players play the following rhythm patterns:

flute	pattern	starting point on	remark
1	4+3+4+5	2	cross rhythm
2	4+3+4+5	4	cross rhythm
3	4+4+3+5	1	
4	4+3+3+6	3	cross rhythm
5	4+3+9	2	similar to 1
6	like 2	like 2	cross rhythm
7	8+3+5	16	cross rhythm
8	16	13	together with 4
001	2+2+2+2+2+2+2+2	1	
	variant: 4+3+4+5	2	cross rhythm

This music can be described more as a rhythmic than melodic imitation of the vocal melody by the flute ensemble, as a resultant melody is not audible. To this respect the *bɔlo shuru* differs most from the *bal naggaro* and *waza* music.

THE SONG TEXTS OF THE *WAZA* AND *BAL NAGGARO*

Some remarks should be made on the texts as sung by the dancers. Generally speaking, there is a standard repertory of musical compositions, while new texts can be created in order to replace the old ones. In most cases, if a composer of a tune is known and mentioned by the people, he or she is not the one who made the music but the song text. Most of these texts are created by specially talented women. In the village Uffud El-Nuweiri the two women, Dandale and Ajba Abaath, composed most of the *waza* songs. The *waza* group of the neighboring village Uffud El-Tōm had a very productive composer named Bahr El-Nil Araki, who was not a member of the group, and a young man, Fileil Ya'agub, who was also a *waza* player.

As the melodies are short and repetitive, the texts are also short and can only transport aphorisms or limited statements which generally reflect the world of ideas within these peasant communities. Some examples may be given here:[31]

"The *luba* (bean) is ripe" is about a girl who is ready to be married. In the tune *Asir-balə* ("Young Sir") the text goes, "I have insulted the young Sir; he shall not come back again." The young Sir is maybe a son of a *jallāba* or still a hint at the colonial times. Other examples are: "Today I will give you the things that will make you angry"; "Today I will give to our guest, what pleases him"; "The white ants ate the millet" (mocking somebody who did not take care of his stock or did not produce enough millet beer); "Your head is like that of a partridge!" (namely without hairs). One song even mentions the song composer Dandale in a song by the man Musa Al-Haadi with the words: "Dandale, sing the old songs for us!" Love and sex are also found in songs like "Zozei (name of a girl), I will come to you this night!" *Waya Rubo shugabomo* ("Waya Four, you killed your uncle with a knife") does not mean that she really killed him but she did something very bad to him. *Duwas shaguur haleh bellanyi buna ganeh* ("The monkey ran into the mountains") hints at a bad *mek* who ruled over the people and who was expelled by them. "A white eagle comes into the village like the Khawaja" was a song dealing with my visit; *Al-Khartum bulafoda, jinzitayu amazotayeh* ("In Khartoum there is plenty of money, nevertheless he had to come back" [because of his family]) reflected the present times; and *Tamiema fuda atharghu laghashash*) ("Tamiem [name of a *mek*],

we have already paid our money [taxes]'') hints at previously existing tensions between the *waṭāwîṭ* and the peasants.

As the following examples show, the *bal naggaro* texts have a similar shape and content: *Amil bishi ya gadilə yə, amil bishi ya abowa* (''I was so angry when I came from the field; I was so angry when I found nothing to eat''); *Adam atirbaya mihi laŋoŋdi, mushaŋ merala massigara* (''The parents did not advise her well, the girl became a cigarette in the mouths of the boys''); *Adam al waliya abuwa, mushaŋ dala Galeya abuwa* (''Nobody took care of the girl, she was married to a Galla'') *ɔbe fakaru alola, buni-e kalalu.* Al-Hidir *jidnə le al-Habar, buni-e kalalu* (''Al-Hidir [King of Asosa] decided to come back [to the Sudan], because he was pressed [by the Ethiopian army]'').

THE NORTHERN EAST AFRICAN AREA OF ONE-PITCHED ENSEMBLE MUSIC

The music for one-pitched flute and trumpet ensembles of the Berta seems to be a stylistic centre for this type of performance practice in the northern zone of East Africa. The Berta are surrounded by culturally similar peoples who also have similar musical practices. We have records from the Gumuz, Ingessana, Uduk, and Mao. The Uduk have a flute ensemble called *bɔlshɔk*, which seems to be identical with the *bal naggaro*, and another ensemble, *athele*, which resembles the *bɔlo shuru* (Günther 1972:63). As we can see from these records the number of instruments which form an ensemble is considerably smaller than in the Berta groups. Only the flute ensemble of the Gumuz can be compared with those of the Berta. Also recorded are one-pitched flute ensembles from the Sidamo-Konso group of peoples who live around Lake Abaya up to Lake Stefanie in southwest Ethiopia.[32]

Although little is known about the musical structures of this one-pitched multiphonic ensemble playing, it is already possible to postulate the existence of a northern East African area of this type of music stretching from the Gamuz – Ingessana – Berta – (Burun) – Uduk – (Meban) – (Koma) – Mao – (Masongo) – to the Sidamo/Konso (Dorze, Konso, Gidole, Galeb, Baka) in southwest Ethiopia.

NOTES

1. Reprinted and translated in Kirby (1933:314).
2. See Kirby (1933), Nketia (1962), Günther (1972), Arom (1984), Koetting (1984), Schmidt (1984), Dauer (1985).
3. See Arom (n.d. and 1984:192), Koetting (1984). The term *hocket*, however, was already used before in comparative musicology in other related contexts.
4. See Evans-Pritchard (1932) and others.
5. The main groups are the Berta, Hamej, Gumuz, Gule, Ingessana, Burun, Uduk, Koma, and Meban.
6. See Evans-Pritchard (1932:42), Bryan (1945:190), Cerulli (1956:11 f.). Yabus is sometimes called River Dabus.
7. Hilke and Plester obviously had only the Sudanese Berta in mind.
8. See also Wedderburn-Maxwell (1936:179,183); Marno (1874:70). The real meaning of the Arabic term *waṭāwīṭ*, which literally means ''bats,'' remains not clear.
9. See Cerulli (1947, 1956); Bryan (1945).
10. Unfortunately the names of musical instruments were copied incorrectly from Robertson (1934:121). *Bal*, a name given to the calabash trumpets (the Berta *waza*), is the name for the stopped flute like that of the Berta. The lyre *ginger* must correctly be named *jaŋger*.

11. "Außer den Kalebassentrompeten wirken Schlagstäbe und Rasseln mit, die geradezu einen metronomisch exakten Rhythmus schlagen, der sich allerdings synkopisch zu den Tubentönen hält, deren immerhin noch so verwickeltes Zusammenwirken sich als rhythmisches Fundament erweist" (Hilke 1959:227).
12. The Berta are called Funj tribe here.
13. Al-Daw (1985:22,58,68,75) = *asesaghu*; *abangarang*; *balo*.
14. I gratefully acknowledge the help of all institutions and of Prof. Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz, Director of the IAAS, of my friend Ali Al-Daw and all the friendly people in Dār Berta. My thanks for their generous hospitality and support go to Abd El-Munim, chief commander of the garrison at Qessan, and to Qamar from Qessan sūq.
15. See for the *tambura* Simon (1983:291, ex. 45,46), and the *noba* Simon (1983:304–309, ex.47).
16. See Günther (1972) for the Ethiopian part.
17. This feast took place in the village of Mitinjalo near Qessan, Oct. 14, 1983 (rec. M 19434–19438).
18. Muzmar Umar, 60, from Uffud El-Nuweiri (rec.M 19390–19403). This set will be named "waza 1" in the following. "Waza 2" was recorded at Uffud El-Tōm Nov. 23, 1982 (M 19410–19417), and "waza 3" at Mitinjalo near Qessan Oct. 14 and Oct. 21, 1983 (M 19434–19438, 19447–19455).
19. Salah (1984:353) mentions also a set of 13 trumpets.
20. As Salah (1984:353) translates even "*mashair*" with "child," and "*wazalu*" with "boy," we doubt his competence in translating the other terms correctly. Also Gottlieb (1983:158) is not correct when translating "*waza al mashar*" with "first *waza*."
21. It might be also "*shəŋir*."
22. This is also the name for a side blown trumpet of the same material. Salah mentions also a deer-horn called "*kasbal*."
23. I gratefully acknowledge the help of the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (West) and of its members Ellen Prigann and Dipl.-Ing. Hans Reinhard Wirth who made the measurements. The frequencies given in Hertz here (Hz. in table 2 = c.p.s.) were transformed into cents by using Hans-Peter Reinecke: "Cents Frequenz Periode," (deGruyter) Berlin 1970.
24. According to some scholars (see also Kubik 1984:81), the term "time line pattern" was used for the first time by J. H. Kwabena Nketia in his lectures at the University of Ghana, Legon. There are many terms in African musicology we use. For further information on this "set of tools" see Kubik (1984) and Simon (1983).
25. This notation system is derived from similar notations used by Kubik (1983 and 1972). To my knowledge, Kubik was the first one who developed such a type of transcription. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Tiago de Oliveira Pinto and of Gerhard Kubik, who checked the transcription of "*gera esharbeh*" with us during his last working visit to Berlin.
26. See Kubik (1984:73).
27. See Dauer (1983:179).
28. Unfortunately I could not get further information about these competitions.
29. This is the *boltsetsiu* of the Ethiopian Berta as mentioned by Günther (1972:56).
30. The meaning of the other names according to the players: 3. "to cross a path in front of somebody"; 4. "the little father"; 5. "to set into the earth"; 6. "saddle"; 7. "plays much"; 8. "father"; 9. "he-goat"; 10. "cow"; 12. "an allied"; 13. "the leader."
31. The examples given here are from our recording collections Sudan 1982, 1983 which are archived at the Berlin Phonogramm Archiv in the Department of Ethnomusicology, Museum of Ethnography, Berlin (West).
32. See the record Ethnic Folkways FE 4353 (rec. by Lerner, Wollner).

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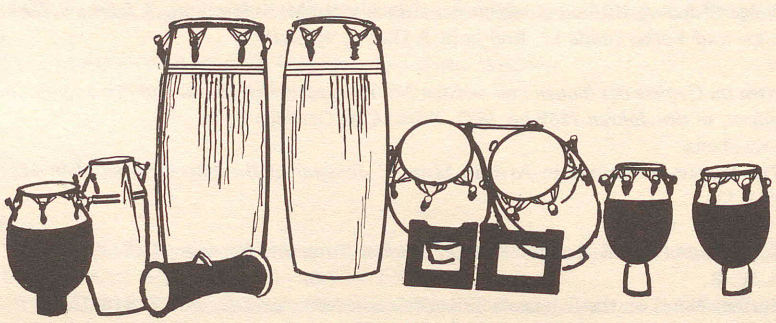
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APPENDIX

TABLE 1

no.	musical function	waza 1/2	waza 3	Salah 1984	bal naggaro	bɔlo shuru
01 02	additional, high		mušāhir/ashɔro mušāhir/ajilɔgi	mashair bala mashair	telo atani telo	
1 2 3 4 5	melody high group tone 1 2 3 4 5	(a) wazalu abunyielə aghəghə balə ashənir balə adodo	wazalu waza mushaŋ aghir balə shoru ajilɔgi	wazalo waza moshang carbali gaharo agrosh	talit telo agitarə terang aghuŋalu athathar	tetelo telelo danyi aghit nareḥ a'um balə
6 7 8 9 10	melody low group tone 1 2 3 4 5	agundu asɛzaghu shoro ashənir danyi agurush	agundú asɛzaghu diil hɔran balə dɛrə	agondo adodo shengir genoger dull	mushaŋ abuŋuŋ aghuŋalu athathar diil	atefah amadiḥ abareinso a'um
001 002 003 004 005 006	additional, low				masharkan ashənir (asɛzaghu) (ashənir) (agundú) (dɛraŋ)	abiiji (andiil) abareinso (abamataan) (azura)
(3)					(abuŋuŋ)	

( ) = not played

TABLE 2

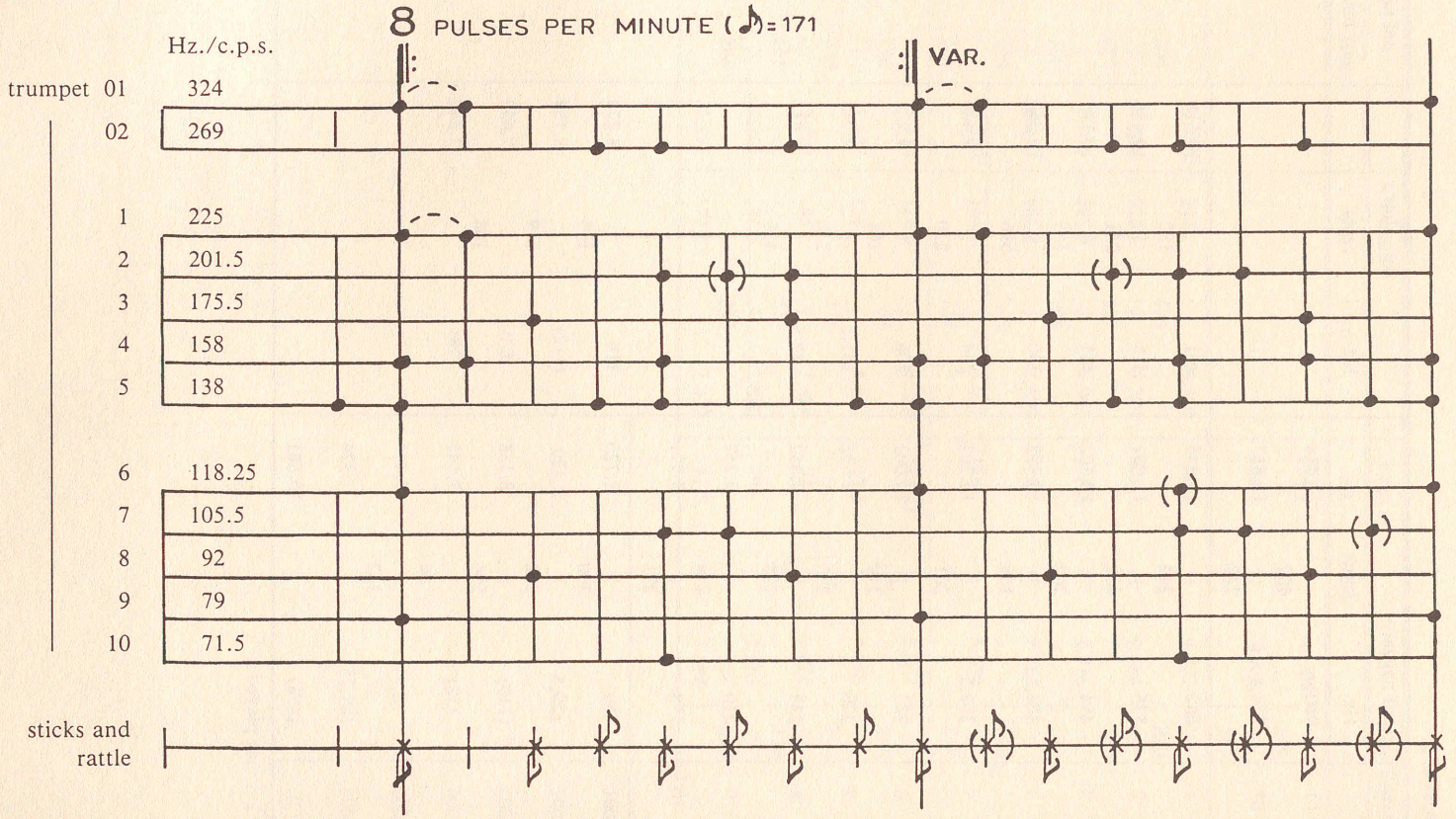
no.	waza 1			waza 2			waza 3			Gottlieb 83
	Hz.	cents		Hz.	cents		Hz.	cents		cents
01							324		10.008	
								322		329
02							269	|	9.686	|
								309		385
1	232		9.430	244		9.517	225	|	9.377	|
		206			133			191		246
2	206	|	9.224	226	|	9.384	201,5	|	9.186	|
		287			323			240		167
3	174,5	|	8.937	187,5	|	9.061	175,5	|	8.946	|
		108			206			181		271
4	164	|	8.829	166,5	|	8.855	158	|	8.765	|
		249			245			235		165
5	142	|	8.580	144,5	|	8.610	138	|	8.530	|
		256			258			267		248
6	122,5	|	8.324	124,5	|	8.352	118,25	|	8.263	|
		186			93			197		227
7	110	|	8.138	118	|	8.259	105,5	|	8.066	|
		236			375			238		210
8	96	|	7.902	95	|	7.884	92	|	7.828	|
		161			224			263		200
9	87,5	|	7.741	83,5	|	7.660	79	|	7.565	|
		266			238			173		248
10	75		7.475	72,75		7.422	71,5		7.392	

TABLE 3

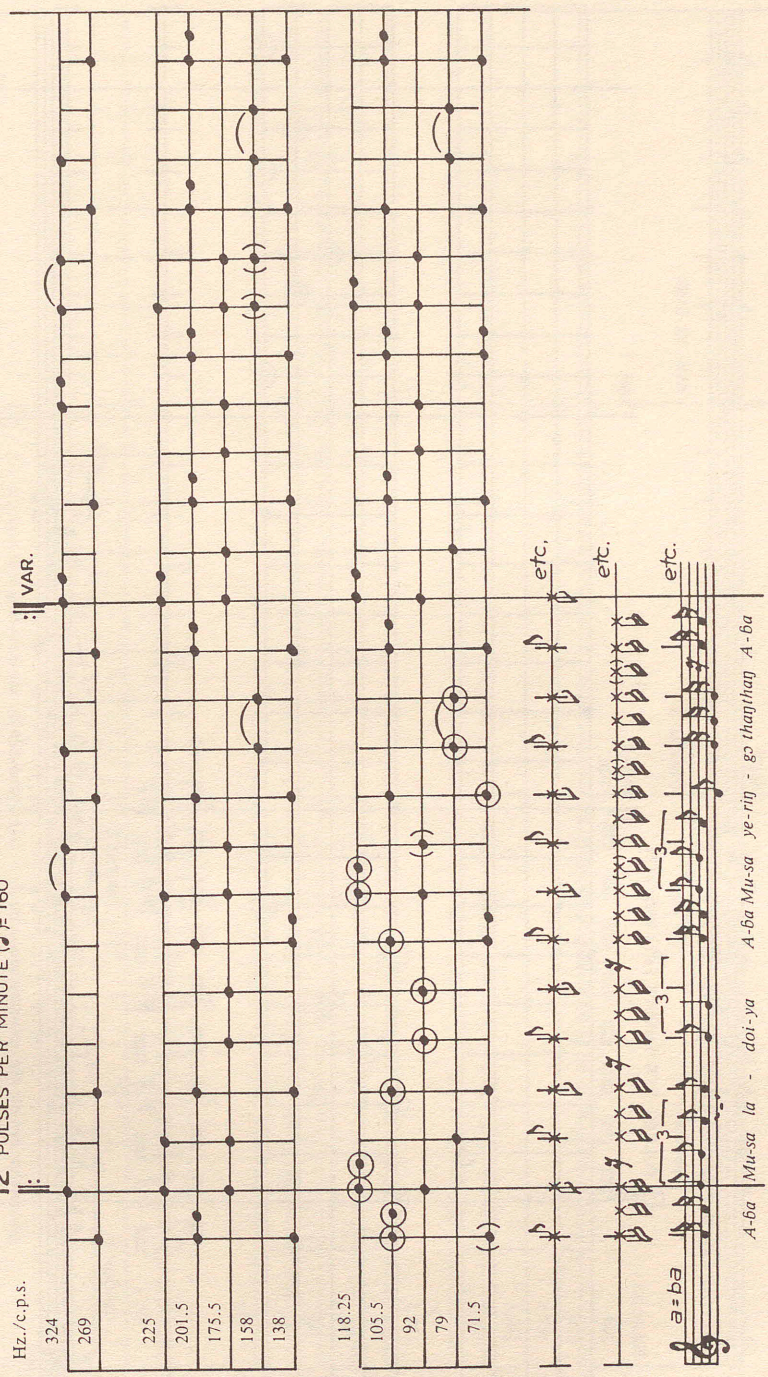
no.	bal naggaro			bɔlo shuru			bal naggaro length
	Hz.	cents		Hz.	cents		of inner tube in cm
01	980	407	11.924				8,4
02	774,5	272	11.517				11,5
1	662	244	11.245	461	182	10.618	12,0
2	575	409	11.001	415	241	10.436	14,0
3	454	200	10.592	361	155	10.195	15,0
4	404,5	189	10.392	330	596	10.040	20,0
5	362,5	201	10.203	234	220	9.444	22,2
6	323	310	10.002	206	181	9.224	26,0
7	270	240	9.692	185,5	230	9.043	30,0
8	235	195	9.452	162,5	539	8.813	35,5
9	210	286	9.257				40,5
10	178	251	8.971				46,5
001	154	300	8.720	119	105	8.274	54,5
002	129,5	282	8.420	(112)	519	8.169	62,4
003	(110)	596	8.138	(83)	108	7.650	(69,4)
004	(78)	56	7.542	(78)		7.542	(94,4)
005	75,5)	162	7.486				(99,3)
006	(68,75)		7.324				(109,5)
(3)	(478)		10.681				(18,0)

( ) = not played

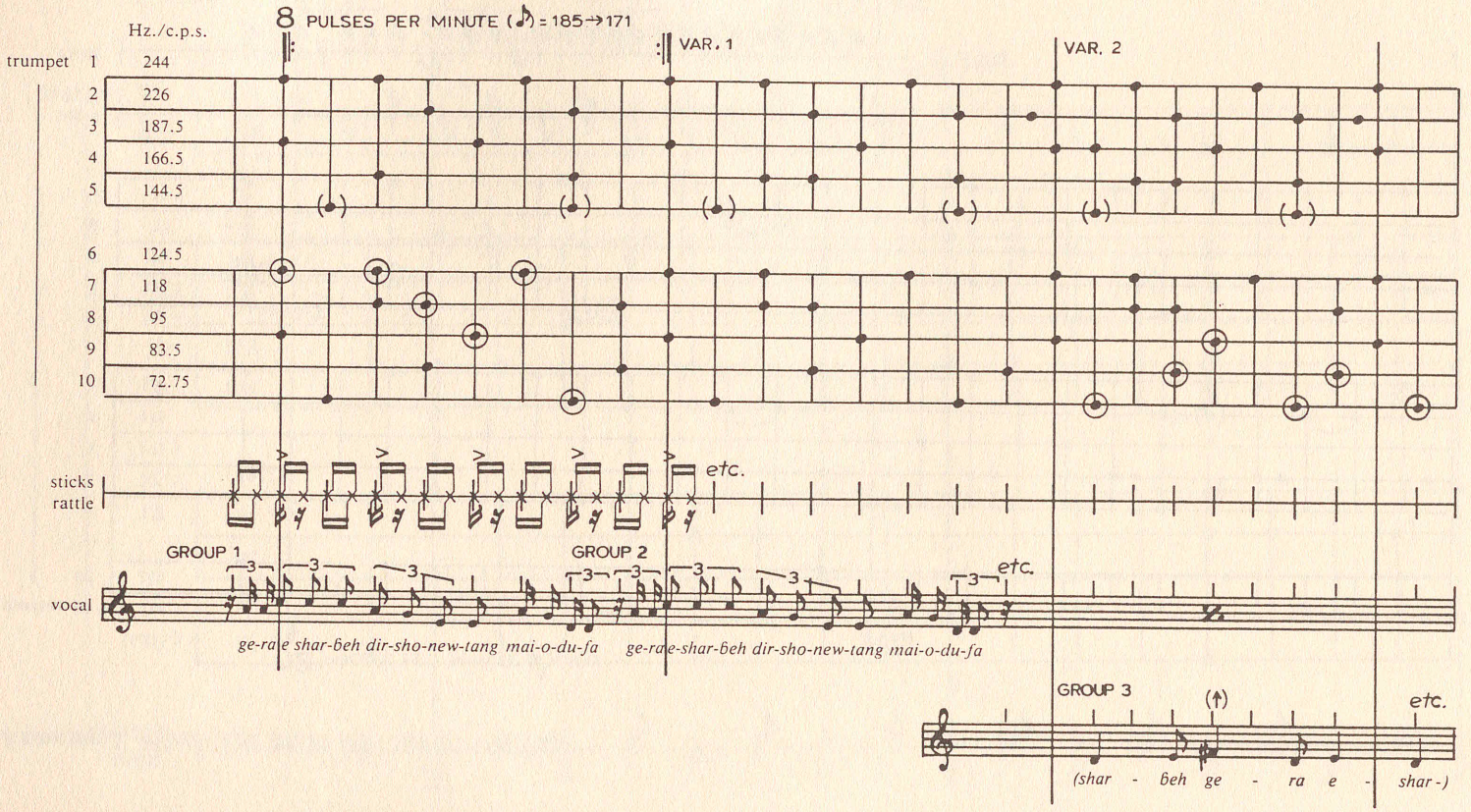
Example 1. *Waza Akharo''* (83–22b/M 19453)



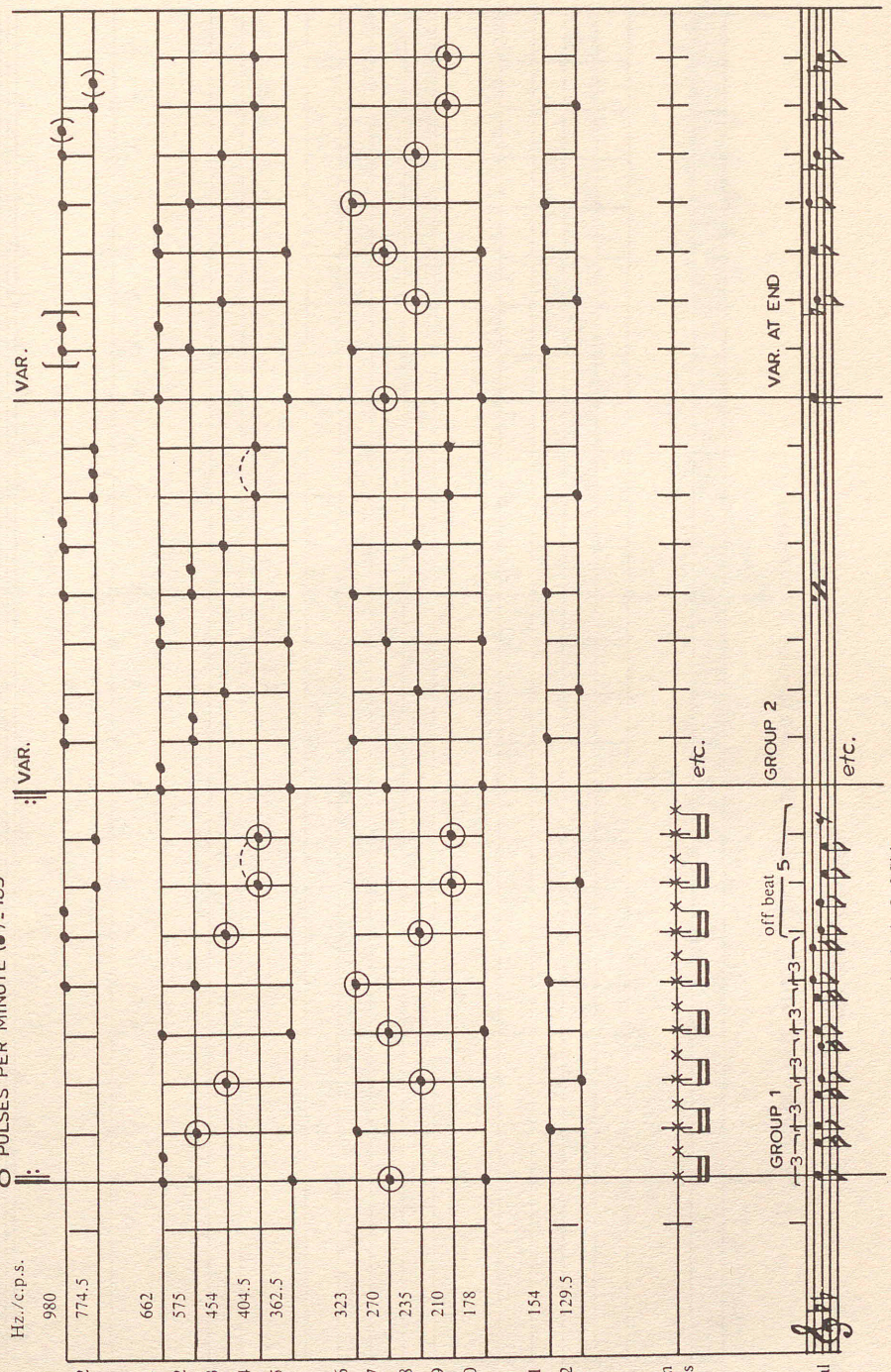
Example 2. *Waza Aba Musa* (83–22a/M 19453a)



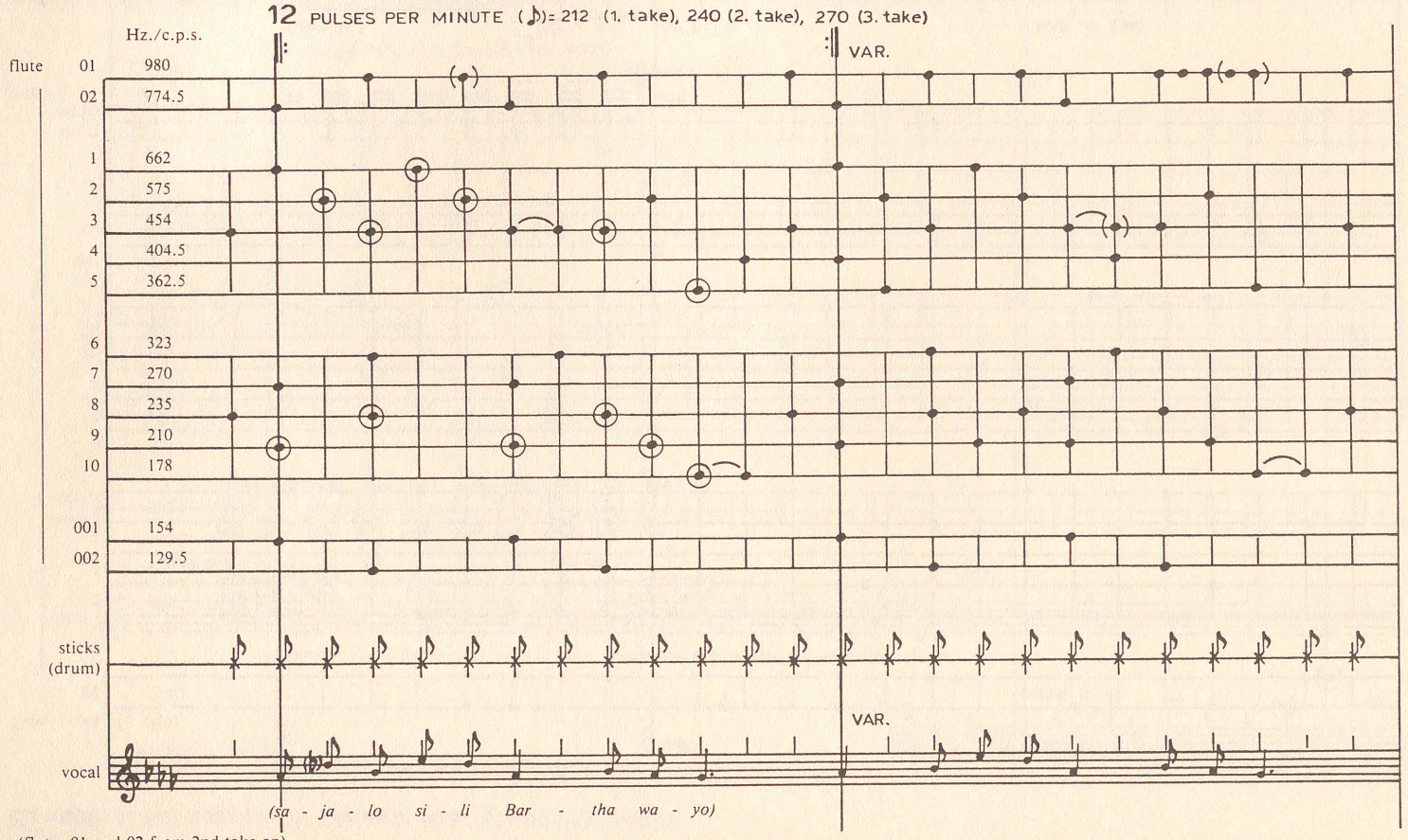
Example 3. *Waza Gera esharbeh* (82–30/M 19417)



Example 4. *Bal-naggaro Al-khawaja balə* (83–48b/M 19479)

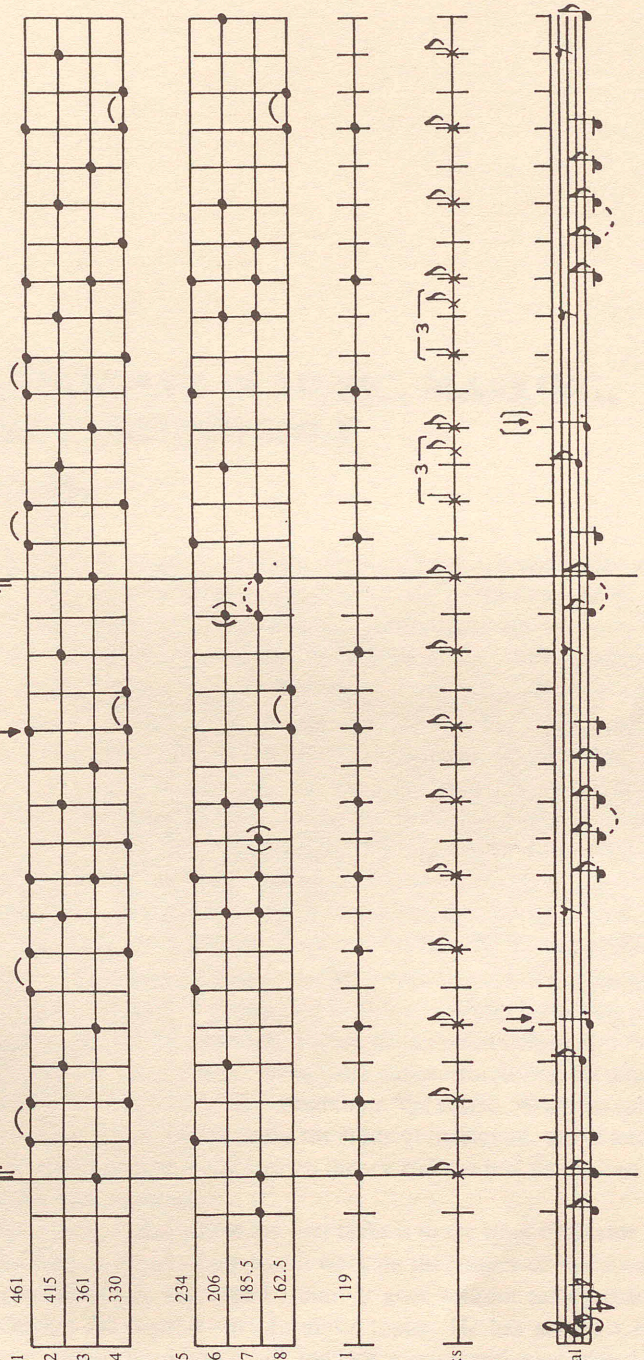


Example 5. *Bal-naggaro Bartha wayo* (83–55/M 19486)



(flutes 01 and 02 from 2nd take on)

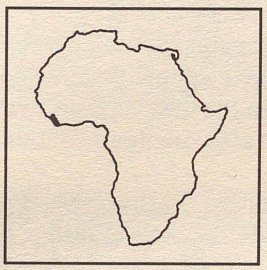
Example 6. Flute ensemble *bɔlo shuru* (82–20/M 19407)



7

VAI WOMEN'S ROLES IN MUSIC, MASKING, AND RITUAL PERFORMANCE

LESTER P. MONTS



STATEMENT: In 1974, while teaching at a small state university in western Pennsylvania, I received a notice from the W. W. Norton Company advertising new publications. At that time, I was a performer and teacher of Western music. While teaching a course called "Man and His Music," I began to develop a curious but reserved interest in ethnomusicology. The new listings from Norton included a book (by a person whose name I couldn't pronounce) called *The Music of Africa*. Thinking that this might be good recreational reading, I ordered a copy of the book along with some of Norton's more "serious" publications. What I intended to be a quick glance at *The Music of Africa* resulted in a thorough reading of the text and a burning interest to read more. As I look back on that experience, I have come to realize the great impact Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia has had on my scholarly life. After reading more of Professor Nketia's writings, I decided to return to graduate school to pursue a degree in ethnomusicology.

I have never had the opportunity to study with Professor Nketia, but during his tenure at UCLA, I met with him on several occasions to discuss African musicology and the direction of my research in Liberia and Sierra Leone. From these conversations and his scholarly writings, I gained some sense of direction for my research on Vai music. While his early writings on music in Ghana provided me with models for the study of musicians, music and language, and music and dance, his more recent writings on theory and method have given me a basis from which to form my own opinions.

Each time I begin a new project one of my first tasks is to see what Professor Nketia has said or written on the subject. Much of my recent work on the history of Vai music has been influenced by the trails blazed in this area by him. It goes without saying that Professor Nketia's influence reaches far beyond African music topics. He has gained a tremendous amount of respect from scholars in anthropology, folklore, history, and other related disciplines. Through his writing and teaching, a great oral tradition carried on by his students and colleagues has evolved. Time and time again, at professional conferences, in seminars, and in casual scholarly conversation, someone espouses a theory deeply rooted in the Nketian tradition.

We are all indebted to Nketia for his devotion to scholarship and dedication to our discipline. I shudder to think what African musicology would be without his contributions. □

Social-based studies on topics ranging from polygyny to modern feminism have been the main focus of women's studies in Africa for several decades.[1] By comparison, investigations on the roles of women as creative artists have been sparce, but a new awareness has brought this topic to the forefront in recent years.[2] The extant literature on African music contains many reports that discuss the musical contributions of women on a general basis. A good number of scholars have emphasized the exclusive role of female music-makers in rites of transition, mentioning in some detail a particular group of songs, musical instruments, or dances. While many of these studies have provided a more balanced view of music-makers in Africa, few have addressed the roles of women in light of the dramatic changes taking place in African societies. This paper will focus on how changes in the sociocultural system have affected female participation in musical events and on the continuity of traditional roles in a ritual context.

In many parts of Africa, populations are constantly shifting from rural to urban centers, leaving in their wake a drastic modification in communal life and in traditional institutions and societies. Among the Vai, these conditions have caused an imbalance in the roles of musicians once demarcated along gender lines. The mobility of Vai women is affected by certain rules of residence,[3] and the majority of towns have female weighted populations. A great number of young men move to urban areas where they seek and hold wage earning positions or attend school. With the absence and lessened participation of male musicians in various social activities, women have adopted some of the abandoned roles. By comparing the musical roles of women in the past with their roles in present-day society, a clear picture emerges on how factors affecting both continuity and change have impacted female musical participation.

In the past, music-making by both sexes was generally localized. Each town had performers who devoted their talents to a wide range of social activities. Musicianship, like other avocations,[4] was divided along gender lines. On a general level, women's musical roles were bound up inextricably with the fundamental practices of birth, initiation, marriage and other labor-related activities. They were also the main music-makers at naming celebrations and religious rituals associated with ancestor veneration.[5] Both women and men excelled as vocalists and instrumentalists. Restrictions were placed on women's participation in certain Muslim celebrations and in activities associated with the men's secret society, *ɓɛli*. As would be expected, the rituals and ceremonies of the *sande* society called for the exclusive use of women: they accompanied performances of the spirit-impersonator, *zoo-ɓa* (Photo 1), the initiate dance troupe *tɔmbɔkɛ bɔɔniɛ-nu* (Photo 2) and other *sande* ceremonies and rituals (Photo 3). According to informants, ensembles consisting of both male and female musicians were, for the most part, relegated to non-ritual occasions. We gain a sense of the division of musicians from late nineteenth and early twentieth century writers who describe musical events along gender lines (Johnston 1906: 1032–56). In addition, the photographic data from this era seldom show male and female musicians performing together (Photos 4 and 5).

Three major developments have affected the past to present roles of female musicians: (1) the advent of Islam; (2) the decline of the men's secret society, called *ɓɛli*; and (3) the mass rural to urban migration of the Vai after 1930.

Elsewhere I have discussed the transformation of the Vai secret societies due to the impact of Islam (Monts 1984b). Traditionally, through their training activities, the two societies provided a reasonably steady flow of musicians into the society at large. Due in part to the acceptance of Islam, the men's secret society, has in recent times, suffered a drastic decline, and in the coastal region chiefdoms of Tombe and Gawula men have



Photo 1. Performance of spirit impersonator



Photo 2. Initiate dance troupe



Photo 3. *Sande* ceremony



Photo 4. Musicians from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries



Photo 5. Musicians from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

neglected to hold a *ɓɛli* session in over fifty years. In contrast, the *sande* society holds sessions on a regular basis throughout Vai country.

According to the anthropologist, Svend Holsoe, perhaps the most significant development to affect traditional occupations was the 1930 presidential decree abolishing domestic servitude in Liberia.[6] Prior to this legislation, the Vai held large numbers of domestic servants who performed many of the menial tasks in the society, primarily agricultural labor. It is estimated that domestic servants at one time constituted 75% of the total population in Vai country. Holsoe asserts that even when the domestic work force was no longer available, freeborn Vai men continued to devote themselves to a variety of intellectual, artistic, and craft specializations.[7] They were unprepared and unwilling to assume the duties once performed by slaves. This resulted in a steady migration of freeborn Vai men to Monrovia, Liberia's main urban center. The traditional Vai leaning toward politics, entrepreneurship and craft oriented occupations is seen in present-day society. In recent decades, Vai people have held a disproportionately high number of positions in government and business. In a craft area Holsoe (1975:10) cites, for example, that the majority of goldsmiths in Monrovia today are Vai. As a consequence of male migration to urban areas, women have acquired a number of new roles in rural music-making activities.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN MUSIC-MAKING

Direct participation of women at ritual and non-ritual occasions far exceeds that of men. For example, one seldom observes a large number of men serving as chorus singers. Even on occasions when male participation would seem warranted, such as performances by male masqueraders, women constitute the main core of the chorus. One could reasonably consider this a case of male-female complementarity or competitive egalitarianism, since different roles are recognized and accepted, and there is no overtly negative or antagonistic behavior from either group.

SONG TYPES

The Vai maintain that songs can be divided along gender lines. Hence, there are *musu ɗɔŋ-nu* (women's songs) and *kai ɗɔŋ-nu* (men's songs). These songs are naturally acquired through the various roles and occupations both sexes serve in society. Songs, for example, which accompany *ɓɛli* rituals and ceremonies are considered "men's songs," while those performed at birthrites where only females are present are "women's songs." During my field research, I conducted only three song recording sessions which required the exclusive use of male singers. At these sessions, recordings were made of war songs, hunting songs, and drinking songs, genres that have fallen into obscurity, since they have little, if any, practical use in present-day society.

STATUS AND TRAINING

I also discovered nearly three times as many professionally active women musicians as men. Such statistics will continue to favor females, since the decline of the men's *ɓɛli* society has eliminated the most systematic means by which male musicians are trained. Moreover, the demise of *ɓɛli* has also halted a number of primary performance opportunities for men.

Expert female musicians among the Vai bear the titles *kengai* and *zoo* (Photo 6). Both are linked with woman's musical duties in *sande*, though women in other vocational areas may also bear the title *zoo*.[8] Today, the *kengai* is an itinerant professional musician who, through secret society training and a lengthy apprenticeship, is schooled in all phases of musical performance associated with the *sande* society.

As a teacher in *sande*, the *kengai* trains the initiate dancers called, *tɔmbɔke ɓɔɔniɛ-nu*. She teaches the speech surrogates transmitted by the *sasaa* and the highly stylized dance movements. A *kengai* may also assist in costume design, and advise the overall membership on matters of repertoire, since songs used in the Vai *sande* society are also in the languages of neighboring peoples: namely, the Mende, Gola and Dei. Moreover, Arabic songs are used in the Muslim version of the society, called *mɔli sande*, requiring a *kengai* to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the language. As the quality control expert, the *kengai* is an advisor on musical matters relative to the masked dancer/spirit impersonator, *zoo-ɓa*. Along with a dance instructor, she teaches the characteristic movements, the accompanying rhythms and songs appropriate to the mask.

A *kengai* may be contracted by a town to serve as the head musician during the three-year *sande* cycle. During this time she must oversee the musical portions of some ten major, exoteric, public rituals and an unknown number of esoteric rituals and

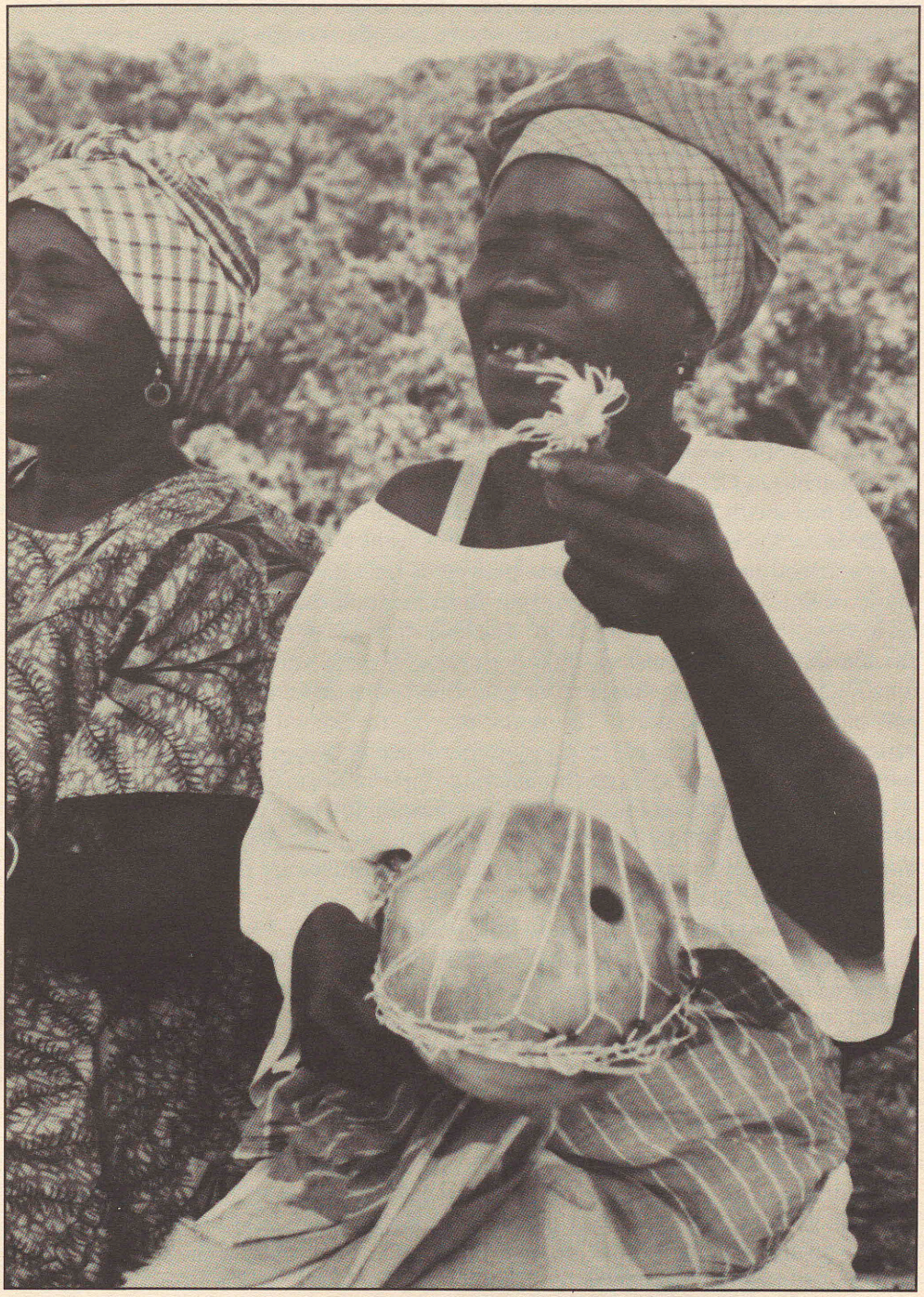


Photo 6. Expert female musician

ceremonies occurring in the secluded areas where *sande* is held. Because the neighboring Gola, Mende, and Dei people subscribe to a similar version of *sande*, a Vai *kengai* may be hired to perform in these areas. In addition to *sande*-related duties, a *kengai* may be the leader of an itinerant song and dance troupe that travels throughout the region performing for ritual and festive occasions. She may develop a reputation based upon her unique performance of topical songs and/or as a highly skilled rattle beater. At death feasts, a professional female musician is the preferred specialist to sing praises of the deceased. During her latter years or upon retirement, the emeritus title, *zoo*, is bestowed on a *kengai* who has faithfully served the *sande* society. As a *zoo*, she may continue to serve *sande* in an advisory capacity.

PERFORMANCE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Women's roles in the performance of instrumental music revolve around the gourd rattle called *sasaa* (see Photo 6). This instrument serves as a symbol of female musical activity. It symbolizes the *sande* society, the spirit impersonator, *zoo-ɓa*, and the musical roles of women in general, since when a *sasaa* is heard, one expects to see a woman playing it.

An examination of the function of instruments in ensembles reveals the specific uses of the *sasaa*. Vai instrumental music characteristically adheres to a basic two part structure: one instrument supplies a pulse pattern or time line and another provides a rich rhythmic line. Since the *sasaa* is the only instrument played by women, it is capable of performing these two basic functions. The lead rhythmic and pulse parts may be subordinated with additional instruments. For example, three women playing *sasaa-nu* may function in the following manner: one player performs the lead rhythmic line (this is the only part requiring the skill of the master player), the second player provides the pulse pattern, and the third player performs a subordinate-pulse-ostinato pattern to enrich the texture. At certain points in a performance, the three rattles may play in rhythmic unison.

In the past, ensembles with such an instrumentation played primarily for *sande* activities or activities calling for female participation. Now because women have acquired some of the duties formerly held by men, *sasaa* ensembles are called to perform for a wider variety of local social occasions.

Women also interact with men in instrumental ensembles but in these contexts the *sasaa* seldom performs the lead rhythmic role. Even in situations considered women's province, such as dancing by the spirit impersonator *zoo-ɓa* when male drummers are present, women are relegated to the subordinate-pulse ostinato and pulse lines, while the lead rhythmic part is performed by a male musician.

PERFORMANCE IN VOCAL ENSEMBLES

The roles of women in vocal ensembles vary, depending largely on the song type and the nature of the event. Songs cast in the two part, call-response format will not be discussed in detail, since women commonly perform both of the parts associated with that style. A more precise view of female roles may be obtained by examining the style performed by professionally-led ensembles.

For the performance of a variety of topical songs, the following parts are prescribed: a lead solo (*ɗɔŋ-ɓa*), a solo ostinato (*tɛmu*), and a chorus ostinato (*ɗɔŋ ɓila mɔənu*). Direct observation and analysis of these ensembles have led to the conclusion that

women's roles differ depending on the sex of the lead singer. It is common for women to sing each part when the ensemble is comprised solely of female singers.[9] But when a male sings the *ɗɔŋ-ɓa* or solo part, women are relegated to the ostinato lines.[10]

I have not observed or been informed of an ensemble in which a female soloist was accompanied by male ostinati singers. This would indicate that the parts are consciously divided along gender lines. The separation of musical roles is symbolized, as well as reinforced, by the sexual division of labor, which is, in a way, a form of cooperation. Again, it is fairly accurate to describe women's roles in both vocal and instrumental ensembles as complementary rather than subordinate to that of men, even though female musicians are, as a rule, under the control of the lead male musician.

Women also play an important role in the preservation and continuity of old, traditional song styles. As far as can be determined, a genre of songs referred to as *kɔ kɔlɔ ɗɔŋ*, or "old songs," are today sung almost exclusively by older women. Younger women showed little interest in singing what they considered archaic songs. This style of singing differs dramatically from other songs in the repertoire. The four part structure consists of three soloists, each with its own distinct timbrel and dynamic quality—they are: *kulɛ-ɓa* or big, loud voice, *kulɛ kele-ma* "middle voice" and *kulɛ ɗɔɔ-ma* "small, high voice," and a chorus *ɗɔŋ ɓila mɔɛ-nu*. The most prominent line among the soloists is sung by the *kulɛ-ɓa*. A counter melody is sung by the *kulɛ kele-ma*, and the *kulɛ ɗɔɔma* often uses a technique called *ɗɔŋ ɓila kaŋgɔlɔ* "singing in the throat" or humming. The chorus sings a repetitive melodic line as in songs cast in call-response structure (see Example 1). Based on what the Vai say about the songs, we can only speculate that they are remnants of an older song strata on the verge of dying out, and it is through the conscious efforts of women that they have survived thus far.

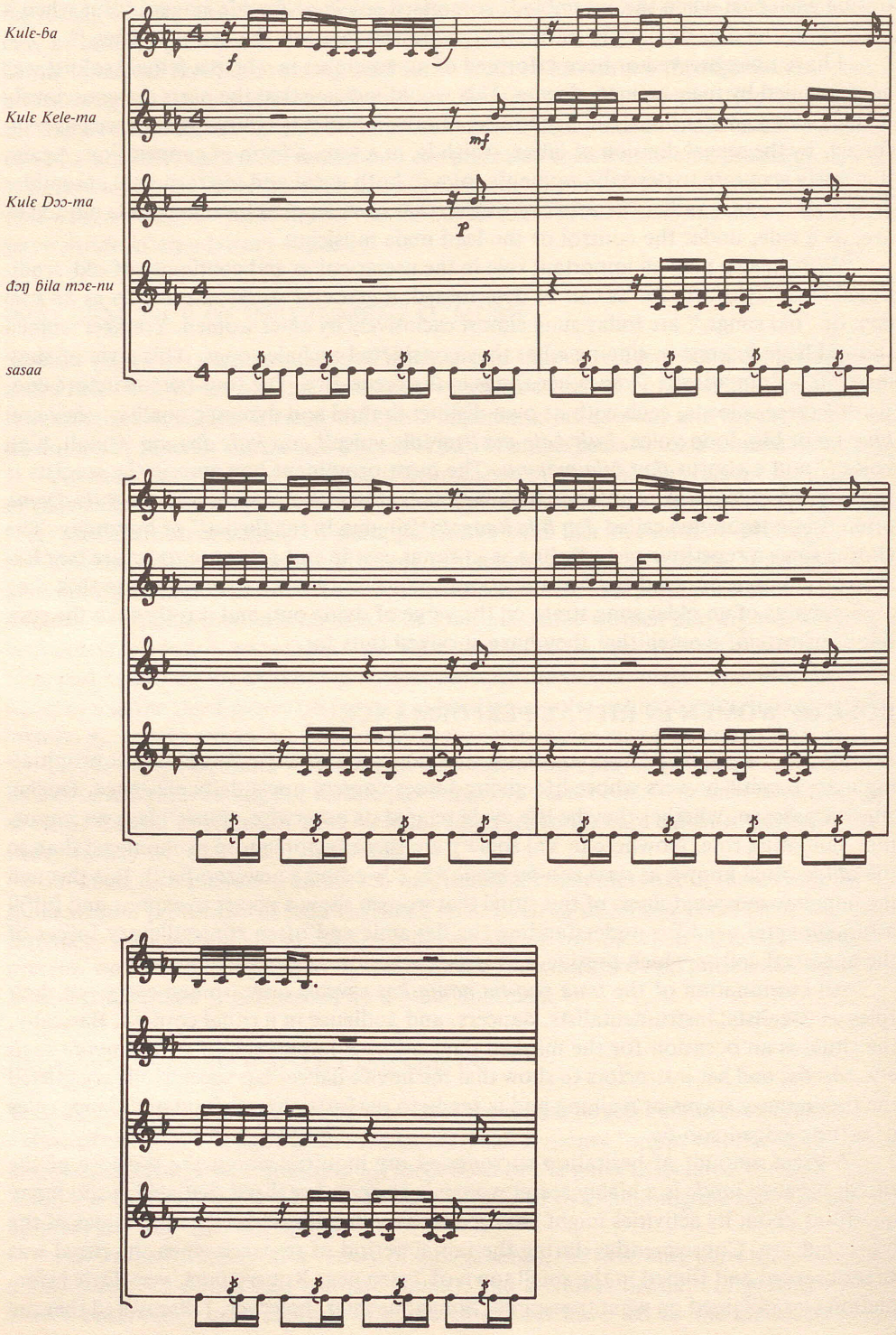
ROLE OF WOMEN IN RITUAL PERFORMANCE

Among the Vai, ritual performances are common and collective acts aimed at propitiating unseen spirit powers whose life-giving forces control one's daily existence. During rites of passage, whether they be life cycle related or otherwise, music plays an important validating role. Nowhere in Vai society are these factors more pronounced than in the *sande* ritual known as *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* ("we find a new *zoo-ɓa*"). It is through the immense meaningfulness of this ritual that women show a power to express and fulfill a fundamental need for understanding the dynamic and often contradictory forces of the ancestral spirits which preside over *sande*.

An examination of the *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* reveals how women carry out their roles as vocalists, instrumentalists, dancers, and audience in a ritual context. Basically, the ritual is an occasion for the masked dancer/spirit impersonator of the *sande* society, *zoo-ɓa*, and her instructors to show that the novice dancer has successfully completed the preliminary stages of training and is ready to perform the spiritual and dance roles of a full-fledged *zoo-ɓa*.

A great amount of hesitation surrounded my inquiries about the purpose of the ritual, because *sande* is a highly secret women's society. I realized that asking too many questions about its activities might have jeopardized my research into other areas of the music culture. Consequently, during the initial period of research when the ritual was first observed and filmed in the small town of Tɔsɔɔ near Robertsport, very little information was obtained on what transpired. Sometime later, however, I discovered that the

Example 1.



"public face" of the ritual was not a highly secret activity, and, through a feedback analysis session using a videotape of the occasion, a group of *sande* women provided a fairly detailed account of the ritual and its purpose.

A large body of literature exists on the spirit impersonator of the *sande* or *bundu* secret societies of southern Sierra Leone and northern Liberia. Scholars from various disciplines have dealt with the myth and legend surrounding the origin of the masker; her role in *sande* ceremony and ritual; the myths associated with mask carvers; and the iconographic and aesthetic qualities of the mask itself.[11] The main focus here is on the music connected with the mask and the initiatory ritual, an aspect of *sande* activity which has been seldom mentioned in past studies.

Mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ is a ritual of status elevation, which takes the form of ritual drama, portraying the roles the *zoo-ɓa* must perform if granted full status. All aspects of Vai aesthetic perfection are seen in this ritual: the costume, the mask, the singing, the dance. It is also what Van Gennep (1960) would call a "rite of incorporation," intended to include and elevate the novice dancer to a new position in the *sande* hierarchy.

The occasion must take place when the *sande* society is in session and in the town where the dancer is trained; it is not allowed at other times, especially when the men's secret society, *ɓɛli*, is in session. Prior to the public performance, women enact a number of esoteric rituals in seclusion, involving the use of talent enhancing aids such as amulets and special medicines. These aids are ordinarily used by masked dancers, but they are of special importance to the novice dancer, who must display extraordinary talent on this occasion. The instrumentalists, along with more experienced[12] *zoo-ɓa* dancers and attendants, prepare for the ritual in the secluded area called *sande fila* ("women's society bush"). Because the novice dancer has not been elevated to full-fledged status, she is not allowed to enter the sacred grove. Therefore, she and her attendants must make preparations in an area outside the "bush."

To start the exoteric portion of the ritual, a group of female instrumentalists and singers lead a procession through the town to announce the start of the ritual. The full-fledged *zoo-ɓa* dancers and their attendants soon follow. One by one these dancers display their skills, accompanied by the beating of the *sasaa* and singing. This micro-level event alerts the town that the ritual has commenced. The entourage, now consisting of musicians, dancers, and *sande* members, moves to the first of three, predesignated points along the outer boundary of the town. There they are met by the novice dancer and her attendant. Here, in a wholly dramatic setting, the experienced dancers perform the characteristic *zoo-ɓa* movements, as if challenging the novice to match their skills. The experienced dancers compete among themselves, and use this occasion to introduce new dances. Meanwhile, the novice dancer moves about impatiently observing the activities. When her turn to perform comes, she timidly accepts the challenge. As expected, the novice performs as a master, and the physical and verbal behavior of the audience acknowledges her skills. *Sande* women shout words of praise such as:

1) *a keŋkɔlɔ nyi*—"Under her feet is fine."
2) *i i ma wɛɛ*—"Give it all you've got!"
3) *zoo-ɓa kosa tɔmbɔ kɛa*—"That *zoo-ɓa* is an excellent dancer."

On occasion, the experienced dancers may become ambivalent toward the novice, and, through various mimetic gestures, force her from the dance arena. All this adds to the overall effect of the ritual as drama. As the experienced dancer moves toward the novice,

both use what appear to be prescribed advance/retreat movements. Moreover, each experienced dancer acknowledges the skill of the novice with a similar bowing and turning movement. Throughout the event, the lead instrumentalist (*kengai*), using the *sasaa*, transmits various messages to the novice dancer, thereby testing her knowledge of the speech surrogate. The entire series of events is repeated with greater intensity at the two remaining locations. For reasons not completely made clear, when moving to the next predesignated point, the novice dancer and her attendant are not allowed to traverse the town with the other participants; they are compelled to proceed along the outer boundary. If the novice dancer does not fall while performing or otherwise violate the rules of behavior associated with the mask, she gives her final performance with the experienced dancers in the center of town. The hour-long ritual culminates when all the participants move from the town and gather before the entrance to the *sande fila*. Surrounded by the entire membership, the experienced dancers again take turns performing the characteristic movements, then enter the "bush." The final dancer is the novice, who has now earned the privilege of entering the sacred grove. Jubilant singing, celebrating the initiation of the novice dancer, is heard from the "bush" for several hours.

Herndon and McLeod (1981:119) argue that "music is regarded as a form of ritual procedure which must be performed correctly." Their view of music in ritual coincides with the Vai concept that *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* is a *tɔmbɔ nii* or "dance test." This occasion, as an expression of "correctness," therefore indicates the way in which the Vai perceive the function of song, dance and instrumental performance in ritual. Two questions most fundamental to this discussion are: What is the role of music in this context? and What are the specific roles of women? Both questions can be answered from several perspectives.

For the dancers, songs are used to promote or create a state of "other-awareness," or "other-self"; they evoke change in the dancer's state of being, not inducing trance, but in some way altering the state of consciousness or personality from human to spiritual. Music is used to instill a sense of pride and accomplishment in the dancer. As a mode of communication, music is often directed to the ancestral spirits impersonated by *zoo-ɓa*, a plea on the parts of the *sande* membership for the spirits to cast their benevolence upon the *sande* society.

Encapsulating these roles, we see that one of the most important aspects of *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* (and most other *sande* rituals) is the way in which women involve themselves in the performance of music at every level. Hence, performance of the ritual calls for the participation of all the initiated members of the *sande* society in the town where it is held. A core group of three instrumentalists is responsible for the accompaniment.

The *kengai* performs the intricate rhythmic patterns and speech surrogates that accompany and communicate with the *zoo-ɓa*, while the two remaining instrumentalists, *sasaa kɔlɔ bɔ-mɔɛ-nu*, literally, ("people behind the *sasaa*") perform basic pulse patterns. As indicated above, the *sasaa* has important symbolic meaning for the *zoo-ɓa*, for the *sande* society, and for women in general. It is the only musical instrument used by women; it is an indexical sign, symbolizing their roles in the overall production of music. Traditionally, all phases of musical activity associated with the *sande* society required exclusive use of female musicians playing *sasaa-nu*.

The *kengai* is closely involved with the training of *zoo-ɓa* prior to this public performance. Her role is to acquaint the wearer of the mask with the rhythmic patterns that accompany the stylized movements that characterize *zoo-ɓa* dance performance, and with

the various rhythmic patterns which transmit commands as "rattle language." Of equal importance is the *kengai*'s role as lead singer. All the songs performed during the ritual are in leader-chorus format. Hence, the *kengai* must be acquainted with those appropriate to the occasion and must possess the strength-of-voice necessary to be heard over the chorus. Due to their great number, the *sande* women singing the response parts often overwhelm the most experienced lead singer. In such instances, an additional number of singers join the lead line. This often relieves the *kengai* from the repetitive part, allowing her to freely sing praise words to the dancer. Two additional sound sources used in the ritual include small Western-manufactured sleigh bells attached to the costume of the *zoo-ɓa* and occasional handclapping.

The dance portions of the ritual are performed entirely by the *zoo-ɓa* spirit impersonators. In addition to the novice dancer, other experienced *zoo-ɓa-nu* must participate in the ritual, for it is partly their decision whether the novice dancer will become a full-fledged *zoo-ɓa*. If these dancers are not available in the town where the ritual is enacted, they are invited from *sande* lodges nearby. All the spirit impersonators, regardless of status, have a follower known as *zoo-ɓa ɓali-mɔɔ* (literally "praiser of *zoo-ɓa*"). Her role is that of an acclamator, intoning praise words about the dancer she accompanies. She also carries a rolled mat, to shield the dancer in the event a portion of the costume becomes detached. The *kengai* may take on one of these roles by singing praises.

The characteristic dance style of *zoo-ɓa* may be described as a series of quick, short movements on the balls of the feet, with hopping and leaping in a small spatial area. The torso is generally held erect, and rapid arm movements counter those of the feet. The Vai characterize her dance as *tɔmbɔ kpandi* ("hot dance style"), because of the high bursts of energy common to the performance, and *tɔmbɔ đɔ kpati đe mu* ("tight dance style"), due to the short, rapid movements.

Mime and other forms of dramatic movement are common traits of *zoo-ɓa* dance. These movements add a degree of novelty to the performance of ritual. Prancing about with short, child like steps, quick back and forth movements of the head, peering around the corners of buildings, acting in a subservient manner, and frantic behavior are typical antics of the novice dancer. Appearing totally disgusted, the experienced dancers, through mimetic portrayal of the dominant role, often rest one hand on their canes and the other on the hip to observe the atypical behavior of the novice dancer.

During the course of this event, or during any competitive performance, the experienced *zoo-ɓa-nu* will present new dances or memetic skits which, if adopted by other dancers and popularized, can become a standard in the repertoire. Along these lines, it is an expectation of the *sande* membership for a *zoo-ɓa* to be creative and constantly searching for new styles of performance.

Many of the "new" *zoo-ɓa* dances are products of diffusion and transformation. Due to the high level of interaction among regional *sande* societies, songs and dance styles are shared (Monts 1982:108–113). Dance styles common to a Mende or Gola area are often brought back by itinerant Vai performers and transformed to meet Vai needs. Other styles are brought by dancers from neighboring ethnic groups whose itinerancy takes them to various parts of Vai country.

Three rhythmic patterns can be isolated and related to particular portions of the performance. The rhythm pattern in Example 2 accompanies the highly stylized, characteristic movement associated with the dancer; it seems basic to the *zoo-ɓa*'s repertoire and is continually played as a measure for testing a novice dancer's conformity to style.

Example 2.



The pattern in Example 3 may be termed a "filler" or "segue" rhythm. It is used during periods when dancing does not occur, when the dancer is engaged in mimetic and other dramatic movements. This rhythm is not bound to *sande* activities, but is also used in other musical contexts.

Example 3.



The final rhythmic pattern (Example 4) concludes a dance sequence. When this pattern is played, the dancer moves toward the *kengai*, in a bowing and retreat type of movement. She compliments the instrumentalists, who respond with their own set of energetic movements, which are characterized by a quick, up and down bending at the waist, while playing the *sasaa*.

Example 4.



Example 2 is performed at "high" points of the occasion, when dancing occurs. The *sande* women observing the event are not passive spectators. During and after an exceptional performance, handkerchiefs are waved overhead and joyous exclamations such as *ooo* and *holyoo* are heard along with other outbursts of adulation. These sounds play an important ritual role; they encourage frenzied ecstacy by the members of *sande*. The audience is conceptually prepared for what is to transpire, and through their collective consciousness of proper behavior, the dancer is stimulated. At this stage, the dancer is in what Turner (1974:253) calls a liminal phase, "a temporary dissolution of the usual structural statuses and customs and an . . . introduction of egalitarianism." In other words, the person wearing the mask has moved into a different presence of mind, a state of depersonalization, adopting the personality of ancestral spirits, and therefore displays the movements (dance) and other behaviors which characterize them. The compound effect of rattle beating, song, crowd noise, and the like help to achieve what Turner (1967) refers to as a state of "communitas," which in this case is a state of unity with the experienced dancers. Now the radically changed mode of being—that is, the ritual donning of the costume and successful completion of the dance test—constitute the essential moment of initiation into a full-fledged *zoo-ba*. By putting on the costume the novice assimilated the behavior of the ancestral spirit; in other words, she becomes a revered being of the spirit world.

On the other hand, Example 3 is performed during a relative lull in crowd noise and casual activity. The relationship of these two rhythmic patterns within the context of the ritual may have some far-reaching implications for a theory proposed by Herndon and McLeod (1981:124–25), who state that "there is an intimate relationship of some kind between the production of overwhelming sounds [be they musical or otherwise] and the liminal state of mind."

The songs performed by *sande* women during *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* are not prescribed or restricted. An examination of those recorded during the ritual, along with others that Vai women say are appropriate to the occasion, indicates that the texts address a wide variety of topics. The majority of songs have exoteric meaning, referring to the beauty of the dancer's costume, praising or ridiculing her performance skill, and encouraging her to dance. Other songs have esoteric meanings, and Vai women respond to questions about them with subtle laughter or silence.

There is a hierarchy among all Vai masked dancers in terms of dancing skills. Some young, novice dancers are often reluctant to compete with their highly skilled, well-known counterparts. This is reflected in the following *sande* song in the Mende language.

wao, wao, wao, wao, wao, noojo
wao, noojo mu ɓanga ndoli mao
hoo, noojo mu ɓanga ndoli mao

Translation:
Come, come, come, come, come,
great dancer our friends are dancing.
Oh, great dancer, our friends are dancing.

This is a song of encouragement, which can be performed in any context where two or more *zoo-ɓa* dancers are present. Intended to encourage a dancer of lesser skills to participate in a competitive dance performance, it is used in *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* to summon the novice into the dance arena.

Songs for *zoo-ɓa* are learned as a woman participates in *sande* activities. It is the role of each member to learn the basic repertoire, which is an expression of the homogeneous mass consciousness that surrounds *sande*.

CONCLUSION

This examination of women's musical roles among the Vai should suggest that students of African musicology must take a closer look at the roles of female performers. It is through various adaptive strategies that Vai women today have a more profound role in the production of music than in the past. Women have out of necessity taken over musical roles in activities from which they were once excluded. In light of the changing patterns affecting music cultures, the adjustment of women to these changing patterns may be one of the best indices for judging sociocultural change in general. For, as many ethnomusicologists have suggested, processes of musical adaptation reflect other adaptive strategies in the wider realm of society.

The ritual *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* is a cultural performance involving the integration of song, dance, and performance on musical instruments. The ritual revolves around a sacred mask, "an iconic sign and symbol, revered and experienced by the [women of *sande*] as a veritable apparition of the [ancestral spirit] it represents, even when they know that a man make the mask and a [woman] is wearing it" (Hanna 1979:125). Though the music of *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* is neither prescribed nor context-specific, the manner in which musical concepts are manipulated solicits specific behaviors from participants when performed in female performance contexts. The occasion calls for direct participation of all able-bodied *sande* women. Thus, musical performance in *mua zoo-ɓa nama kɔɔ* has an important function not only in the validation of ritual but also in the integration and social cohesion of Vai women.

NOTES

1. See Denise Paulme (1963), Kenneth Little (1973), S. Leith-Ross (1939), Margret Jean Hay and Sharon Stichter (1984).
2. See Jacqueline DjeDje (1985), Roxane Carlise (1975), Lester P. Monts (1984a), Elizabeth Gunner (1979).
3. The Vai are virilocal in residence and patrilineal in descent. Marriage involves a complex system of bride payment, dowries, and kinship. Married women are, to a great extent, restricted to the towns of their husband's and family's residence. This traditional practice still exists today. For a more detailed description of Vai marriage and the mobility of women in rural areas, see Svend Holsoe (1967:10–13), F. Ronnefeldt (1935:67), and Jangaba Johnson (1954:77–87).
4. For the most part, musicians are part-time performers. For a fuller description of musicians in Vai society, see Lester P. Monts (1983:831–53).
5. For descriptive accounts of Vai rituals and ceremonies in the past, see G. W. Ellis (1914), Johann Buttikofer (1890), and O. Dapper (1668).
6. For further discussion of slavery among the Vai, see Svend E. Holsoe (1977:287–303).
7. For a summary of Vai occupations, see Svend E. Holsoe (1975).
8. See Lester P. Monts (1983:836–39) for a discussion of musicians' titles and specialist roles.
9. See Lester P. Monts and Jeanne T. Monts, *Music of the Vai of Liberia* (Phonograph recording). Side 1, Band 9.
10. Ibid., Side 2, Band 7.
11. For a variety of discussions on the spirit impersonators in the *sande* and *bundu* societies, see Warren d'Azevedo (1973), Svend E. Holsoe (1980), and Ruth B. Phillips (1978).
12. I use the phrases "experienced" dancer to denote a full-fledged *zoo-ba*, and "novice" for the dancer being initiated.

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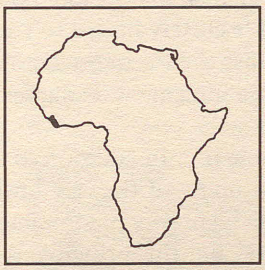
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8

WOMANHOOD, WORK AND SONG AMONG THE KPELLE OF LIBERIA

CYNTHIA E. SCHMIDT



STATEMENT: As a mentor, and now a colleague and friend, for the past seventeen years J. H. Kwabena Nketia has enriched my professional life and thinking with his deep insights and all-embracing approach. On a personal level, it is his warm, jovial manner that first comes to mind. On a professional level, I have the highest esteem for his work, with its integrity and intellectual depth. Quietly productive (and known to write a cogent article during an airline flight), Nketia is generous with his time, responding to every question with careful thought. His profound thinking has challenged and inspired me to develop my ideas to the fullest, which I now realize is part of a lifelong process.

"Prof" brings African music to life in the classroom, breaking into an Akan melody or tapping out a polyrhythm, encouraging closer attention to the subtleties and dynamics of music-making, and how it relates to artistic, philosophical and local values. He has signalled the direction of more recent studies of interaction and meaning in music performance. In promoting a cultural awareness, he is recognized by colleagues and governments in an impressive international "network."

J. H. K. Nketia is the foremost living scholar of African musicology. Erudite in diverse musics and interested in broadly theoretical concepts, he has written on topics ranging from the historical to the more contemporary.

His enthusiasm for the strides of the pioneers of ethnomusicology provides a spark of excitement for appreciating the intellectual history and especially the oral history of the field. I consider myself fortunate to have known J. H. K. Nketia, one who has shaken the hands of many of the early scholars, and who has himself made a significant mark. □

Women's and men's social patterns and musical spheres vary considerably throughout the world, contingent upon cultural ideologies. Regardless of these gender disparities, the significance of women's music in West Africa has been neglected in the literature, except for a few recent studies.[1] Yet its investigation can yield rich insights into the institutional dynamics of these cultures.

Among the Kpelle of Liberia, the lines drawn between gender roles are as deeply incised on music as they are on labor, marriage patterns and social institutions. In the region of Upper Bong County, women's group music-making dominates Kpelle musical culture with female solidarity emerging as an ostensible message. The cooper-

ative spirit is further revealed in women's associations such as work groups where women are devoted to common social and economic interests. But notions of Kpelle female solidarity in secret societies are challenged in writings by scholars such as Bledsoe (1980a) and MacCormack (1979) who assert that within these societies, women manipulate power to achieve their own goals and maintain stratification.

Despite the complex reality, enduring ritual, political and economic institutions provide a base for the continuity of musical traditions which, in turn, help to maintain and preserve the social order. As Nketia (1982:640) states, "the need for strengthening the bonds that bind units of social organization is met, among other things, through music and dance." By focusing on how women have elaborated their socioeconomic and musical roles with changing demands of society, we can appreciate them as actors in their social system.

The Kpelle, the largest ethnic group in Liberia, are a Mande speaking group of slash-and-burn rice agriculturalists. In the relationship between Kpelle men and women, polygyny remains an important factor influencing family life and is closely linked to traditional agriculture. Peaceful cooperation of co-wives can increase their economic power and personal independence. On the other hand, women with supplemental sources of wealth beyond farming generally prefer a single life.[2]

Women play strong roles in virtually all aspects of economic life. In addition to doing the bulk of the work in upland rice cultivation, they own many of the rice farms, hold the key to the granary and allocate rice. In the past, complementarity predominated in the work cycle with men doing the heavier agricultural work, but this principle is no longer maintained in many areas. Women's roles are changing as men move into wage labor jobs. Aside from their active participation in traditional economy, women sell produce at the market and use the profits. In many areas, this income is the only source of currency.

Kpelle women are not limited to the domestic sphere. While men have generally retained most of the political controls in this patrilineal society, public status of women is increasing. In Bong County, both oral and written history suggest that women have held positions of authority as town chiefs, paramount chiefs and ritual leaders, as well as entrepreneurs. As individuals and as organized groups, women have had substantial influence and even institutionally sanctioned power over men.

Women and men are equally involved in complex performance activities. In the rural setting, most singers and dancers are women, while instrumentalists are men. Women produce music within the work context, in the domestic context while carrying on other activities, for religious rituals and for recreation. Other than the more collaborative performance the individual female vocalist plays an influential role in the public domain singing for ceremonies and political events. Such a performer has impact by virtue of visibility.

This study begins with a discussion of women's roles in the two most vital social institutions in which gender differentiation between Kpelle men and women is rooted: (1) the work cooperative or *kuu*,[3] and (2) the women's secret society called *sande* or *saneŋ* (the male counterpart being called *poro*, or *poloŋ*) where initiates receive formal music and dance training. Both institutions share the belief that women are the symbol of fertility and therefore make women's roles explicit. Music supports these major institutions; thus, sex role distincitions are followed in the music and performance ensembles, influencing other performance contexts as well.[4]

Song texts provide a locus of expression for women as social actors to express their views on a broad range of topics. They illuminate their beliefs, ritual practices and cultural values which intersect with music performance. These will be examined along with women's musical roles within an ensemble. To conclude, this discussion looks at how women articulate their performance roles differently with changing demands of society, thereby adapting to and affecting the society.[5]

ROLES IN LABOR

One of the most important socioeconomic institutions of the Kpelle of Upper Bong County is the cooperative work assistance group called a *kuu*.[6] These voluntary associations of agricultural workers are based on mutual aid in labor, *kuu* meaning "to put something in the next person's hand." If work is organized properly, each member benefits securing for themselves certain economic interests through communal self-help, pooling their efforts in work and in music-making to facilitate increased production.

The texts of the work song below express how their lives are oriented to rice farming, the *kuu* being personified to denote its economic and social value.

Kpelle Text
Kúu wee máa-mɛni ké-nuu wee.
Kúu wee máa-mɛni ké-nuu wee.
Tîi wee, nɔ̀ mɛni ké-nuu.

Translation
Kuu is the person who can do things for me.
Kuu is the person who can do things for me.
Work is the only thing that can do things for me.

Women and men alike belong to cooperative work groups—based on ties of friendship, not kinship or territory. Normally the *kuu* is composed only of members who are the same sex as the leader. The gender represented depends upon the type of work and season of rice growing cycle; either men or women make up the cooperative. The majority of work activities, however, are performed by women.[7]

Only those who demonstrate hard labor and prove themselves capable of doing the job achieve the position of *kuu laa nuu* (leader of the *kuu*). A female is designated as *kuu laa nuu* for a cooperative that performs tasks designated as women's labor. The male *kuu laa nuu* is accorded lower prestige than his female counterpart (Teitelbaum 1977:25). The *kuu laa nuu* often "outranks" chiefs in the hierarchy of traditional authority, but ultimately this authority must be viewed primarily in terms of the context of the *kuu*.[8]

In addition to assigning work, keeping order and settling disputes on the farm during the working day, the *kuu laa nuu* also serves as the lead solo singer. Slit drummers and those who perform struck idiophones, setting the tempo and providing the rhythmic basis for workers to coordinate their movements through the forest, are among the officers of the *kuu*.

Singing is crucial to the morale of the labor cooperatives in Upper Bong County. One informant reported that refusing to participate in singing the songs that accompany the work is one of the types of cases heard at a *kuu* hearing in a Kpelle traditional court. This incident along with others—not putting forth effort, arguing or fighting in the *kuu*,

or disrespecting the *kuu* elders—are subject to a fine for breach of order because such incidents disturb the work of the *kuu*.

The importance of music for cooperative work is also stressed in that cooperatives may be classified according to instruments used or genres. For example, the work done by the *wuli kuu* (singing cooperative) is accompanied by singers (who may be members) without the use of drums or other percussion instruments. The *kéleŋ kuu* uses the *kéleŋ* (large, wooden slit drum).

In order to more clearly understand gender roles in labor and work music, it is necessary to examine the different stages of work activities of the agricultural cycle. Heavy labor activities such as cutting down larger trees and burning the undergrowth to clear the area are generally assigned to men, while women help clear undergrowth and assemble it for burning. Such cooperatives are known as the *kwaobo kuu* or bush-cutting *kuu*. The leaders secure musicians whose music is characterized by multi-ostinato patterns in overlapping and interlocking style (see Schmidt 1984). The sound of polyrhythms played on the *kéleŋ*, *feli* (goblet single-headed drum) and *kóno* (bamboo slit gong) penetrates the forest.

The second stage, "scratching the rice" and planting the seed rice, involves the women's cooperative called *kwasí kuu*. When the rains begin in May or June, the women work with short-handled hoes to "scratch" or break the soil, throwing seeds on the ground, covering them and removing weeds. As the *kwasí kuu* members work, they sing multipart songs with one female musician playing the time line of the *kóno*, a small lightweight bamboo slit gong which is held suspended from a handle and struck with one stick. Another member may also tap out the rhythms on an improvised instrument or the handle of her hoe to keep up the work pace. Since women customarily do not play membranophones, occasionally they will organize percussion ensembles, adding to the *kóno* a *kɛ̂ɛ* (gourd rattle with beaded netting) and a hollowed-out tortoiseshell idiophone, struck with one stick on the flat bottom side. Both the rattle and tortoiseshell drum are women's instruments associated with the female secret society. Generally the leader of the *kwasí kuu* is also the soloist. She extemporizes in a speech-song style, commenting on the event, praising and encouraging, while leading the formation of workers through the field (Photo 1). A chorus leader provides the responsorial background to the soloist, singing short phrases while the other *kuu* members respond in ostinato parts sung to vocables. The participants do not sing in unison, but build up a dense complex of overlapping two-to-three pitch vocal patterns similar to bush-cutting music.

When the rain slackens, the need to preserve the harvest is at its greatest. The women form a cooperative to weed the young plants throughout that period. When music is performed, they sing call and response songs in the form of AA, BB, CC, . . . etc.

During this seedling stage of the rice, not only nature's elements, but certain insects, birds and small animals become a serious concern. Birds, considered pests who eat the early crop of rice before it reaches maturity, are also associated with secret society spirits. Women and children must protect the rice during the long season. In the past, xylophones were played during this activity. Today songs composed about the birds are meant to function in warding off their destructiveness. Adolescents also sing the song below as a popular *yaloŋ* song performed when they gather in town at night to dance. Each will think of the name of a bird, spontaneously adding short text fragments and phrases to the song, until they tire of it.



Photo 1. Nepe of Sinyea, leader of rice planting cooperative, also leads women in song.

Kpelle Text	**Translation**
Solo 1: *Kele wóŋ-oo, kele wóŋ-oo toloŋ kene wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo, hawk tail-oo and dove tail-oo.
Solo 2: *Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.
Solo 1: *Toloŋ wóŋ-oo kɔ kwɛɛ wóŋ-oo.*	Dove tail-oo and partridge tail-oo.
Solo 2: *Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo
Solo 1: *Kɔ kwêɛ wóŋ-oo pilinyaŋ wóŋ-oo.*	Partridge tail-oo and wide guinea fowl tail-oo.
Solo 2: *Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.
Solo 1: *Tòloŋ kene wóŋ-oo pilinyaŋ wóŋ-oo.*	Dove tail-oo and wide guinea fowl tail-oo.
Solo 2: *Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.

Solo 1:	*Pilinyaŋ wóŋ-oo sóya-pɛlɛ wóŋ-oo.*	Wide guinea fowl tail-oo and little rice bird tail-oo (weaver bird).
Solo 2:	*Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.
Solo 1:	*Sóya-pɛlɛ wóŋ-oo, kele wóŋ-oo.*	Rice bird tail-oo and hawk tail-oo.
Solo 2:	*Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.
Solo 1:	*Ka wáa, ŋá ŋɔni kélee láa ɓó.*	You take a bath, and I will tell all the birds' names.
Solo 2:	*Kele wóŋ-oo.*	Hawk tail-oo.

The fourth stage (focal point) of the year is the harvest which occurs in October or November when the rice is ripe. Women organize the *mɔlɔŋtee kuu* (harvesting or rice-cutting cooperative) with some assistance from the men. Depending on the size of the farm, the family may gather the crop themselves, but most often it requires all available labor. Since harvesting takes place at the hottest time of the year and instruments become a burden to carry, singing is unaccompanied. *Kuu* members move through the rice fields at a relaxed pace, singing in call and response style as they cut the rice from the stalks and tie it in bundles.

Shifting leadership among the females is heard in the music, for the most competent singers alternate as lead singer. Co-workers respond either repeating the lead singer's phrase or singing shorter, more uniform phrases in unison. The lead singer is expected to remain aware of the morale of her co-workers, acknowledging and encouraging them throughout the day. This interactive, conversational quality of the music also lends to the expression of grievances as in the text below. In this example the *kuu* leader is accused by one of the other song leaders of being deceptive like the guinea fowl as it is portrayed in Kpelle proverbs.

	Kpelle Text	**Translation**
Solo:	*Toŋo ɓà íyée láa mâ ee; toŋo.*	Guinea fowl you have deceived me.
Chorus:	*ɓà íyée láa mâ.**	You have deceived me.
Solo:	*Kúui nâmui ɓà íyee láa mâ ee.*	The head of the *kuu* you have deceived me.
	Oo Surɔ́ŋ pɔ́lɔ ɓà iyée láa mâ ee.	Oh *Suron-Polo* you have deceived me.
	Toŋo ɓà íyée láa mâ ee.	Guinea fowl you have deceived me.
	Kúu nâmu ɓà íyee láa mâ ee.	The *kuu* owner, you have deceived me.
	ɓà iyée láa mâ, ɓa ńyée làa yâ ee.	If you deceive me, I (will) deceive you, too.

*Chorus repeats phrase after every solo phrase.

The remaining stages, also primarily performed by women, consist of processing rice and storing it in "rice kitchens." Pounding songs occur here with polyrhythmic percussive accompaniments as the women beat or hull the rice with mortars and pestles, preparing it for immediate consumption, selling or preserving, and seed to start the cycle again.

As mentioned earlier, in these areas the most significant amount of agricultural work and, in some cases, all phases of the farming cycle are performed by women. This increasingly becomes the situation as men take on more wage labor jobs; heavy demands

on their time limit their contribution to self-help projects such as building roads, schools, etc. (Carter and Mends-Cole 1982). With their own rice farms, women sell the goods and use cash profits to pay for amenities or necessities. Thus, they gain some economic control over their lives.

SONG TEXTS

As seen in the foregoing, Kpelle song texts are used not only to enhance and comment on the work, they also reflect the different needs and concerns of the singers. When work song texts are not fixed, every lead singer becomes an improviser to some extent. Creating and performing her own song, the text has greater subjectivity and is more emotive in function. Sung in a declamatory style and marked by the natural flow of speech, one line of text may seemingly bear no relationship to the next. Each phrase has a meaning, but the song is generally not unified thematically. For example, all within the same song, a singer may comment on the success of the *kuu*, shift to how change impacts their lives, move to the topic of co-wife disputes, and then end with a discussion of the rewards and frustrations of married or unmarried life and individual passions. Within the larger structure, however, songs may be unified by the recurrence of certain "stock phrases" and "key words," which are repeated intermittently throughout the song.

As in other types of Kpelle oral tradition, song texts are most highly valued if they have a hidden meaning. Allusion can be viewed as another manifestation of secrecy that is institutionalized among the Kpelle. Praises of workers and reference to ancestor and "forest" spirits may be expressed through allusion—the more allusive they are, the more enriching the experience for those versed in Kpelle oral tradition.

Song texts sung by women for a *kuu* frequently comment on the arduous nature of their work. In the text below a woman sings of her desire for a husband to assist with the difficult part of the task of making palm oil so that she may lighten her burden and reap the benefits. Women make palm oil to sell at the weekly market, investing their earnings in small shops. This rich red oil made from palm nuts is an important ingredient in Kpelle dishes and involves a tedious process of extraction from the seeds. But one must first cut the palm nut cluster from the tree. Working with a cutlass can be dangerous for a worker if he or she does not exercise extreme caution and care in handling the tool. The skill it demands is often the focus of attention in work song texts.

The singer also refers to the risks and severity of accidents occurring after dusk. Since it is a considerable distance to the road and there are added dangers in traveling through the forest at night, suffering is prolonged. Despite the hardship she continues to express devotion to her labor.

Kpelle Text

Oo no oo no, gbêɣa pôlu kôlo.
Oo no oo no, gbêɣa pôlu kôlo.
Sirê èi kê mî e tóu ŋuŋ too la ee.
Sirê èi kê mî e tóu ŋuŋ too la ee.
a na ta lalu kélee wɛɛ ŋá.
Kpíni pɛlêɛ kɔ́ɔ túa ŋána ɓe.
Owei, ŋà tûa tíi ŋa.
E ŋà ŋzɔ́ŋ kélee ɓó. Saa malôŋ fé ŋɔ́ŋɔńyéii.
Ee, kee gbêɣa-saa malôŋ fe ŋɔ́nɔ ńyéii.

Translation
Oh no, Oh no, I have no cutlass.
Oh no, Oh no, I have no cutlass.
If I had a husband he would cut the palm nut cluster.
If I had a husband he would cut the palm nut cluster.
Then I would pick up the seeds.
Hurting your foot at night is bad.
Yes, I have stayed (to work) long on a farm.
I have confessed all my behavior. I no longer have sorrow for death.
I won't be sorry to die to the hands of a cutlass.

A common theme heard in work music is the reference to long life, and recognition of those leaders who attained prestige or respectability during their lifetime. The text below refers both to Suakoko, a town in Bong County named after a long line of chiefs, and to a famous female leader. In the late 1920s the Madame Suakoko, who belonged to this succession of chiefs, presided over the town of Suakoko. She was known to be an intelligent, respected and exceptionally competent leader, recognized for her generosity and wealth in offspring. In epical songs she is extolled as a symbol of the society, in which the "wealth in people" system is so highly valued.[9]

Kpelle Text
Wéli wee, wéli wee.
Núu fa lêɛ ɣénie, ǹáa ɓé a lêɛ naa.
Nûa, káseɣê, kámáma.
M̀âaī kaâ ǹɛɛ mâī, da é lêɛ kâ-oo.
Oo díf́é ǹɔii lêɛ yao-nuu yéeì yɔo.
Nyaa mu oo, Suâkoko a wɔ́lɔ ǹɔii láa lí-ee.

Translation
Friend, friend.
A person doesn't live on earth forever, but the name lasts forever.
People, thank you very much.
The blessing that you have left on me, some of it should stay with you.
Oh, they shouldn't leave the land (when they die) with a coward.
Long ago Suakoko's name had taken the world.

Multiplex relationships develop between members of a labor cooperative as one's *kuu* partners become part of a friendship network. *Kuu* members may be gone for the entire day or for several days at a time; thus, interpersonal tensions may develop within the group. As the singer expresses in the text below, an effective working unit will be discussed in the town long after the event. Being able to coordinate the work as a cohesive group is a rewarding experience for everyone involved.

Kpelle Text
O yá, ɓà sìye sia mâ, pá í kóran ɓó wɛ.
Gúu kùrote ɓó, wóo támaa ɓe nîa.

Translation
Oh yes, when you come from the trip (*kuu*) you must tell the people what happened.
The *kuu* is small, but the people still talk about it.

The cooperative is a viable economic institution, and although its economic function is paramount, it also serves a social function. Thus, two Kpelle behavioral ideals are acted out—social participation and hard work. The main activity is work, but the interrelations of the *kuu* members are expressed musically and reinforced as women's group identity outside the work setting. Often they continue to perform together throughout the evening, having returned to the village with a sense of elation and well being from a successful *kuu*.

A similar scenario, however, would not be seen in those towns of Lower Bong County where work cooperatives are declining in number or no longer exist.[10] In these same areas, music-making in the villages is less frequent and performance ensembles made up entirely of women are rarely seen. It is apparent that where cohesive women's voluntary associations exist, there is often a correlation with women's group performance.

ROLES IN THE SANDE SECRET SOCIETY

The *sande* secret society is a large-scale women's association among the Kpelle and their culturally related neighbors, its counterpart being the *poro* for men.[11] Women's positions in ideology and ritual are comparable to men's as expressed institutionally through their joint supervision of the community morals and actions by the *poro* and *sande*. These institutions are the "sacred" ruling structure of the towns (the secular being composed of chiefs, elders, etc.). With membership for life, the *sande* society is also a mechanism for ritualistic cultural socialization, initiating young girls into womanhood.

New members are "born" into the corporate group through an initiation that takes place during the post-harvest dry season. Every girl from six to sixteen is encouraged to join *sande*. After puberty, a girl leaves the social domain of the village to be initiated in the *sande* "bush" school, or female age-set community, in an enclosed sacred area of the forest. Through this early socialization, every initiate learns her female adult role in the culture as wife and mother. Instruction is often conveyed through song and dance movements depicting appropriate wifely behavior, comportment and social graces. During this period of isolation they also acquire ritual knowledge of the medicines (considered dangerous for men) which confer fertility. Clitoridectomy is often performed at the beginning of the initiation period and, according to MacCormack (1979:34), is sometimes described as making women "clean." The pain involved in clitoridectomy is a metaphor for the pain involved in childbirth, thus bonding initiates together through shared pain and risk of death from infection which sometimes follows. Because of increasing consciousness of issues and risks involved, these practices are on the decline in some areas of Liberia.

These institutions not only serve as a *rite de passage* but also give emphasis to the traditional authority structure. The society is graded with initiates having the lowest status. *Sande* leaders are classified in terms of their ranked institutional positions, the highest being the role of the *zo*, referring to a shaman-priestess leader of the *sande* society or a specialist with knowledge of medicines. Their status and power have been discussed by Bledsoe (1980b) who emphasizes that as in the "wealth-in-people system" women who head the *sande* society take full advantage of their positions to acquire labor, wealth and the allegiance of the initiates and their families. Thus, *sande* strengthens patterns of stratification which are based on age and lineage. Given the authority as ritual

elders, they uphold their place in society and their connections with elite landowning lineages.[12]

One of the hallmarks of *sande* is the emphasis placed on specialized training in music and dance performance, which aesthetically heightens the common experience of those involved. Not only do initiates learn the dances and rhythms of the *kɛɛ* (a gourd rattle covered with beaded netting), they also learn the repertoire of *sande* songs, which are generally performed in a responsorial style.

Every woman who is a *sande* member knows and responds to the sound of her name played on the *kêɛ*. Thus, the *kêɛ* acts as a speech surrogate, the different sonorities of the tonal language being duplicated in rhythmic patterns. The leader of the ensemble usually performs on the highest pitched *kêɛ*. The art of playing *kêɛ* involves subtle differences in volume and intensity as well as duplication of speech. In the town of Samai in Fuama chiefdom, ensembles of male drummers did not exist, but women's orchestras made up entirely of *kêɛ* (with sometimes up to twelve gourd rattles of varying sizes and sonorities) performed polyrhythmic accompaniment.

A large number of the songs that women sing for work and recreation throughout the Kpelle life cycle are learned during this intensive initiation period. Such texts are filled with allusive statements that are understood only by members of similar status in *sande*. Those who possess exceptional talent as dancers are selected to work more extensively with the accomplished dance leaders in *sande* or *zo*. They undergo rigorous dance training, learning to execute specific dance steps, interpret the drum and rattle signals, and perform their individual virtuosic movements when the training is completed. When they present their special exhibitions for public appearance, intense appreciation is shown and aesthetic criticism is made of their coordination, skill, and artistry in dance.

The major social phenomenon of secrecy is proscribed in these societies.[13] Except for broad generalizations, men and women do not share each other's secrets, and in Upper Bong County it is almost impossible for an outsider to gain information on the workings of the societies. (The song texts included here were all recorded at public events with informants giving further exegesis at a later time.) The practice of *ifa mo* or "do not talk it" displays the members' privileged access to places, events and knowledge to the exclusion of others (nonmembers, men and children); it marks women and men as separate categories in the structural relationship of the Kpelle society (Bellman 1979).

The following song excerpts give a sense of how *sande* pervades the thoughts of members in later stages of their lives.

Kpelle Text

Solo: *Fãa pú oo, fãa pú oo oo*
Chorus: *Fãa pú mâ.**
Solo: *Fãa pú oo, fãa pú oo*
Góraŋ pólɔi kpɛɛ-woo ɓà lé-ee?
Góraŋ pólɔi kpɛɛ-woo ɓà lé-ee?
ŋá wéli mâma oo, oo, fãa pú oo, fãa pú oo.
ŋá wéli mɛi-woo, kérɛi? Da kútóliì, lɔɔ lá-woo ɓà lé?
Da kú tóliì, gbâaŋ lá-wòo ɓà lé?

*Chorus repeats phrase after every solo phrase.

Saa léŋ ɓé saa fei la, ŋa weli batu oo.
Ŋá wèli mâma oo, dá kútóliì gbâaŋ lá-woo ɓà lé?
Da kútóliì, ɓolia wóo ɓà lé?
Góraŋ póloi kpɛɛ-woo kèrɛi ŋá wèlii fatuma.
Kèrɛi? Góraŋpòloi kpɛɛ-woo.
Da kútolii lɔɔ pôlu-woo ɓà lé?
Da kútolii gbâaŋ lá-wòo ɓà lé?

Translation

Solo: Blow wind-oo, blow wind-oo.
Chorus: Blow wind on me.
Solo: Blow wind-oo, blow wind-oo.
What is the news of the end of the old year?
What is the news of the end of the old year?
My friend mama, blow wind-oo, blow wind-oo.
My friend, Mei-wo, right? They're calling us.
What is the sound of the entrance to the bush?
Why are they calling us to the entrance of the fence?
What death is not a death, my friend, Batu-oo.
My friend mama-oo, they are calling us to the fence, for what?
They are calling us to Borlia for what?
Isn't it that the old year has ended, my friend Fatuma.
Right? The news of the old year ending.
Why have they put us behind the bush?
Why are they calling us to the entrance of the fence?

Ritual symbols are multivocal or susceptible to different meanings. The *sande* song text above makes reference to an initiate's change in ritual status in the phrase "what death is not a death." It is believed that during initiation period a young initiate symbolically dies and is reborn; hence her body is covered with white clay during initiation and she is given a new name. The classic stages of a liminal period followed by a reincorporation ritual and rebirth have been discussed by various scholars (Van Gennep 1960, Turner 1969, MacCormack 1980). Turner (1969) states that "liminal entities are neither here nor there . . . likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness . . . ." In *sande* this transformation in rebirth also symbolizes the social transformation which a woman undergoes from novice to marriageable status.

In the above song texts, frequent reference is made to *gbaaŋ*, or the "fence" marking the boundary of the ritual area and ritual separation of the women involved. Initiation into secret societies takes place in an isolated area of the forest which is walled off from the trails by a fence (constructed of wooden poles, plaintain stalks, piassava branches, or large mats), which may be up to ten feet high. Special hanging "medicine" warns unwary travelers not to pass or they will undergo severe punishment (Welmers 1949:238). No one is allowed behind this boundary other than initiates and members, nor are non-members allowed to be informed of affairs transacted while the school is in session. Closing the initiation is known as "breaking the fence"; thus, initiation is the "entrance" into the full privileges of the Kpelle.

It is believed that powerful spirit forces inhabit the forest, and certain spirits are responsible for protecting the *sande* bush school.[14] As in *poro*, upon entering the initiation school, initiates are ritually devoured by the forest spirit (*zèle* for women and *ŋamu* for men). Women undergo scarification not only to make themselves beautiful, but the incises represent teeth marks to show that they have been "eaten" by the *zèle*. As sung in the text below, the *zèle* can bring misfortune or death to an initiated person, particularly if he/she crosses over the fence entrance within the sacred grove.

Kpelle Text

Solo 1 *Aa ńyá fé gɛ́ ní, zèle ɓé gɛ̀-ee.*
Solo 2: *Iyɔo, iyɔo gbôŋ lá.*
Solo 1: *O no aa ńyá fé gɛ́ ní, zèle ɓé gɛ̀-ee.*
Solo 2: *Gootumo à ítòo, pu kélee náaŋ káa yâ.*
Solo 1: *Gootumo aa, gbâaŋ lá-wuru náaŋ káa yâ.*
Solo 2: *Gootumo aa, gbâaŋ lá-wuru laa káa yâ.*
Solo 1: *Gootumo aa ńâŋ a ńdóliì náaŋ káa yâ.*
Solo 2: *Gootumo ńyá fé gɛ́ ní zèle ɓé gɛ̀-ee.*
Solo 1: *Gootumo aa, gbâaŋ lá-wuru náaŋ káa yâ.*

Translation

Solo 1: I didn't do it but it is the *zèle* who did it.
Solo 2: Yes, yes, the doorway.
Solo 1: Oh, no I didn't do it, it was the *zèle*.
Solo 2: Gotumo if it make you fall, then the bad luck of all is on you.
Solo 1: Gotumo the bad luck of the tree of the fence entrance is on you.
Solo 2: Gotumo, the tree of the fence entrance is named after you.
Solo 1: Gotumo, my father is calling me—bad luck is on you.
Solo 2: Gotumo, I did not do it, the *zèle* did it.
Solo 1: Gotumo, the bad luck of the tree of the fence entrance is on you.

In the past, female initiates were secluded for three years, the number three being associated with femaleness; the number four is associated with maleness. In recent years this period of time has been reduced but can vary from several weeks to several years. *Sande* and *poro* initiation periods cannot be held simultaneously because each group, during that time, is considered to have ritual supremacy and control of the forest as well as the moral well-being of the community. The sacred area for *sande* initiation is referred to in the text below as "women's town"—the area where music and dance are learned and performed is "the platform of the drum."

Bonds between a mother and child are the most sacred of all among the Kpelle. Realizing her child will gain new status through initiation, and questioning the extent of her child's new dependency and shift of loyalty to the powerful *sande* leader, a mother expresses her anxiety in singing "they are taking my child away." Absolute obedience to *sande* leaders is expected of them in initiation school and throughout their lives. To pay respect to the *zoo-ŋa* or *sande* leaders controlling the medicines that bestow fertility, entrance fees, exit fees and special food are required of the parent of marriageable girls.

Kpelle Text

Solo: *Kiŋ Kolo, ɓa lîi kêi lé?*
Da kútóliì géleŋ-kpaaŋ mà.
Da kútoliì lɔɔ pôlu.
Da kútóliì nɛyâ-taai.

ŋá goôɓoi kula-lôŋ ɓe da lîi là tí.
ŋá kɔ̂ɛ̀ɛ kula-lôŋ ɓé da lîi là.
ŋá ɓunûŋ too-lôŋ ɓé da lîi là.
ŋá mɛi káa-lòŋ ɓé da lîi là.

Translation

Solo: King Kolo, what are you going to say?
They are calling us on the platform of the drum.
They are calling us into the bush.
They are calling us to women's town.

That is my child who empties my bag they are carrying.
That is my child who picks bitterball they are taking away.
That is my child who drops my basket they are taking away.
That's the child I'm taking care of they are taking away.

In the texts below, the initiation school where they have "stood up the drum" is being held in the surrounding forest near the town of Wuli-taa,[15] which has taken on a foreboding atmosphere. When initiation school ends, those who have become members will display their skills in dancing, accentuating their womanhood. Token gifts, food and kola nuts are brought to the "coming out" ceremony of the *sande* members while the community gathers to watch the dramatic change from somewhat awkward behavior to the more graceful movements of the new initiates as they emerge from their training. Their public appearance is one of lavish celebration marking the end of the session. The head dancer of the *sande* school enters the town first, leading the parade of initiates out to dance. Special exhibitions are performed by the most outstanding dancers (such as Kuluba mentioned in the text below). The novices have learned the important aspects of cultural knowledge and achieved a marriageable status.

Kpelle Text

Daâ kɔ kwɛɛ-konaŋ tɔɔ wuli-taa.[1]
Góraŋ-kpɛɛɓe, ŋa í tóliì. Faa.
Daâ kú kónaŋ tɔ́ɔ wuli-taa.
Daâ kú kónaŋ tɔ́ɔ wuli-taa.
Góraŋ oo, góraŋ-kpɛɛ ɓe
Gbíni toɔ́ɔ ee wuli-taa.
Kwa ŋɔ́nɔ ké lîi ee wuli-taa.
ŋa lí láaì ee wuli-taa.
Daâ kú kéleŋ tɔ́ɔ wuli-taa.
Daâ kú kéleŋ tɔ́ɔ wuli-taa.
ŋa lîi ŋá Kuluba-pili káa wuli-taa.
Kuluba-pili káa wuli-taa.

Translation
They have built a fence for the unmarried people at Wuli-taa.
It is the year at end, I am calling you. Answer.
They have built our fence in Wuli-taa.
They have built our fence in Wuli-taa.
The year, it is the year's end.
Dark night in Wuli-taa.
We are again going to Wuli-taa.
I am going to bed in Wuli-taa.
They have stood up our drum in Wuli-taa.
They have stood up our drum in Wuli-taa.
I am going to see Kuluba dance in Wuli-taa.
Kuluba's dancing is in Wuli-taa.

Despite the heavy fees, initiation is considered economically advantageous for the girl's family. The daughter is subsequently expected to marry, giving her kingroup rights to bridewealth or brideservice from the groom. Enormous pressure is put on kin and marital relations because they are so important in terms of broader economic and social security. In the text below, Kokwee and Malaa, two unmarried *sande* members, are saddened because the male suitor's attention is now drawn to the new initiates.

Kpelle Text
Sirɛ káaì wála ɓé maa a kú kɛ léŋ ee.
Oo Kɔkwêɛ ɓé wólɔì, maa laa káa wólɔi ee.

Nêi, ka Yɔnkɔ tɛɛ ḿbɔ́, zâniŋ à kùla,
ka yɔnkɔ tɛɛ ḿbɔ́.
ŋá ké kêi ka, ka Yɔnkɔ tɛɛ ḿbɔ́ Zâniŋ à kùla,
ka Yɔnkɔ tɛɛ ḿbɔ́.

Translation
It is hard for a girl to marry a man, why does grandmother trouble us?
Oh, it is Kokwee who is crying; Malaa is crying.

My friend, you give me Yonkor (after the initiation),
you give me Yonkor.
I was telling you, give me Yonkor (after the initiation),
give me Yonkor.

As Bledsoe (1980a) states, Kpelle marriage may be seen as "a continuum, or a process . . . Kpelle marriage usually consists of Sande initiation, betrothal, co-residence, 'turning over' the woman to the man symbolically with a token or bridewealth, and bearing the first child or two." Although marriage is very much a topic on the minds of Kpelle women and men, initiation into the *sande* society overshadows marriage and childbirth as one of the major events in a Kpelle woman's life.

MUSICAL ENSEMBLE ROLES AND MUSICIANSHIP

Female musical expression among the Kpelle centers on vocal music performance.[16] Although no musical genre is exclusive to women, certain repertoires are perceived as specific to women's activities (such as *sande* songs) or are usually performed by women.

The vague ties that bind women initiates or *kuu* workers often bring these members together in other performance contexts, particularly in women's vocal music ensembles. They share a body of musical knowledge which includes a repertoire of songs, and certain defined musical roles of performers established during initiation form the basis for organization of other performing groups—both spontaneous and permanent. High standards of proficiency in music and dance and certain expectations of involvement are instilled in them through the *sande* society (Photo 2 and Photo 3). (The events where I heard the greatest precision/proficiency in the music were in performances where the ensemble was organized on the basis of the previous experience in *sande* society school.)

The proportion of time allotted to music performance, which reportedly contrasts with men's initiation, is another carry-over from patterns set up during women's initiation school. Rehearsal time for music is much greater among Kpelle women than among men. In Digei, aside from singing to accompany domestic activities, women's ensembles often practice during late afternoons and on Saturday evenings in the town kitchen; older women teach the younger ones the songs.

Within a vocal music ensemble, a multipart structure emerges displaying a hierarchy of musical roles. The performing groups vary in size and organization depending on the occasion or specific song (Schmidt 1984:204). But certain musical roles provide a nucleus for a particular type of performance. These roles have assigned names relative to their characteristic functions and relationships. Based on one of the oldest models for part structure,[17] a five-part nucleus to which a soloist may be added, consists of the following:

a. *ŋulei siye nuu* or "song starter" (principal ostinato)

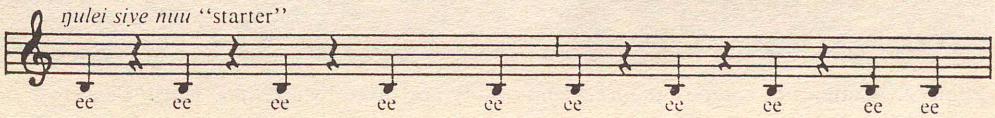
b. three *naa soɔ keblai*, "song catchers" or singers who "grab, hold, or catch" the song from one another (supporting ostinati which interlock), are the *ŋulei ňoŋ, ŋulei ǧoŋ*, and *ŋulei ňee* (see Example 1 on page 254).

c. *ŋulei tóo nuu*, or singer who "puts in the words" (soloist)

Of the three "song catchers" or *naa soŋ keblai*, the most important role, the *ŋulei ňee*, is symbolically referred to as "mother voice," also "big voice" or "low voice." This voice is expected to have more carrying power than the other "song catchers." The "mother voice" interacts most closely with the soloist, enhancing the vocal lines with responses that vary rhythmically and melodically; she also sings praise, and interjects comments using both vocables and meaningful texts. The role of the "mother voice" implies both authority and independence, the singer exercising considerable freedom in varying the part. In a mixed ensemble this role may be performed by either a male or a female.

The two main roles that are most often specified for women are not duplicated by other singers in an ensemble. First, the role of the lead chorus singer or "song starter" is regarded as one of the most demanding roles because discipline and a sense of precise timing are essential to its proper execution. The song starter sings the principal ostinato, acting as the time referent for the group; therefore, her voice must have a distinctive, penetrating sonority and sufficient volume to be audible. The starter usually sings vocables such as "ee—ee—ee—ee-ee-ee" (see Example 2) to a one- to two-pitch

Example 2.



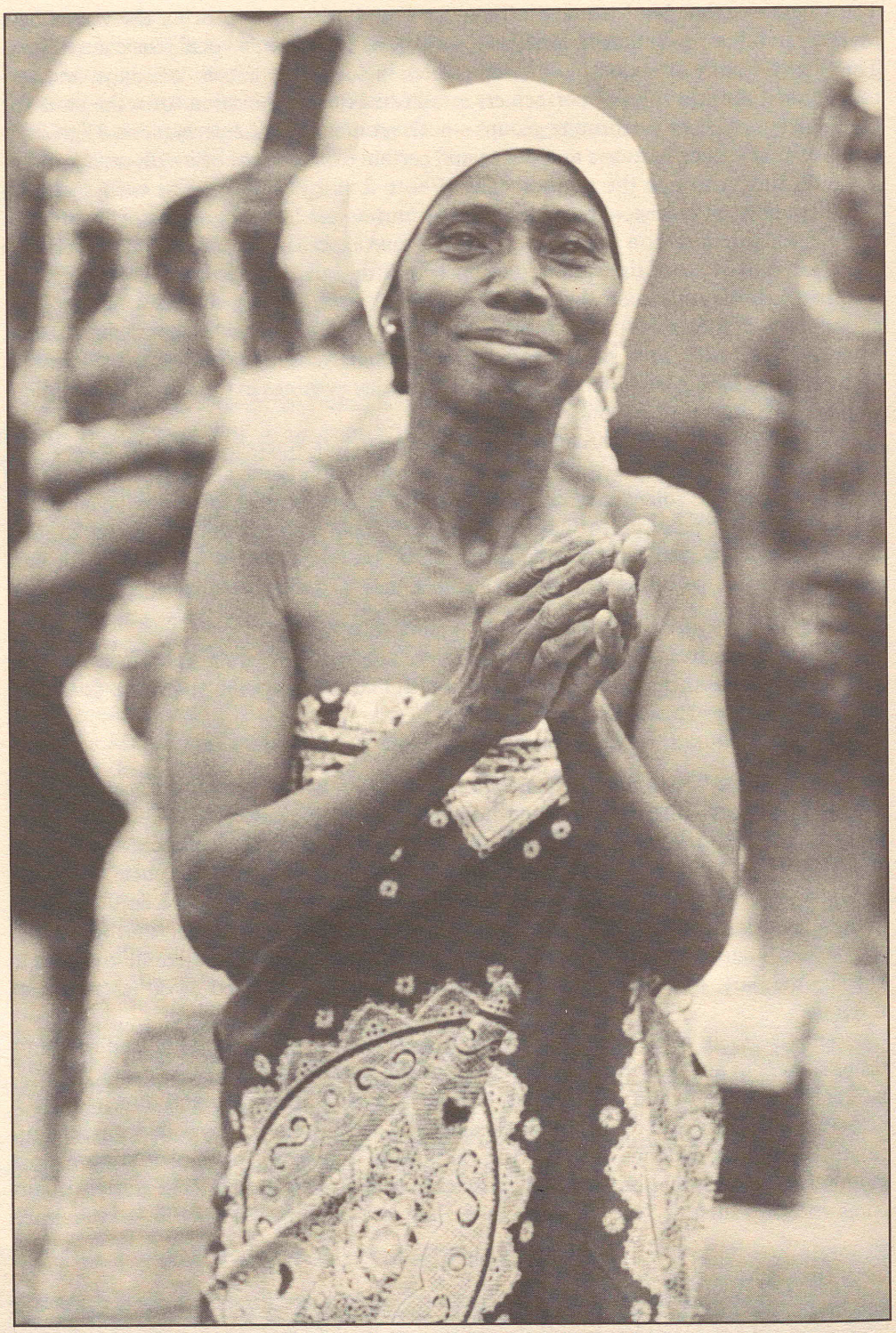
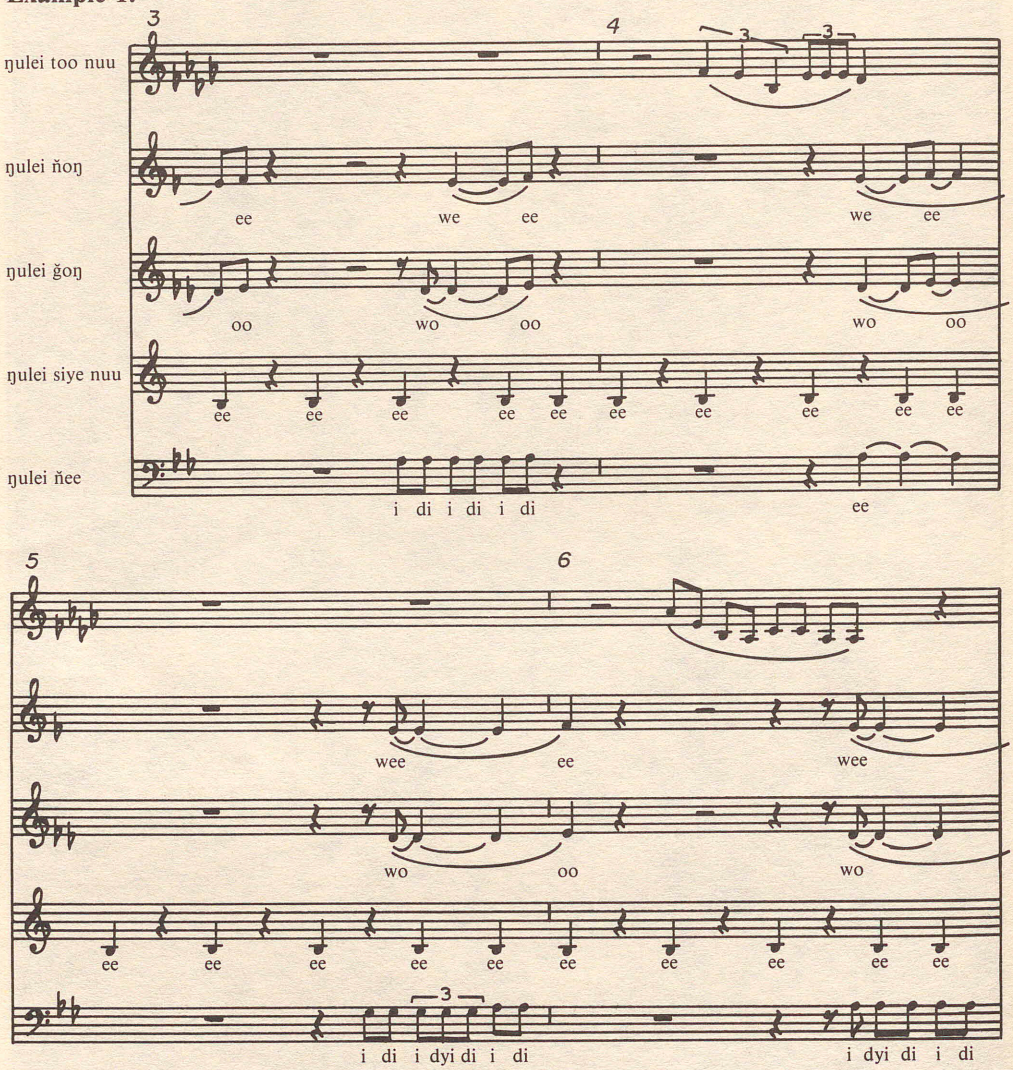


Photo 2. Attitudes of composure, grace and beauty portrayed by a refined Kpelle dancer.



Photo 3. The deep satisfaction of motherhood and artful performance expressed by a Kpelle dancer.

Example 1.


ŋulei too nuu
ŋulei ňoŋ
ŋulei ǧoŋ
ŋulei siye nuu
ŋulei ňee
ee we ee we ee
oo wo oo wo oo
ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee
i di i di i di ee
wee ee wee
wo oo wo
ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee ee
i di i dyi di i di i dyi di i di

pattern of eight beats in a percussive style. A striking similarity can be seen between her musical role and that of the basic bell pattern that marks off the time span in West African drum ensembles. This role is crucial in women's ensembles not accompanied by drums, because it provides the time reference or basic beat. In men's ensembles, a drummer may carry out this rhythmic role.

The other important role associated with women is that of the soloist or *ŋulei tóo nuu*, the singer who "puts in the words" and commands the attention of the listeners. An attribute of a good soloist is her sensitivity to metrical form and to the word rhythms in a verse or phrase, guiding every aspect of the music.[18] Generally undulating melodic contours are shaped by the ingenuity of the singer who performs a text clearly understood by everyone in her audience. The majority of the songs allow the lead soloist considerable freedom in the choice of lyrics. Half-sung, half-spoken remarks and comments on topical events can be heard as the soloist gives attention to text and melodic variation. Her use of Kpelle parables and proverbs signals a specific musical response from the ensemble and elicits praise from the audience. She must have the ability to communicate her thoughts and social judgement with subtlety in the public vehicle of song.

The most highly esteemed and sought-after soloists in the Kpelle region are female singers. When commissioning a soloist for a special event such as a funeral feast, criteria are not only based on talent in singing and composition, but on her experience in performing in a variety of styles and repertoires. Versatility is a highly prized cultural asset among musicians in Kpelle society. Women seem to excel in their knowledge of the "old" Kpelle songs and the ability to extemporize for the occasion. A female soloist must first win respect before she can be accepted functionally as someone with power to move their thoughts and their emotional reactions into the areas she directs. Often she embodies the ideal of physical attraction and dignified bearing. Status, prestige and financial compensation are accorded to those performers who best fit these criteria and provide a variety of musical styles. If they marry, they bring prestige to the household.

In recreational music performance and other "public contexts," the boundaries of sex divisions are blurred because men do not have exclusive access to money, fame and experiences of travel. Female professional performers who become renowned often lead an independent, mobile lifestyle with a group of supporting singers and an entourage of instrumental accompanists. One particular female Kpelle singer who was held in high regard for her renditions of historical songs enjoyed social and financial independence and a degree of success that was most often measured by Kpelle people in terms of the distance she traveled for a performance. She was often commissioned by Liberian officials, chiefs and other patrons, traveling from one ceremonial performance to another. Being very much in demand and having physical beauty, she enjoyed a somewhat glamorous lifestyle and took full advantage of the attention she attracted as an entertainer. Women recognized her prestige and never doubted her contribution to Kpelle artistic and cultural life.

Some female singers enjoy displaying symbols of change in their lives—sprinkling into their song texts a few words they have picked up from different languages and commenting on the novelties of life outside Bong County. This orientation "vis-a-vis" the outside world exhibits fascination rather than apprehension. The following topical song sung by a female performer in a rural area in Bong County illustrates some of these features. The song texts below tell of her desire for goods that are not easily accessible. She voices a preference for Ghanaian and imported nylon *lappas* or "wrappers" of cloth, which are tied on as a skirt.

Kpelle Text

Solo: *Ka káwóli tɔ́ɔ,*
Nâloŋ ya pôri íwóli tɔ́ɔ yêɛ berei tí ŋa m̀ôi lai.
É kɔein-tu da yá í dɔɔ ḿbɔ́, yêɛ berei tí ŋa m̀ôi lai.
É nâloŋ da yá í dɛɛ ḿbɔ́ yêɛ berei tí ŋa m̀ôi lai.
E gâna da yá í dɛɛ ḿbɔ́ yêɛ berei tí ŋa m̀ôi lai.
Oo nɔ́ kpéni, ya ɓó mâ tɛɛ ŋá ɓó yâ kɔeiŋ-tu lapa fé ńîa kaa mà.
Chorus: *Ai yaa, ŋá kɛ̀ yâ kɔieŋ lapa fé ńîa kaa mà.*
Solo: *Ee kee-nîa, ka káwóli tɔ́ɔ ŋá lûa too gîŋ mà.*
Ná lûa too gîŋ mà yêɛ bérei tí.
Ǹûa too-perei ká ní yêɛ berei tí ŋa
m̀ôi lai. E noŋ e yee kɛ kwi ke ye ke.
Têsi duâba tɛɛ ḿbɔ́ berei tí ŋa m̀ò lài.
Ńíi-mu i mu mi gbaŋá yêɛ berei ŋa m̀ò tí lài.
Ńíi-mu i mu mi gbaŋá yêɛ berei ŋa m̀ò tí lài.
Mɔ̂ne í pa gbaŋá yêɛ berei tí ŋa m̀ò lài.

Translation

Solo: Perk up your ears
Man, you have to listen as I am saying it.
He should buy some of the *quintu lappa* just as I tell you.
Buy some nylon and give it to me as I am saying.
Please buy some of the Ghana *lappa* just as I am saying.
Oh never mind. Let me tell you that the *quintu lappa*, I didn't see what I like.
Chorus: Oh, yes, I told you that I didn't like what I see among the *quintu lappas*.
Solo: Oh friends listen, let me bless the game.
Let me bless the game.
This is the way to bless the game as I am saying.
Send the taxi driver for me as I say it.
My sweetheart and I went to Gbanga as I say it.
My sweetheart and I went to Gbanga as I say it.
Come to Gbanga on Monday as I say it.

Another talented and innovative performer—a singer, dancer and dramatist—entertains her audience by improvising masks and costumes from available resources. Designing her own mask with an Ebony magazine cover secured around her forehead by a colorful headtie, she dances and acts out familiar roles with a warm sense of humor and flamboyant style. Her individualistic performance employing new materials is a revitalization of concepts of masking traditions that are no longer practiced in these areas of Upper Bong County (Photo 4).

As changes are taking place in the context of an ongoing, dynamic cultural life, Kpelle women respond to the changes, sometimes criticizing modern trends but with awareness that their society's cultural vitality is also based on new ideas and interests.

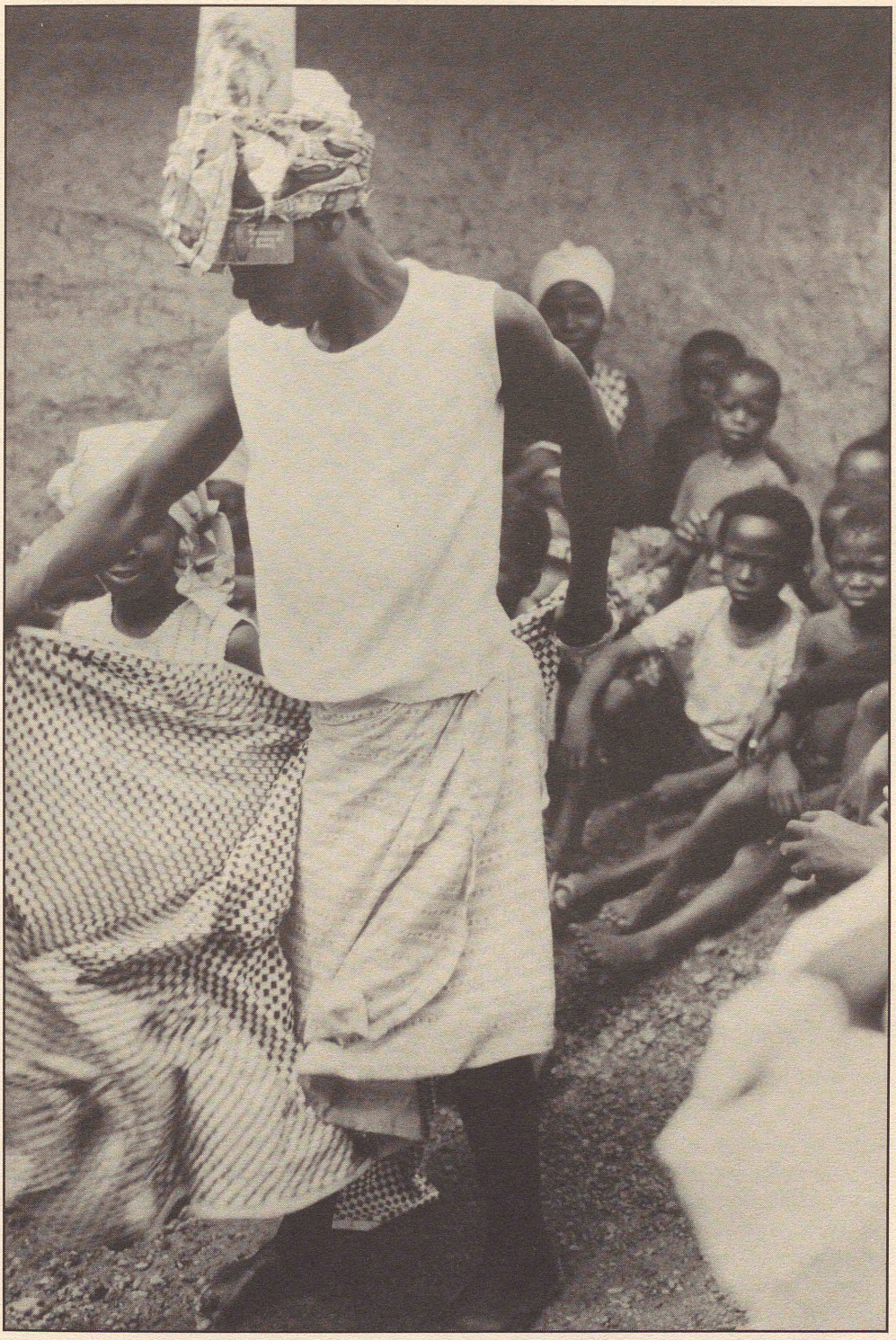


Photo 4. Innovative Kpelle dancer and dramatist has designed her own "masked dance" style.

ON THE URBAN THRESHOLD

New creative outlets and possibilities for the Kpelle and other Liberian women in the urban center of Monrovia have stimulated a new interest in performance. In fact, the Kpelle female singer and dancer has evolved into a new genre of cultural specialists at the National Cultural Center near Monrovia. Older, experienced performers play a major part in teaching young artists how to refine their song and dance style (Photo 5). Most of these singers and dancers who have been trained in their villages or through *sande* society then go through further training. As they become members of cultural troupes (for example, the National Cultural Center or the Cultural Ambassadors), not only do they learn to stage their own music and dance but they include the traditions of others in their performances.

Women with social consciousness are also beginning to find their place in the Liberian popular music scene in Monrovia. Although no Kpelle women have hit the commercial music charts yet, Fatu Gayflor from the neighboring Loma people has become a popular entertainer of wide acclaim in Liberia. One of her recent recordings, called "Market Day," is sung in Liberian English[19] and prefaced with the following:

> I am dedicating this song to all the market women in Monrovia, in Liberia, in Africa, and throughout the whole world. I love them . . . for their hard work, and I love them because my mother herself is a market woman.

Soon morning, soon as coco crows
Ladies them know that is deh day
Early morning power market women
they locka on their way, yah.
Early morning Mama wakes me up
for the market ground-o.
Mama de call me by me name and say,
"Oh, Fatu, get up"
Mama de go to Rally Time Market
every morning,
Just to make me at least have some kala,
kele wele, eh.
Mama workin harder while Papa's
in the liquor shop o?' e-
Mama sleeping tired while me Papa coming
drunk and booze-oo?

Chorus: Market day o, market day o.
Market day o, market day o.

Through her music, Fatu performs a valuable social and political function. Not only does she recognize and affirm the vital economic role played by women, but she also serves as an inspiration to female entrepreneurs.

Women are moving to Monrovia, seeking opportunities of entrepreneurship, performance and liberation. Independent market trade has become highly institutionalized and market associations form an important nexus for women. Their strong participation in the economy continues through collective organization within the city as well as in the villages.



Photo 5. Female adolescents learn to execute dance steps from an experienced Kpelle dance instructor (right).

CONCLUSION

Women are in a pivotal position in Kpelle society. The aim of this study has been to examine through the verbal art of song women's present-day roles in two types of associations. First is the rural work cooperative where membership is largely voluntary; women pool their resources to achieve a common end in work and in song. As Carter and Mends-Cole (1982) state, "to the extent that women have played a major role in the rural economy, the survival of the national economy may be dependent upon their continuing contribution." The feminization of agriculture in Upper Bong seems to correlate with the feminization of music, for women are becoming the preeminent preservers of the Kpelle identity expressed through group performance.

The second women's association, the *sande* secret society, is based on age and sex. *Sande* functions both in teaching young girls aspects of womanhood, fostering loyalty to institutions, and at certain times in life serves as a support system. But the image of an ideal collective harmony suggested by some authors does not represent the complex reality. Certain *sande* leaders also utilize the society to reinforce stratification based on

age and aristocratic lineage. Thus, women will unite on occasion, such as in group performance, but given the means by which rewards are achieved, they will also act independently. In the *sande* dance arena, the young initiates' personal life goals provide motivation for an outstanding individual performance. Women who possess extraordinary womanly graces and are distinguished in the art of *sande* dancing exemplify the authority and integrity of the society and utilize this in a positive way to individual political advantage.

As in many parts of West Africa, women draw from their group experience to assert their independent spirit. Just as *sande* leaders will exercise their status, power and political experience to enhance their positions in the larger society, some performers who have undergone rigorous training in the *sande* society pursue higher professionalism and a more urban and mobile lifestyle. New opportunities for women are influencing the ways they think about themselves and their society. This realization suggests broader, exciting avenues for a woman to better define her role in expressive culture and improve the quality of her life.

NOTES

1. Examples are Jacqueline C. DjeDje (1985) and various articles in Christine Oppong (1983).
2. Gibbs (1963) argues that the Kpelle have a high divorce rate because they lack clearly defined corporate kin groups and because ambiguous marital norms permit frequent deviation from patrilineal rules. Although Kpelle men prefer virilocal post-marital residence, the desire for brideservice by the wife's parents often forces a nonwealthy husband to settle in their community (see Bledsoe 1980a).
3. A summary of Kpelle orthography follows which is based on the orthography developed at the Kpelle Literacy Center, Totota, Liberia (Welmers and Spehr 1956).

   TONE

   kólɔ– high tone: when it appears on the stem of a word, it governs until another tone appears.

   kɔ̀nɔ– low tone; when it appears on the stem of a word, it governs until another tone appears.

   kâli– high-low tone; high tone on the first syllable followed by a low tone on the next syllable, except when the tone appears on the last syllable of the word. In that case, the high-low occurs on a single syllable.

   – unmarked stem; denotes mid-tone throughout stem.

   CONSONANTS

   gb – g an b said together.

   kp – k and p said together.

   ŋ – as in sing.

   ɓ – implosive "b" with the air going in rather than out when the lips are closed.

   ɣ – like "ch" in German "Ach."

   VOWELS

   ɛ – as in bet.

   ɔ – as in caught but shorter.
4. The research in Liberia was made possible through a fellowship from the Institute of International Education. Portions of this article were initially presented at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association held in New Orleans, Louisiana, 1985.
5. These song texts are excerpts, some more fully elaborated than others. Although the "core lyrics" of each song were confirmed and elaborated through systematic discussion of both its literal meaning and the social situation that inspired it, the originality of actual performance is difficult to render. It should be understood that Kpelle songs lend themselves to subtle variation in phrasing. The musical transcriptions have not been provided as the purpose is to analyze songs as social commentary. However, for further elaboration on musical form, see Schmidt (1985). The Schmidt Collection of recorded tapes from Liberia, 1973–1975, is housed in the Ethnomusicology Archive, UCLA.

6. Other types of labor cooperatives among the Kpelle include, for example, *to kɛ kuu* (palm nut cutting and oil reducing cooperative), *laa tee kuu* (house thatching cooperative) and *kapa bunyei* (money saving cooperative) often referred to by the Yoruba term *susu*.
7. When not involved with rice farming, Kpelle men's time is occupied in growing cash crops, some have wage jobs, or they may be shop owners.
8. The Fala Kpelle women's and men's cooperatives divide their workers into three rankings: *tuang* is the highest, then *sasexe*, and *bulu*. Ritual promotion takes place after all the rice farming *kuu* members have finished their work. The ritual involves drinking a potion of medicine with intensive work activity and music performance on percussion instruments (see Bellman 1979). In Zokwele and Zota chiefdoms where this research was done, the use of medicine and rites was left to the individual and not usually practiced as a group activity.
9. The "wealth-in-people" concept proposes that leaders use various social institutions to gain control over labor, acquiring followers, thus status and wealth (see Bledsoe 1980a).
10. Bledsoe (1980a:121) correlates the nonexistence of the *kuu* and fewer numbers of *kuu* workers with proximity to road and wage labor centers. Siebel (1969) hypothesizes from his data that the *kuu* is stronger in the "polycephalous associational state" of the Kpelle than among the decentralized groups of southeastern Liberia.
11. Bellman (1975) maintains that there are significantly different structures among the *poro* and *sande* organizations as practiced by the speakers of the five dialects of Kpelle, but they still recognize a communality of membership depending on the interactional context. Other types of secret societies exist among the Kpelle, such as the snake society, iron worker's society and hunter's society, but the *poro* and *sande* are the major societies.
12. Women occupy a number of status positions in *sande* society, which has its own ruling structure (taught to a new member in a ritualized manner). The political consequences of the *sande* society have been discussed by Bledsoe as a means by which leaders achieve status and power. For elaboration see Bledsoe 1980a and 1980b.
13. The element of secrecy that surrounds the activities of these societies has received much attention. According to Bellman, it is possible to manipulate the meanings of symbols used in a secret ritual. Since different categories of member-participants in a ritual make use of interpretive techniques relevant to their particular categories they are able to communicate to certain members and exclude others. For further elaboration, see Bellman 1975, 1979; Murphy 1976, 1980; Stone 1982.
14. Unlike the Vai and Mende within the Central West Atlantic region (see Monts 1984), the practice of masked dancing associated with *sande* and *poro* as well as the appearance of entertainment masks, are not commonly found among the Kpelle.
15. Wuli-taa is not the actual name of the town, but will be used for this discussion.
16. Musical instruments performed by Kpelle men include various string instruments such as the *konin* (triangular framed zither) and *gbɛgbɛtɛ̂lɛ* (multiple bow lute). Other instruments generally performed by men are the *gbèlɛɛ* (plucked idiophone) and various types of drums—cylinder, barrel, goblet and hourglass pressure drums as well as wooden slit drums (with a single slit).
17. According to Kpelle musicians in Bong County, one of the oldest and most respected types of multipart music is *gbonaŋ*. It is believed to have originated in the forest and the five voices or "parts" represent voices of ancestor spirits. (For further musical description and transcriptions, see Schmidt 1984.)
18. Although Kpelle, a Mande language, is tonal, the effect of the tones on sung Kpelle is minimal.
19. Lyrics were written by Steve Worlior, Monrovia, Liberia.

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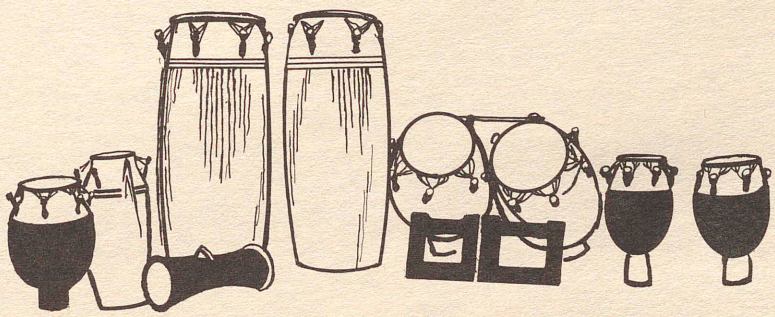
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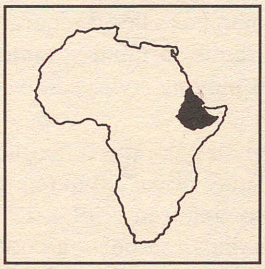
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9

ORNAMENTS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION AS A DETERMINANT OF TECHNICAL ABILITY AND MUSICAL STYLE

CYNTHIA TSE KIMBERLIN



STATEMENT: Nketia served on my doctoral committee while I was a graduate student at UCLA. In my dissertation, I had included a small section on ornaments. Nketia seemed fascinated with what I had done, as at that time in the 1970s few publications dealt specifically with ornaments in African music on a systematic basis. I have used the original section on ornaments as a point of departure. For this study, not only have I included a classification of ornaments but also put forth the idea of using ornaments as a tool to access a musician's technical and musical ability. □

INTRODUCTION

Differentiation of musical ability and style among *azmari*[1] of Ethiopia can be determined by ornaments and how they are articulated in musical performance. Ornaments are defined as those pitches which are not part of the basic melody but vital to the stylistic interpretation of that melody.

Based on the music of a single musician as model, this study proposes to define a standard by which ability and style might be objectively quantified. This does not mean that subjective elements are unimportant. Rather, some parameters can be measured and are useful indicators in evaluating ability and style.

Together with raw data and comments offered by indigenous musicians and informants, this study focuses on the ornaments used by one master musician[2] as illustrated in an ornament classification system derived solely from the ornaments he uses in seven songs. The musician selected is both a *masinqo* teacher by profession and a performer of some repute.

Because of these two factors, it is fitting that I define him as the standard by which other Amhara *masinqo* performers can be judged. Ornament analysis within this theoretical framework enables one to work within a set of boundaries defined by a control, to look at an ornament broken down into its melodic components within a classification system as well as to view the ornament in the context of a particular song(s).

According to indigenous informants and *azmari* I recorded,[3] every *azmari* accumulates a repertoire of ornaments which can range from a few dozen to an

unknown number. One criterion of a good *azmari* is the extent to which he incorporates ornaments in his music. A beginning player uses fewer ornaments in his songs than a more advanced player. When one begins to work on a new song, he concentrates on the basic melody and then adds ornaments, learning to master a few at a time—adding, subtracting until he gets it right. Basically, ability refers to technical mastery of ornament execution.

Sheer frequency of ornaments in a composition may exhibit technical virtuosity but does not necessarily guarantee a good performance. Though one may know how to play a hundred or more ornaments, he may select a smaller number to use. Most likely, he knows that some ornaments enhance the music better than others. Certain ornaments become the trademark of popular *azmari* and, while well known by other players, cannot be used by them in public performance except at the risk of ridicule.

Style refers to how the musician chooses to use the ornaments during a performance while staying within the framework of the musical tradition. Style elements include: frequency of ornament use, number of different ornaments used, combination of ornaments played in a particular sequence (either as a series of simple ornaments played separately or as a compound ornament), ornament pitch density and rhythmic variability, manner of accenting the ornament, and ornament function. Different playing styles can be attributed to a combination of these factors.

Though ornament classification is limited to the instrumental part, the function of ornaments as well as their use in various heterophonic contexts are discussed in relation to both vocal and instrumental parts illustrated in the accompanying transcriptions. For the future, text analysis and its effect on ornaments would make an important contribution with the help of linguists fluent in Amharic, Tigre, and Oromo languages dialects.

BACKGROUND

The *masinqo* is a single stringed bowed spike fiddle with a diamond shaped sound box and is the instrument of the *azmari*, a professional *masinqo* player. Primarily a solo tradition, the music is most commonly performed by a male *azmari* who sings while accompanying himself. Most *azmari* find work in *ṭäg bet*, places which serve *ṭäg* or mead and where men go to talk and be entertained. Private parties are other occasions for work and these usually consist of holiday, wedding, or organizational celebrations. The *masinqo* is a very public instrument and is relatively easy to find in performance as opposed to an instrument that is primarily played in private for one's own and family's enjoyment.

Text subject matter can be about any subject and commonly includes aspects of the life cycle, war, love, famous individuals, work, and so on, in the form of proverbs, descriptions, narratives, or dialogues. Attitudes reflected in the songs range from pessimism and fatalism to optimism, while the *azmari*'s manner may be non-committal, critical, praising or jesting.

Masinqo text and melodies are passed on orally. *Azmari* usually know a number of texts for each melody. Some *azmari* know only five or six melodies to which all their texts are sung. Most *azmari* seem to copy other *azmari* or songs they hear on records, tapes, or the radio. While sometimes an *azmari* will compose music and text, more often he will compose the text for an existing melody.

Masinqo geographical distribution closely parallels the areas occupied by the Amhara, Oromo, and Tigre ethnic groups who are the principal practitioners of *masinqo* music (Kimberlin and Kimberlin 1984:249).

Two indigenous terms for the word ornament were related to me. *Ǝrəkrət* (ፈርክርት) is one of many Amharic terms used to indicate voice direction during the musical portions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian liturgy. *Ǝrəkrət* whose symbol is " ⁘ " indicates, according to Lepisa (1970:168), "that the voice should go up and down, as one who is sitting on a spring bounces up and down. . . . " The musical signs are noted above the song text. According to one master *azmari*, this term best describes how ornaments are performed in *masinqo* music. He states that ərəkrət is sometimes used to refer to ornaments in general in the context of *masinqo* music.[4] Another Amharic word which can refer to ornament according to Debalke (1972) is *qəlahe* (ቀለሐ), meaning "not fixed" or "to be made more elaborate."[5]

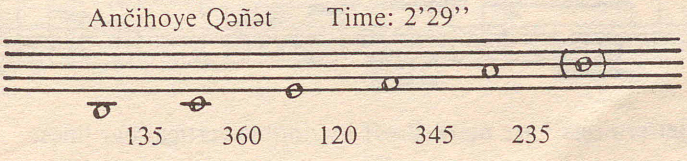
PROCEDURE FOR READING THE MUSIC TRANSCRIPTIONS

The ornaments used for this analysis are taken from the music transcriptions of seven *masinqo* songs depicting both vocal and instrumental parts. The recordings were made in Addis Ababa in a studio setting on a Nagra 4.2L at 7½ ips using a Sennheiser MKH 415T microphone. The music was performed in the Amhara style by a master musician who sang accompanying himself on the *masinqo*. He was originally from Gondar in Northern Gondar Region and currently resides in Addis Ababa. Excerpts from the complete transcriptions (Kimberlin 1976:295–368) are given in the Appendix. Specific measures designating the excerpted parts are given in parentheses beneath the song number.

The music for each song is notated on two staves. The vocal part appears on the top staff and the *masinqo* part appears below. Complete ornaments are given for the *masinqo* part. But because there was some difficulty in hearing the vocal ornaments distinctly, the vocal ornaments are not necessarily written out in full. So it was decided to under notate rather than over notate in this case. Also, since ornament pitch density appears to be unmeasured rather than measured, ornaments in the transcriptions are given with approximate pitch densities.

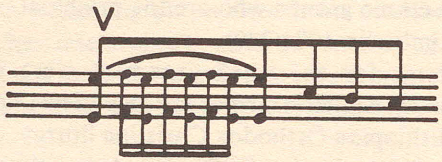
Preceding each song, *qəñət*[6] name and song duration are indicated at the left and to the right, respectively. Interval set[7] sequence is given for the *qəñət* where intervals correspond to the notes notated above in ascending order.

Example 1. Song I, *Ančihoye Qəñət*.



Since pitches are relative, no clefs are given, though the open pitch is tuned to the *azmari* tessitura. Harmonics are notated above the fundamental pitch together with the fundamental pitch.

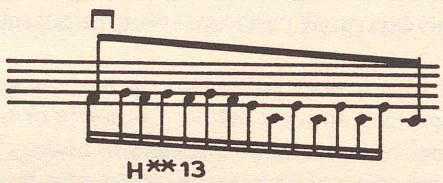
Ex 2—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo* part, measure 18.



In ascertaining the open string pitch for each of the four *qəñət* of ten *azmari*,[8] the following pitch ranges resulted: *təzəta* 324–536 hz. (in Western music, from about E^4 (minus 30 cents) to C^5 (plus 42 cents); *bati* 330–486 hz.; *ančihoye* 328–446 hz.; *ambasəl* 330–406 hz. The open string pitch range is greatest for *təzəta qəñət*. This also describes the tessitura range one might expect to find among Amhara *azmari*. There is no consistency among any individual *azmari* to be highest or lowest in pitch. This indicates a range among *azmari* and that *azmari* view the nature of each song differently and pitch their instruments accordingly.

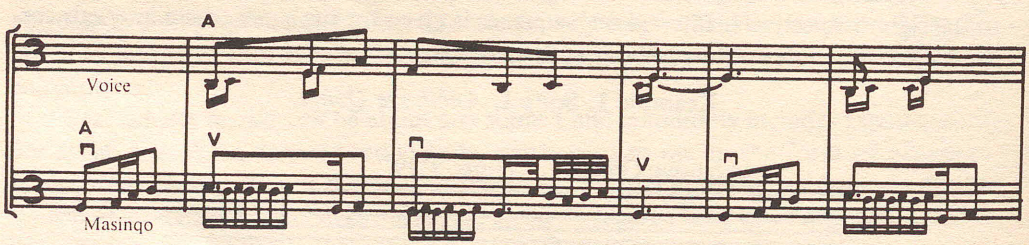
Essential[9] pitches are notated with stems facing up and ornaments are notated in sixteenth notes with stems facing down. The polarity pitch[10] preceding the ornament is always notated with two stems: the stem facing up indicates an essential pitch and the sixteenth note stem facing down indicates melodic continuity as well as the pivotal point next to which the ornament itself begins. Ornament types are written below the ornament.

Ex 3—VII—*Bati—masinqo*—m13.



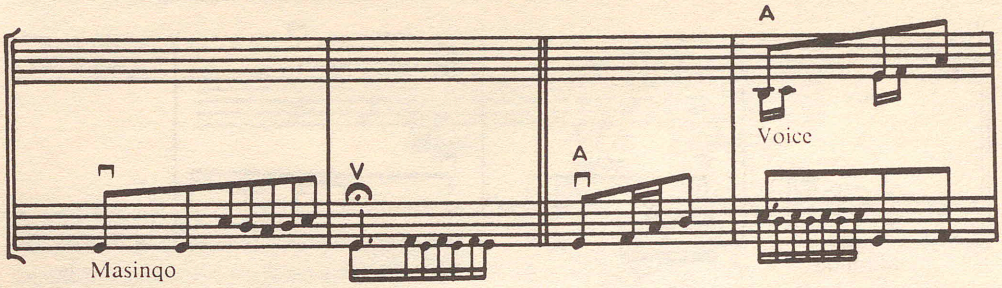
Phrase patterns[11] are marked in both parts at the beginning with the appropriate letter.

Ex 4—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*/vocal—m34–38.



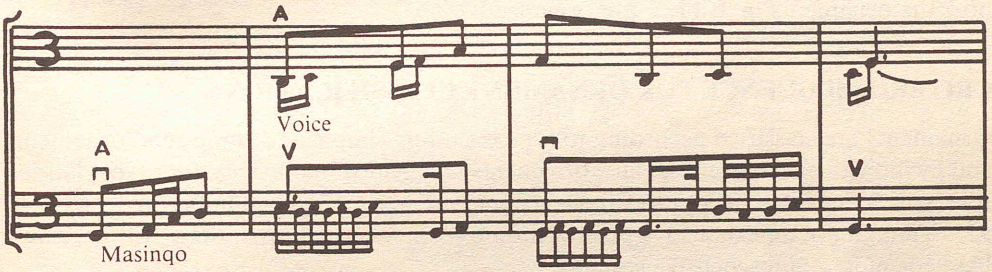
Phrase pattern sets[12] are marked off by double vertical bar lines.

Ex 5—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*/vocal—m32–35.



Each measure[13] is marked off by a single bar line.

Ex 6—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*/vocal—m34–37.

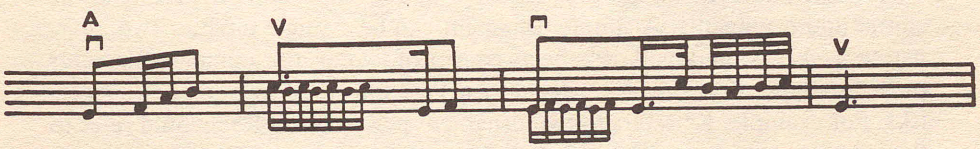


Three types of left hand *masinqo* fingering are used. The first and second types are most commonly used by the *masinqo* player.

Pitch	1	2	3	4	5
Fingering (the thumb is 1):					
Type I	0	1	2	3	4
Type II	0	1	2	4	5
Type III	0	2	3	4	5

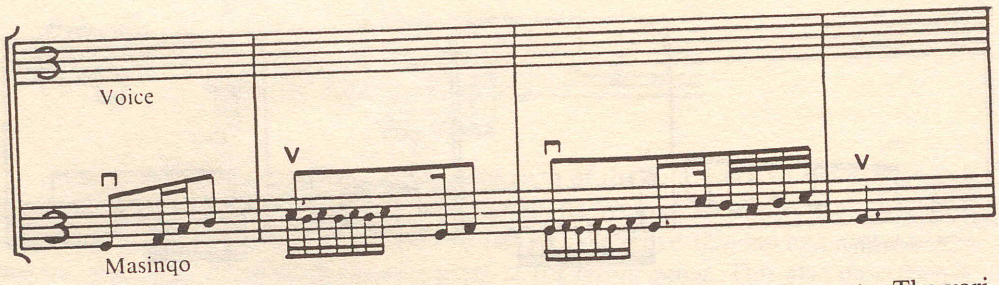
Masinqo bowing direction is indicated above the notes: down-bow with a "⊓" symbol and up-bow by a "V" symbol.

Ex 7—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m34–37.



Note groupings, either duple or triple, are designated with a "2" or "3" on the left hand side of the first two staves.

Ex 8—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m1–4.



A player can vary the basic melodic line through the use of ornaments. The various ornament types used in the songs are delineated in the following section, preceded by a criteria sequence used for ornament classification and succeeded by a key showing how the ornaments in Table 1 are organized.

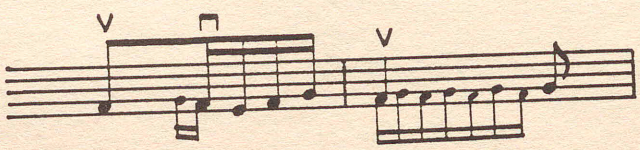
CRITERIA SEQUENCE FOR ORNAMENT CLASSIFICATION

Ornaments are classified according to type including simple and compound ornaments and by individual ornaments. Thus, ornaments are divided into twenty-four types labeled A–R which are subdivided into fifty-seven individual ornaments numbering from #1 to #57. Though not an exhaustive presentation of ornament patterns, these will provide a base for more comprehensive studies.

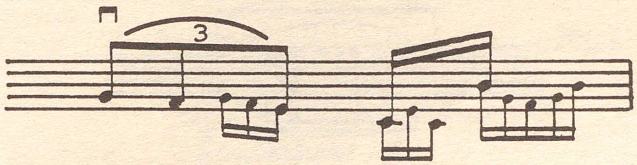
The following list gives a five criteria sequence used for the ornament classification in Table 1, beginning with the ornament type (1) and ending with ornament complexity (5). The sequence reads as follows:

1) Ornament type A–R. Type is determined by the intervallic distance of the two polarity pitches for each *qəñət*. Harmonics are excluded. Some ornaments are grouped together because they fall under the same general type even though they do not necessarily have the same number of pitches.
2) Relationship of the polarity pitches from lower to higher pitch number.
3) Individual ornament pitch numbers from lower to higher pitch numbers.
4) Number of pitches in an individual ornament.
5) Ornament pattern complexity starting with the simple and proceeding to the compound ornaments. A simple ornament can be a single pitch or two alternating pitches. Compound ornaments consist of two or more simple ornaments played together as a unit. These ornaments are indicated by one or two asterisks. For example, K* refers to two ornament patterns and K** would refer to three ornament patterns played together as a unit. According to *azmari*, a simple ornament is considered less complex than a compound ornament.[14]

Ex 9—Simple Ornaments—VI—*Bati—masinqo*—M21–22.



Ex 10—Compound Ornaments—VI—*Bati—masinqo*—m17.

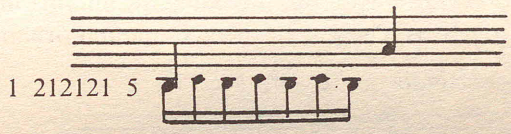


Two additional sequence criteria used are purely arbitrary: *qəñət* order: a) *ančihoye*, b) *ambasəl*, c) *təzəta*, d) *bati*, and song order I–VII. They merely further differentiate ornaments but are not integral to the classification itself.

KEY TO ORNAMENT CLASSIFICATION

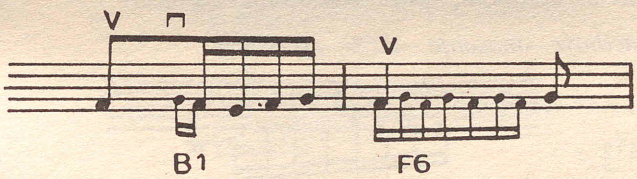
1) The ornament patterns are transcribed on a staff with pitch numbers written at the left of the ornaments. The lowest pitch is indicated by the number 1 and the highest pitch by the number 5.

Ex 11—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m51—ornament #57.



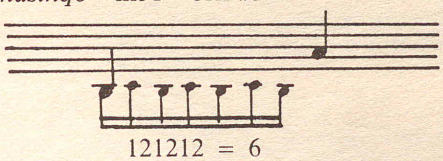
2) The letters A, B, C, D, etc., without asterisks, indicate an ornament pattern of one of two types: a single ornament pitch or an ornament consisting of two alternating pitches.

Ex 12—VI—*Bati—masinqo*—m21-22—orn #18,#40.



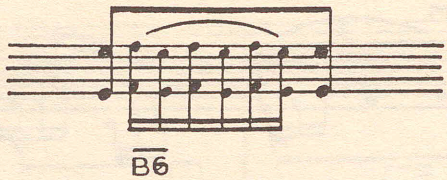
3) The numbers 1, 3, 6 etc., following the letter indicate the total number of pitches constituting the ornament. For example, if the ornament pitch pattern is 121212, the total number will be 6.

Ex 13—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m51—orn #57.



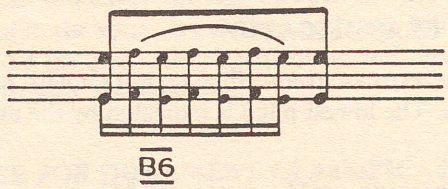
4) A line placed above the letter and number indicates that the octave above the fundamental is heard more prominently than the fundamental.

Ex 14—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m18—orn #16.



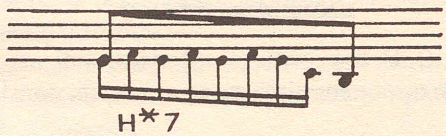
5) A line placed both above and below the letter and number indicates that the fundamental pitch and its octave are heard with equal intensity.

Ex 15—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m18—orn #16.



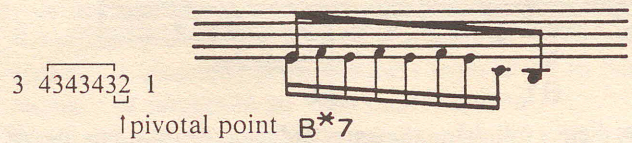
6) An asterisk (*) following a letter but preceding the number indicates that two or more patterns are used together. These are called compound ornaments.

Ex 16—III—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m62—orn #45.



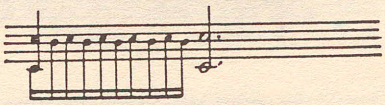
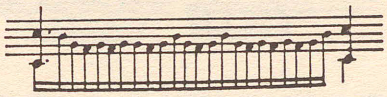
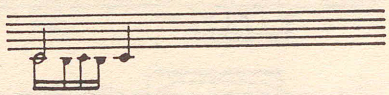
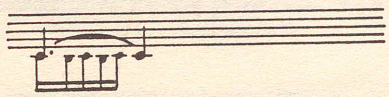
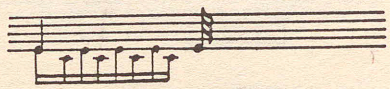
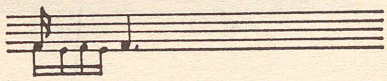
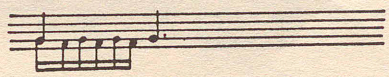
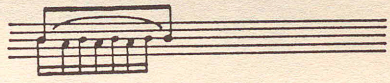
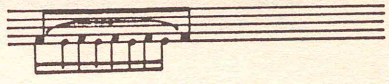
7) The individual patterns used in a compound ornament are marked in alternating brackets. The pivotal point is where two brackets meet.

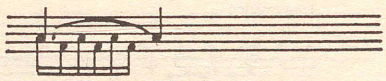
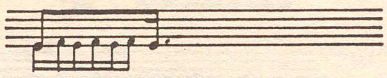
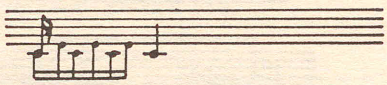
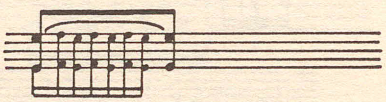
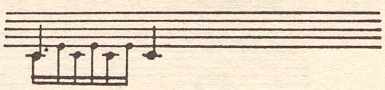
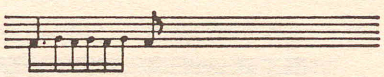
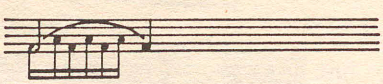
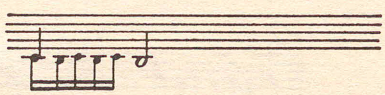
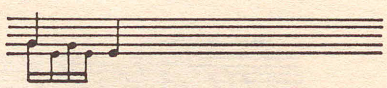
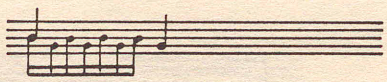
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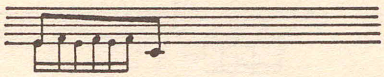
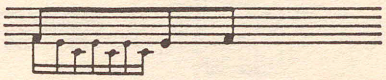
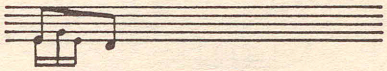
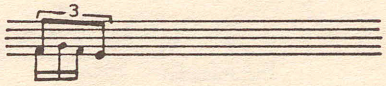
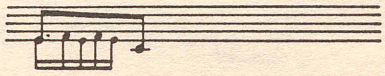
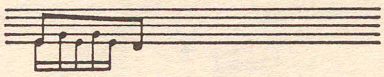
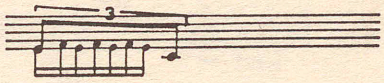
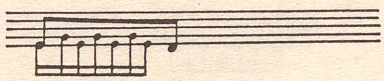
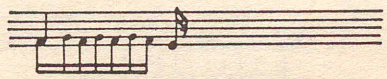
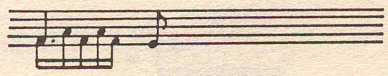
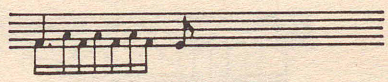
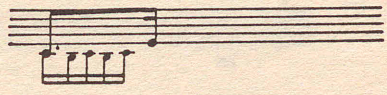


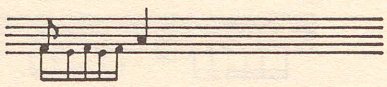
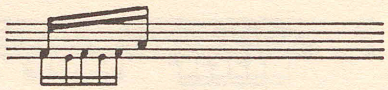
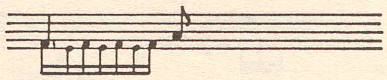
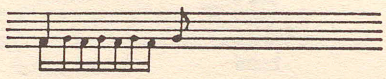
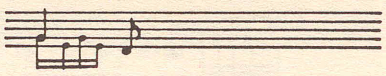
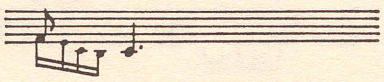
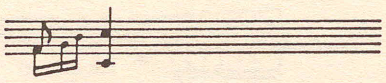
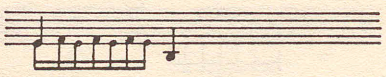
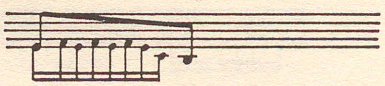
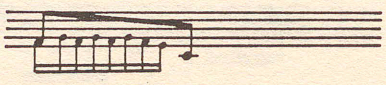
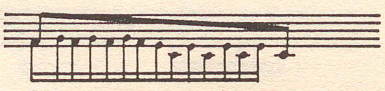
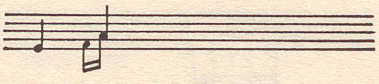
8) The two essential pitches immediately preceding and succeeding the ornament are the polarity pitches.

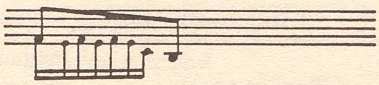
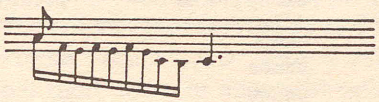
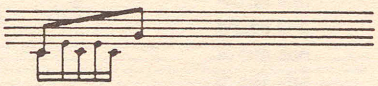
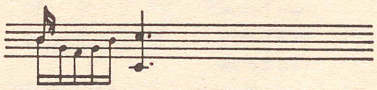
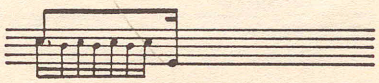
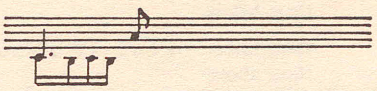
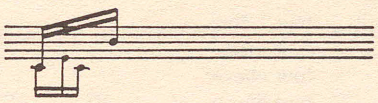
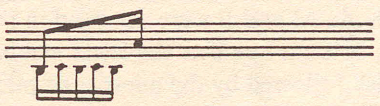
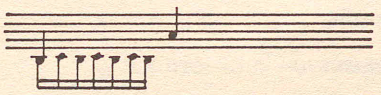
TABLE 1. CLASSIFICATION OF ORNAMENTS

No.	Type & number	Pitches: Polarities are placed first and last	Transcription	Song	Qəñət	Meas. intro.	Phrase pattern
1	A9	1 515151515 1		VII	bati	18 75	B' B''
2	A*22	1 5434344345434543434345 1		VII	bati		B'
3	A3	2 121 2		I	ančihoye	8	B
4	A4	2 1212 2		III	ančihoye	49	C
5	A7	2 1212121 2		VI	bati	6 14	A A'
6	A3	3 232 3		VI	bati	6	A
7	A5	3 23232 3		VI	bati	4 12	A A'
8	A5	4 34343 4		IV	ambasəl	8	A'
9	A5	4 34343 4		VI	bati	1	A
10	VII	4 34343 4		VII	bati	2	A
11	A6	4 343434 4		IV	ambasəl	17	C
12	A7	4 3434343 4		III	ančihoye	18	B

No.	Type & number	Pitches: Polarities are placed first and last	Transcription	Song	Qəñət	Meas. intro.	Phrase pattern
13	A5	5 45454 5		II	ančihoye	7 62	A A’
14	B5	1 21212 1		IV	ambasəl	3	A
15	B5	1 21212 1		VI	bati	15	A’
16	B6	1 212121 1		IV	ambasəl	18	C
17	B5	2 32323 2		III	ančihoye	3	A
18	B1	3 4 3		VI	bati	21 25	B B’
19	B5	3 43434 3		VI	bati	7 25(DR)*	A B’
20	B1	4 5 4		VI	bati	23	B
21	B5	4 54545 4		I	ančihoye	5	A’
22	C4	2 1212 1		I	ančihoye	10	B
23	C1	4 343 3		V	təzəta	2	A
24	C6	5 454545 4		VI VII	bati bati	2 9 4	A A’ A

No.	Type & number	Pitches: Polarities are placed first and last	Transcription	Song	Qəñət	Meas. intro.	Phrase pattern
25	D5	2 32323 1		VI	bati	26	B'
26	D6	3 212121 2		VII	bati	11 15 73	B B' B''
27	D2	3 43 2		V	təzəta	19	B
*DR = Different Rhythmic pattern							
28	D2	3 43 2		VI	bati	17	A'
29	D4	3 4343 2		I	ančihoye	7	B
30	D4	3 4343 2		V	təzəta	20	B
31	D6	3 434343 2		I II	ančihoye ančihoye	3 9(DR) 10(DR) 57	A B B A'
32	D6	3 434343 2		V	təzəta	5	A
33	D6	3 434343 2		VI	bati	15	A'
34	D4	4 5454 3		II	ančihoye	6	A
35	D6	4 5454 3		II	ančihoye	6	A
36	E4	2 1212 3		I	ančihoye	1 3 6	A A A

No.	Type & number	Pitches: Polarities are placed first and last	Transcription	Song	Qəñət	Meas. intro.	Phrase pattern
37	E4	2 1212 3		IV	ambasəl	30	C
38	E4	4 3434 5		III	ančihoye	57	C
39	E6	4 343434 5		I	ančihoye	1 50	A C
40	F6	4 434343 5		VI	bati	22	B
41	G3	4 343 2		V	təzəta	10	A'
42	G*3	4 321 2		III	ančihoye	18	B
43	H2	3 45 1		VII	bati	73	B''
44	H6	3 434343 1		I	ančihoye	51	C
45	H*7	3 4343432 1		III	ančihoye	62	C
46	H*7	3 4343432 1		VII	bati	4	A
47	H**13	3 4343432121212 1		VII	bati	13 17	B B'
48	J1	3 4 5		I	ančihoye	49	C

No.	Type & number	Pitches: Polarities are placed first and last	Transcription	Song	Qəñət	Meas. intro.	Phrase pattern
49	D*6	4 343432 1		III	ančihoye	22	B
50	K**8	5 43434321 2		III	ančihoye	58	C
51	N4	1 2121 4		VI	bati	27	B’
52	O4	5 4345 1		VI	bati	17	A’
53	O6	5 454545 1		VI	ambasəl	2 6	A A’
54	Q3	2 121 5		II	ančihoye	5	A
55	R2	1 21 5		VI	bati	17	A’
56	R4	1 2121 5		I I	ančihoye ančihoye	11 60	B A’
57	R6	1 212121 5		I	ančihoye	51	C

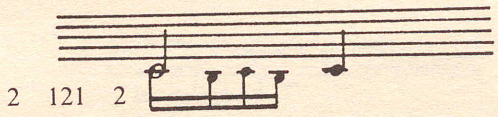
Of the twenty-four possible ornament types shown in Table 2, only nineteen are actually used in the songs.

TABLE 2. ORNAMENT TYPES

Type	Relationship of polarity pitches	Relationship of starting ornament pitch to the polarity pitch preceding
A	unison	below
A*	unison	below
B	unison	above
C	one below	below
D	one below	above
E	one above	below
F	one above	above
G	two below	below
G*	two below	below
H	two below	above
H*	two below	above
H**	two below	above
I	two above	below
J	two above	above
K	three below	below
K*	three below	below
K**	three below	below
L	three below	above
M	three above	below
N	three above	above
O	four below	below
P	four below	above
Q	four above	below
R	four above	above

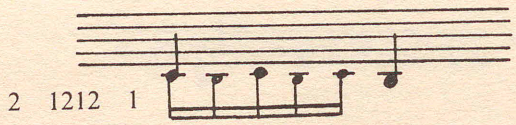
Ornament types I, K, L, M and P were not used in the seven songs. In reading the Table from left to right, column one lists the letter symbol designating ornament type with or without an asterisk followed by the number of pitches in the ornament. Column two indicates the pitch relationship of the two polarity pitches. Thus, "unison" means the two pitches are the same.

Ex 18—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m8—orn #3.



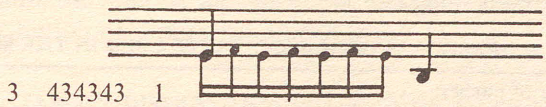
"One below" indicates that the polarity pitch succeeding is one pitch below the polarity pitch preceding.

Ex 19—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m10—orn #22.



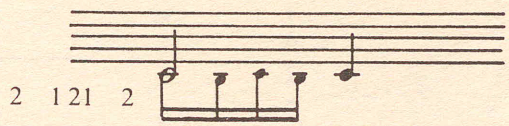
"Two below" indicates that the polarity pitch succeeding is two pitches below the polarity pitch preceding, and so forth.

Ex 20—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m51—orn #44.

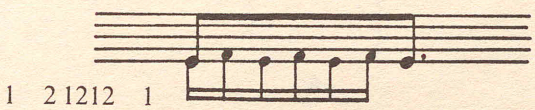


Column three indicates the pitch relationship between the polarity pitch preceding the first ornament pitch. Since the polarity pitch preceding and the first ornament pitch are always adjacent pitches, the terms "below" and "above" indicate that the first pitch of the ornament is notated either right below or above the polarity pitch preceding.

Ex 21—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m8—orn #3.



Ex 22—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m3—orn #14.



DISTRIBUTION AND ORNAMENT TYPES USED

Table 3 gives the distribution of ornament types among the songs.

TABLE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF ORNAMENT TYPES USED IN EACH SONG

	Song:							
Type	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	No. of Songs
A	X	X	X	X		X	X	6
A*							X	1
B	X		X	X		X		4
C		X			X	X	X	4
D	X	X			X	X	X	5
E	X			X				2
F						X		1
G				X				1
G*			X					1
H	X						X	2
H*			X				X	2
H**							X	1
I								0
J	X							1
K								0
K*			X					1
K**			X					1
L								0
M								0
N						X		1
O				X		X		2
P								0
Q		X						1
R	X	X				X		3

Table 4 gives the actual ornament types used plus the number of pitches contained in the ornaments in the seven songs.

TABLE 4. PITCH DENSITY OF ORNAMENT TYPES USED IN THE SONG

Ornament Type	Number of pitches: 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	13	22
A			1*	3	2		3		7		
			6	4		6					
					7						
A*									7		
B	6				1						
					3						
					4						
					6						
C			5	1	6						
					7						
D		5		1	6	1					
		6		2		2					
				5		5					
E				1		1					
				4							
F					6						
–											
G			5								
G*			3								
H		7		1		1					
H*						3					
						7					
H**											7
I											
J	1										
K											
K*						3					
K**								3			
L											
M											
N				6							
O				6							
P											
Q			2								
R		6									

1* = Song number

Tables 3 and 4, show that ornament types A, B, C, and D were used most often and are found in four to six of the seven songs. Four, five, and six pitch ornaments were most common. Eleven ornament types contained four or six pitches each and nine ornament types contained five pitches.

A total of fifty-seven different ornaments for the seven songs are listed in Table 1. Songs I–III and VI–VII, the three *ančihoye* and two *bati qəñət* songs employ ornaments most frequently with twenty-three for each *qəñət* probably because more songs were analyzed in those *qəñət*. The one *təzəta* and one *ambasəl qəñət* song contain five and six ornaments, respectively. Though two or more *qəñət* may have an ornament with the same

pitch numbers, e.g. numbers #31 and #32, they are different ornaments and listed separately because the interval sequence, not the pitch sequence, is different. Table 5 shows the distribution of ornaments among *qəñət*.

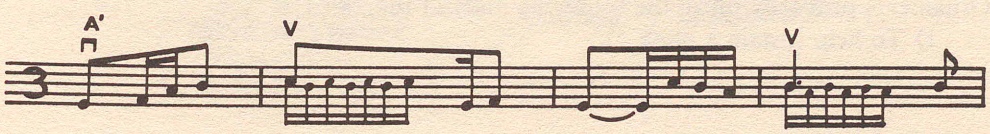
TABLE 5. DISTRIBUTION OF ORNAMENTS AMONG *QƏNƏT*

Ornament number	Qəñət Ančihoye	Ambasəl	Təzəta	Bati
1–2				X
3–5	X			X
6–7				X
8–12	X	X		X
13	X			
14–16	X			X
17	X			
18–19				X
20–21	X			X
22	X			
23			X	
24				X
25				X
26				X
27–33	X			X
34–35	X			
36–37	X	X		
38–39	X			
40				X
41			X	
42	X			
43				X
44	X			
45–46	X			
47				X
48	X			
49	X			
50	X			
51				X
52				X
53		X		
54	X			
55–57	X			X

ORNAMENT PLACEMENT

Though ornaments may be found almost anywhere within a phrase pattern, the majority of ornaments fall towards the middle and near the end of a phrase pattern rather than at the very beginning as in Song IV for phrase pattern A′.

Ex 23—V—*Ambasəl*—m5—8.



Songs I–IV contain no ornaments at all for one phrase pattern. Song I contains ornaments at the beginning of three phrase patterns. Songs I–IV contain ornaments toward or at the middle of the phrase pattern. And Songs IV and VI–VII use ornaments at the end of the phrase pattern. Below is a summary of ornament distribution within the phrase pattern:

Ornament Placement in the Phrase Pattern

Song	*Qəñət*	*None*	*Beg.*	*Mid.*	*End*
I–III	*ančihoye*	X	X	X	X
IV	*Ambasəl*	X			X
V	*təzəta*			X	
VI–VII	*Bati*			X	X

Most ornaments seem to fall around the middle or toward the end of a phrase. Songs I–III contain ornaments throughout the phrase pattern, at the end in Song IV, in the middle in Song V, and at the middle and end in Songs VI–VII.

ORNAMENT PITCH, DENSITY AND FREQUENCY

Ornaments may fall on any pitch. However in Song V in *təzəta qəñət*, the ornaments only contain pitches 3 and 4. Though ornament pitch density is unmeasured rather than measured, actual ornament durations depend upon a number of factors including: 1) the time line pulse as it relates to the phrase pattern or larger melodic unit, 2) tempo, 3) mood, 4) player's virtuosity, and 5) the *masinqo* player's finger flexibility at the time of performance.

Songs I–III and VI–VII employ ornaments most frequently. Songs IV and V contain only simple ornaments while the more difficult songs such as I–III VI and VII also contain compound ornaments.

Song V uses only conjunct ornaments and no disjunct ornaments.[15] Songs IV and VI–VII contain mainly conjunct ornaments but also include one disjunct ornament. But songs I–III contain conjunct ornaments and four disjunct ornaments which could be attributed to the greater difficulty in executing *ančihoye qəñət*[16]

ORNAMENTS AND RELATIVE AGE

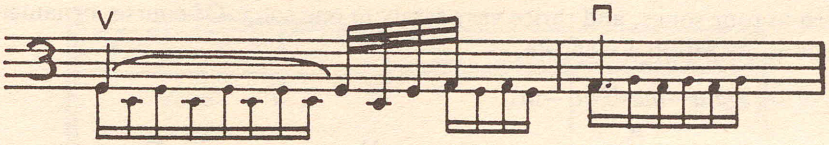
Although the instrumental part usually always contains more ornaments than the vocal part, the degree of difference between the two parts differs in the older versus the more recent *qəñət* songs.[17] That is, the more recent *qəñət* songs in *ambasəl* and *bati* use far more ornaments in the *masinqo* part than in the vocal part than the older *qəñət* songs in *ančihoye* and *təzəta*.

ORNAMENT FUNCTION IN MASINQO MUSIC

Ornaments primarily fulfill the following musical functions:

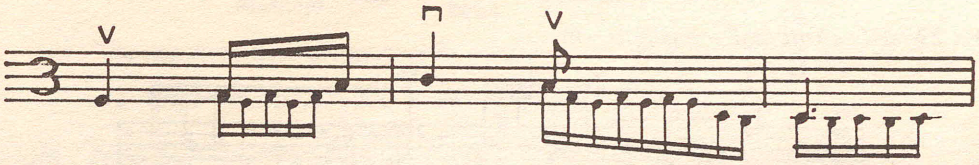
1) To help sustain a pitch.

Ex 24—VI—*Bati—masinqo*—m6-7.



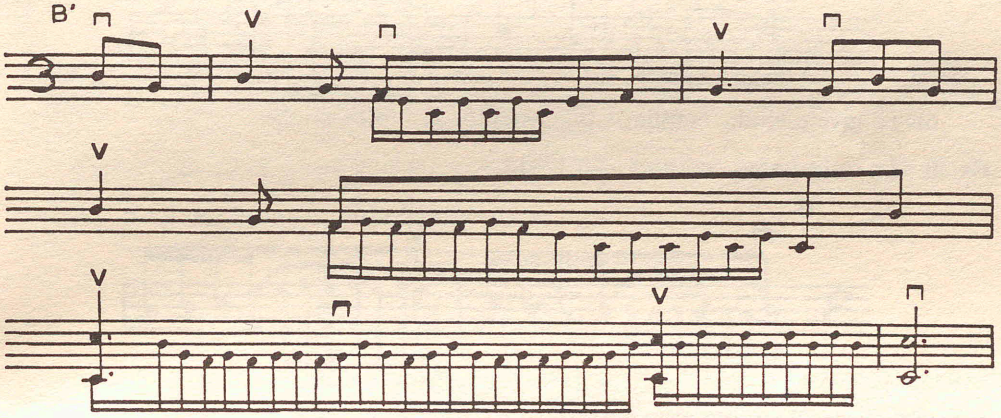
2) To keep the melodic line conjunct. Ornaments "fill in" disjunct intervals in the *masinqo* melody, as in Song III.

Ex 25—**III**—*Ančihoye—masinqo*—m89-91.



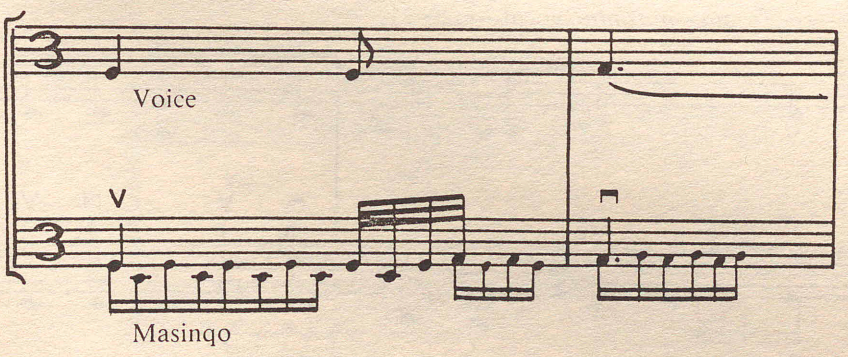
3) To display one's technical virtuosity.

Ex 26-VII—*Bati—masinqo*—m148-153.



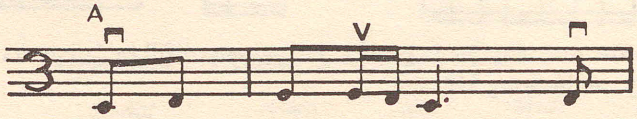
4) To increase the pitch density per measure in contrast to the vocal part where there are fewer pitches per measure.

Ex 27—VI—*Bati—masinqo*/vocal—m63-64.



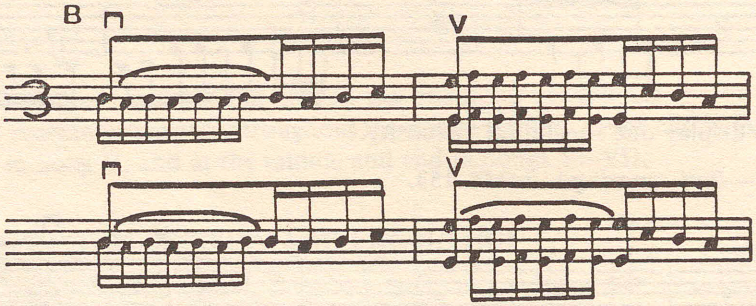
An ornament generally occurs at least once within a measure in all seven songs, twice less often in four songs, and thrice very rarely in one song. Of course, ornaments may not occur at all within a measure.

Ex 28—V—*Təzəta—masinqo*—m1.



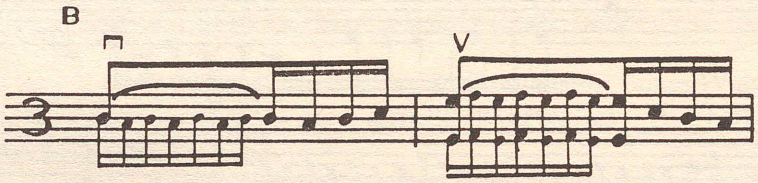
5) To change the harmonics make up.

Ex 29—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m1.



6) To give melodic emphasis to a pitch or group of pitches.

Ex 30—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*—m17-18.

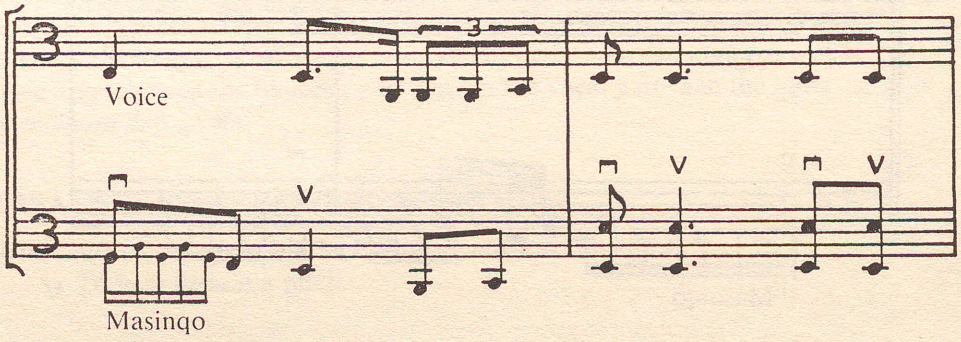


ORNAMENTS AND HETEROPHONY

Five ornament relationships are evident between the two parts. The *masinqo* uses more ornaments than the vocalist to

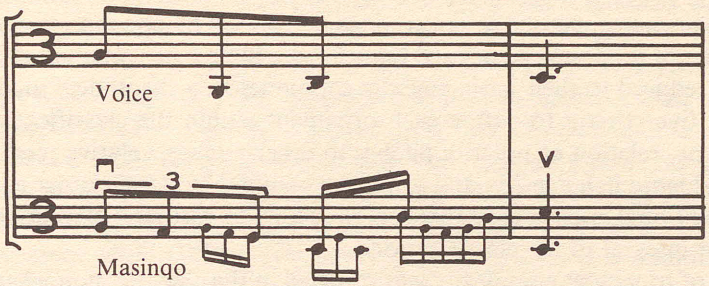
1) some extent

Ex 31—V—*Təzəta—masinqo*/vocal—m20-21.



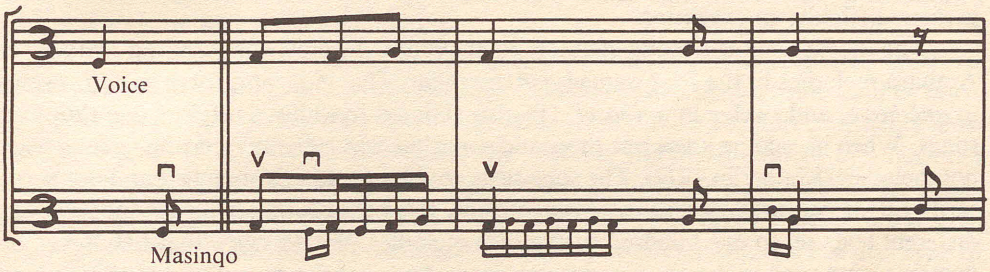
or to a 2) great extent.

EX 32—VI—*Bati—masinqo*/vocal—m74–75.



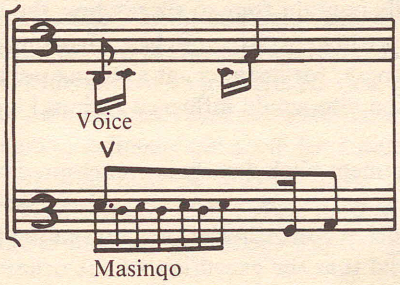
3) The *masinqo* uses ornaments in places where the vocalist uses none.

Ex 33—VI—*Bati—masinqo*/vocal—m89–92.



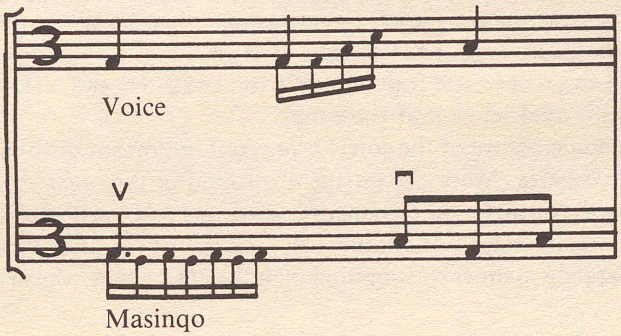
The vocal and *masinqo* sections may use different ornaments 4) simultaneously

Ex 34—IV—*Ambasəl—masinqo*/vocal—m47.



or 5) in the same measure but not necessarily simultaneously but rather overlapping or sounding on adjacent pitches.

EX 35—I—*Ančihoye—masinqo*/vocal—m25.



SUMMARY, OBSERVATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

In classifying ornaments used in seven songs performed by one musician, it was found that they are not randomly composed but follow a logical progression. After the ornaments were reduced to their basic melodic components, a theoretical model was developed using five criteria to define each ornament within the classification sequence: ornament type, relation of polarity pitches to other pitches, relative pitch relationship from low to high, pitch density, and ornament complexity. *Qəñət* order and song order were two additional criteria used that served merely to further differentiate ornaments but were not integral to the classification.

Degree of ornament complexity was revealed in the classification where ornaments are built up from simple to compound patterns and from conjunct to disjunct intervals. According to informants, the greater number of different ornament patterns performed as a single unit and the more disjunct intervals used, result in greater complexity and greater difficulty in execution.

The musician in the study claimed he knew how to play one hundred forty-seven Amhara melodies in the four named *qəñət*: seventy-five in *təzəta*, forty in *bati*, twenty in *ančihoye*, and twelve in *ambasəl*. He also claimed to know a total of one thousand songs. When he said he knew one thousand songs, he was actually referring to song texts, not melodies (Kimberlin 1972). The song texts could refer to any song text and not necessarily performed with *masinqo* accompaniment. It is possible that he knew one thousand different texts set to one hundred forty-seven melodies. We do know that fifty-seven ornaments were used in the seven songs analyzed. And that the ornaments used in a single song ranged from five to twenty-two. His total ornament output from his entire *masinqo* repertoire is not known.

His ornaments usually contain four to six pitches, the latter most frequently used from a total range of two to twenty-two pitches. Ornaments at the higher end of the range would be used sparingly, for instance, at a climax point or for text emphasis. The audience and social occasion also would influence various kinds of "ornament response" from the performer.

It was found that ornament pitch density is unmeasured rather than measured. Exact number of pitches is not as important to the *azmari* as rhythmic precision. It does not matter if the ornament pattern consisting of two alternating pitches is executed in six or ten pitches. But it is crucial that the execution of the ornament takes place within the allotted time span.

The majority of his ornaments are executed toward the middle and towards the end of a phrase pattern. It may be that he first prefers to set the time line pattern for the audience and build up to the ornament gradually. For all the songs, conjunct ornament types A–D were most commonly used. For six songs, disjunct ornament types G–R were used sparingly. On the average, one type was used per song. Compound ornament types, the most difficult to execute, are found in only the Songs III and VII. Three compound ornament types are used in each of the songs.

The heterophonic nature of the songs brings out important distinctions between the vocal and *masinqo* parts. More ornaments are found in the *masinqo* part than in the vocal part. The same or different ornament is often used in both parts in the same measure but not necessarily played simultaneously. Rather, the musician executes the ornament in an overlapping manner or sounding on adjacent pitches. Vocal and instrumental

parts in Songs I–III and V in *ancihoye* and *təzəta qəñət* have a more homogeneous relationship with fewer contrasting characteristics. The vocal part is basically dominant with the *masinqo* in a supportive position. The two parts in Songs IV and VI–VII in *ambasəl* and *bati qəñət* are more egalitarian with greater contrasting characteristics.

Ančihoye and *bati qəñət* songs contained far more ornaments than the other two *qəñət*. It is also known that *ančihoye* and *bati* songs are more difficult to perform than *təzəta* and *ambasəl qəñət* songs. In the Amhara tradition, all *azmari* can play in *təzəta qəñət*, then *ambasəl*, followed by *bati* and then *ančihoye*, the most difficult of the four known named *qəñət*. One explanation might be that more ornaments are required to perform in those *qəñət* with success. The *səlləla* is an exception. It is traditionally a song readying one for war or a show of patriotism and is played in either *təzəta* or *ančihoye qəñət*. It is a virtuoso type composition and the most difficult to play primarily because it calls for the musician to use more ornaments in this category of songs than in others. It is said to be performed by only the best players. One way to ascertain a musician's ability is to have him perform a *səlləla*.

In the future, it might be interesting to test if the ornament characteristics most frequently found in a musician's performances could be used to define some kind of norm in Amhara style *masinqo* performance in general. Could what the audience hears most often in the musician's performances also be heard in the performances of a majority of *amzari* who perform in the Amhara style? What particularly distinguishes the model musician's style and ability from other players? Might it possibly be those characteristics he uses least frequently? These might include in combination, the use and type of compound ornaments, the use and type of disjunct intervals, the placement of these ornaments within the phrase pattern, the range of ornament types within a composition, and how all of these characteristics collectively help define the model musician's style.

In conclusion, ornament classification can help define the dynamics of technical ability and distinctive musical style of a particular musician. As a tool, it needs to be used in conjunction with the whole myriad of characteristics that constitute ability and style in a particular culture to obtain a balanced and accurate picture. For subsequent studies it could be expanded and begin to delineate the norm for a particular group of individual performers like ethnic group and also be utilized cross culturally. Expanding the parameters of a musical characteristic such as an ornament for analytical studies broadens our knowledge about musicans and their musical performance.

NOTES

1. See definition of "azmari" on page 266.
2. Alemayehu Fantay is an accomplished master musician who is considered by the Ethiopians as one of the foremost *masinqo* performers living today if not the finest in the Amhara tradition. He is also a teacher of *masinqo* at the Yared Music School in Addis Ababa and Director of a private performing group in-Addis Ababa. While I was in Ethiopia in 1972–73, I was able to observe Alemayehu in many roles: my *masinqo* teacher and a teacher to other *azmari*, *masinqo* instructor at the Yared Music School, performer, interpreter, informant, and colleague.
3. In *Masinqo and the Nature of Qəñət* (Kimberlin 1976), the music of forty-one *azmari* were recorded in Addis Ababa and the *azmari* and several informants were interviewed in 1972–73. They offered opinions and comments regarding various aspects of *masinqo* performance and criteria used to assess a *masinqo* performer's technical ability and musical style.
4. Alemayehu Fantay, personal communication 1972.

5. Tsegaye Debalke, personal communication 1972.
6. *Qəñət* is an interval set on which Amhara music is built. It consists of two mutually exclusive, intervallically permutated interval sets. There are two *qəñət* in each set: *təzəta* and *bati*; *ančihoye* and *ambasəl*. The four known *qəñət* have the following approximate interval sequences given in cents:

Təzəta	210	175	340	140	325
Bati	325	210	175	340	140
Ančihoye	135	360	120	345	235
Ambasəl	120	345	235	135	360

   Interval, not pitch relationship, is fixed as pitch is determined by the performer's tessitura.
7. Interval set sequence refers to the interval sequence found in any *qəñət*.
8. See above under 3.
9. Essential pitches refer to the pitches of the main melodic line where the melody would be considered incomplete without all the main pitches.
10. Polarity pitch refers to an essential pitch immediately preceding or succeeding an ornament.
11. Phrase pattern(s) is the shortest melodic unit that functions as a complete entity in itself and is not usually subdivided into shorter units. Phrase patterns can be repeated in the same or different sequence.
12. Phrase pattern set refers to one or more melodic phrase patterns that usually constitute an uninterrupted vocal section or an uninterrupted instrumental section. A phrase pattern set can also be delineated by a cadencing or retardation at the end of a set, even between two vocal or instrumental sets, or the text can separate sets with each set introducing a new idea or different mood. A set corresponds with one or more text couplets, an instrumental introduction, or an instrumental interlude. Phrase pattern sets are either litanic, repeated over and over again in exactly the same sequence or cyclic in nature, repeated in a different sequence.
13. Measure refers to the distance between two time line pulses. Thus, the concept of two measures is actually the time between three time line pulses. Time line pulse refers to the regulative principle underlying *masinqo* music and is a recurring pulse which is felt overtly or inadvertently throughout a musical performance.
14. Alemayehu Fantay, personal communication 1972.
15. According to informants, *təzəta qəñət* is the easiest to play and the most popular *qəñət* of the four named *qəñət*.
16. According to informants, *Ančihoye qəñət* is the most difficult to play of the four named *qəñət*.
17. Kimberlin 1976:272–83.

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APPENDIX:

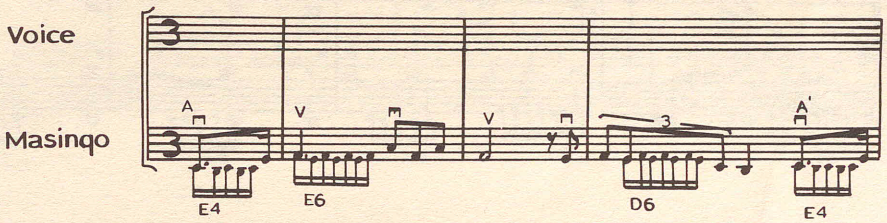
Musical Transcription Excerpts from Seven Songs

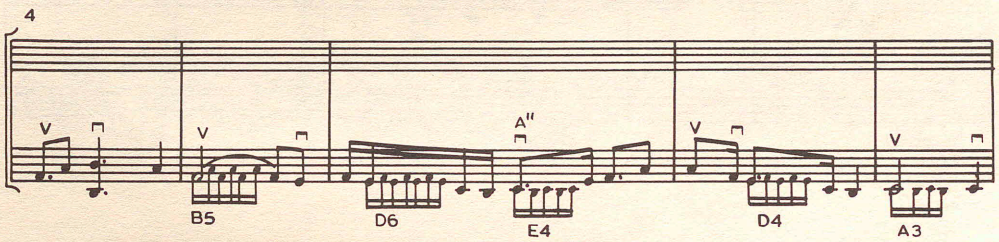
Song I
(Measures 1–29)

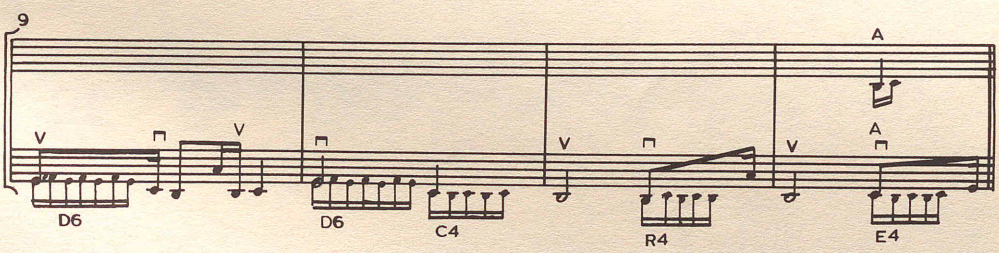
Ančihoye Qəñət Time: 2'29''

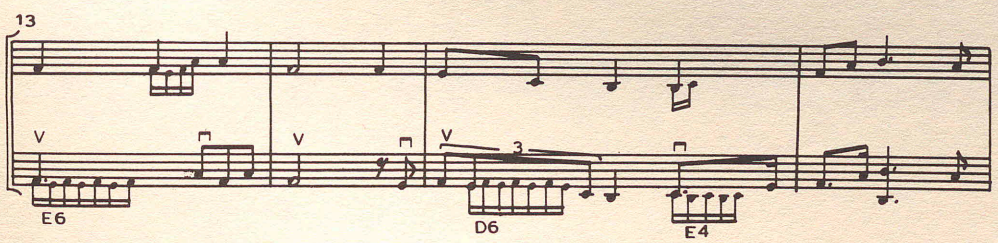


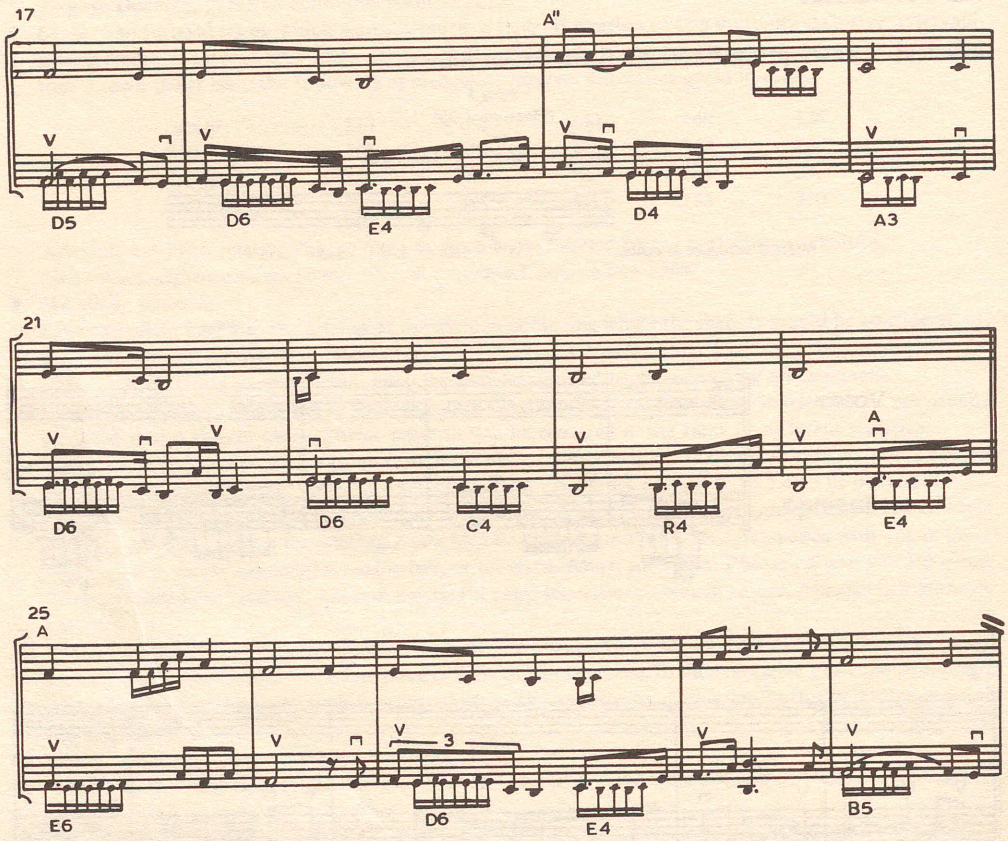
Interval sequence in cents: 135 360 120 345 235





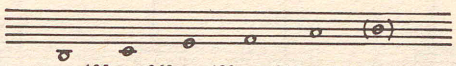




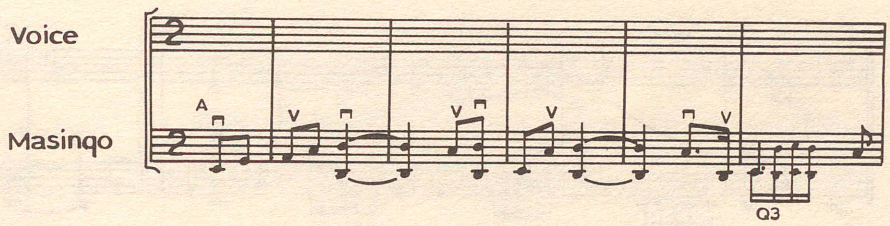

17
A"
V
V
V
V
D5
D6
E4
D4
A3
21
V
V
V
V
A
D6
D6
C4
R4
E4
25
A
V
V
V
3
V
V
E6
D6
E4
B5

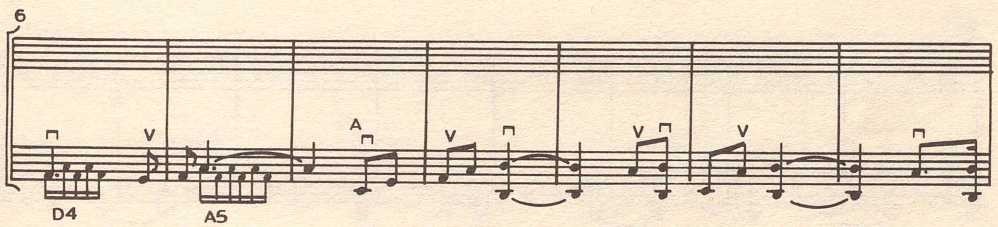
Song II
(Measures 1–63)

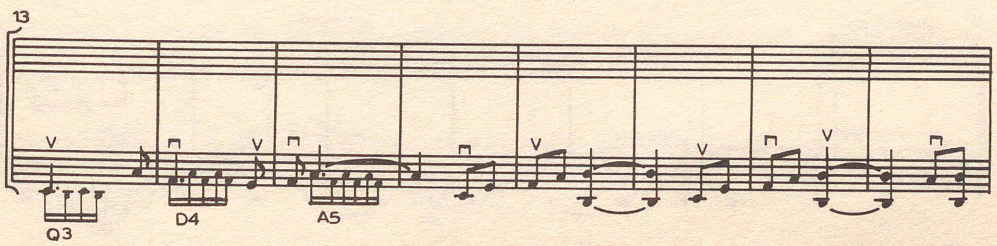
Ančihoye Qəñət Time: 2'30''

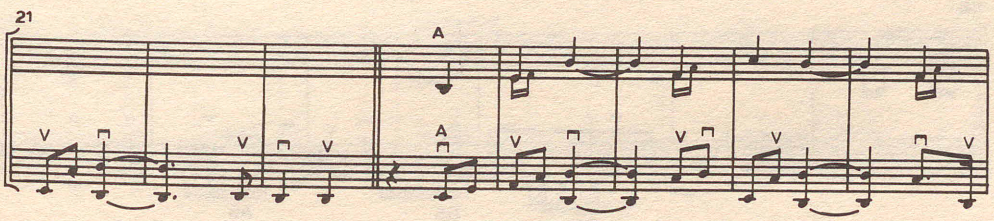


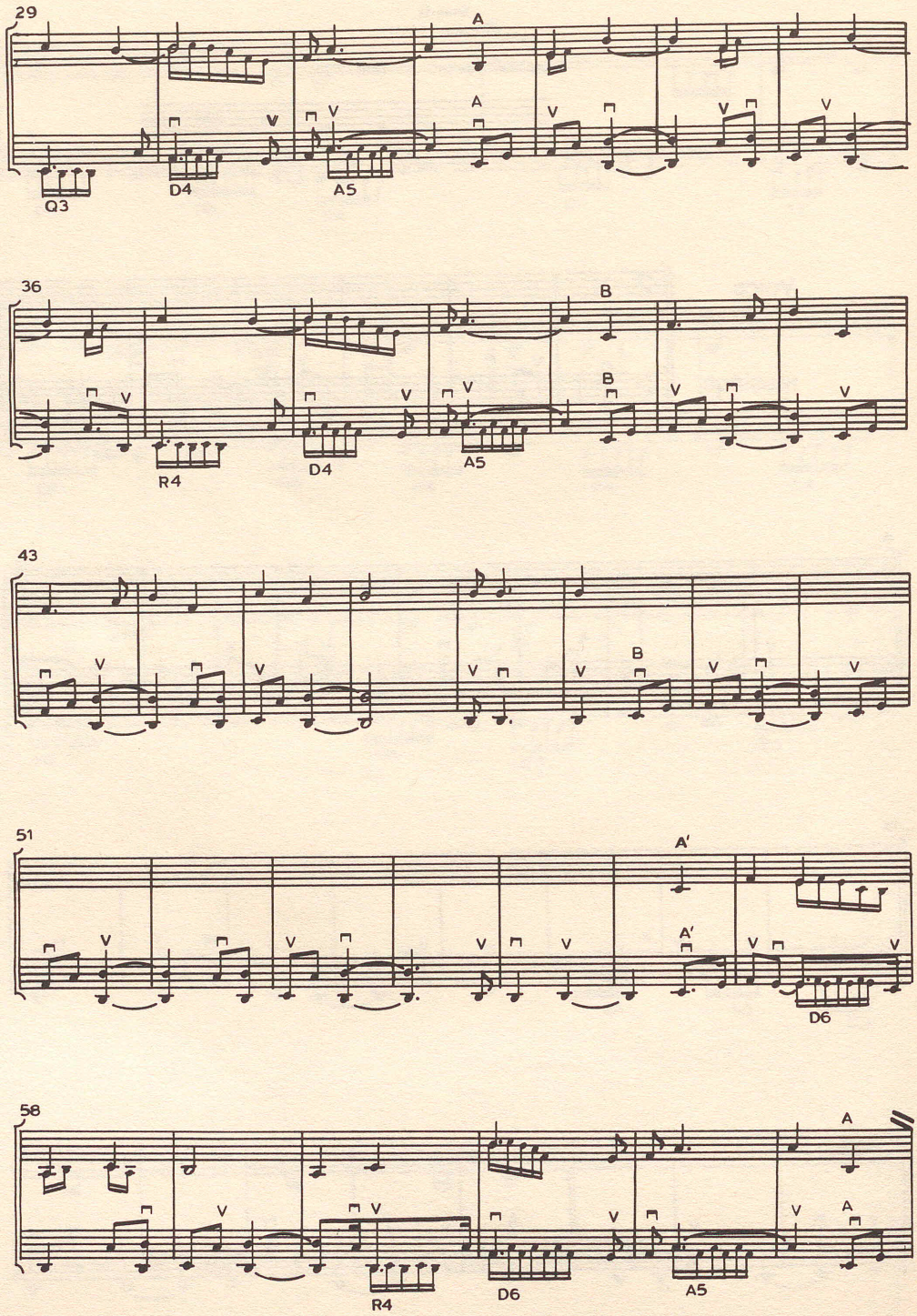
Interval sequence in cents: 135 360 120 345 235









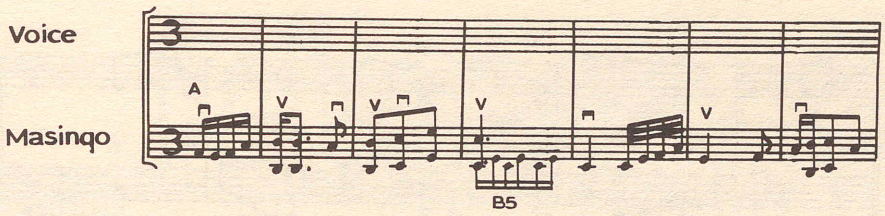

29
A
A
Q3
D4
A5
36
B
B
R4
D4
A5
43
B
51
A'
A'
D6
58
A
A
R4
D6
A5

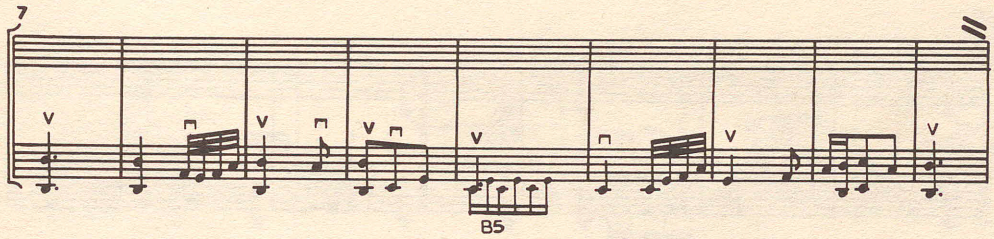
Song III
(Measures 1–15, 64–111)

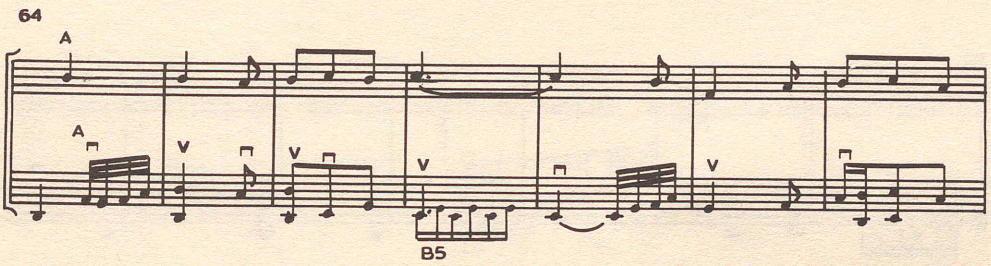
Ančihoye Qəñət Time: 2'25''

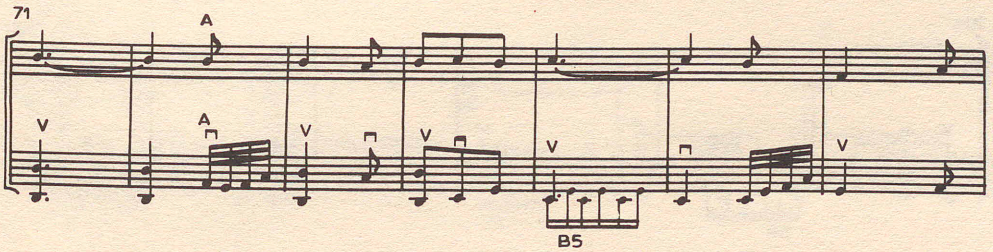


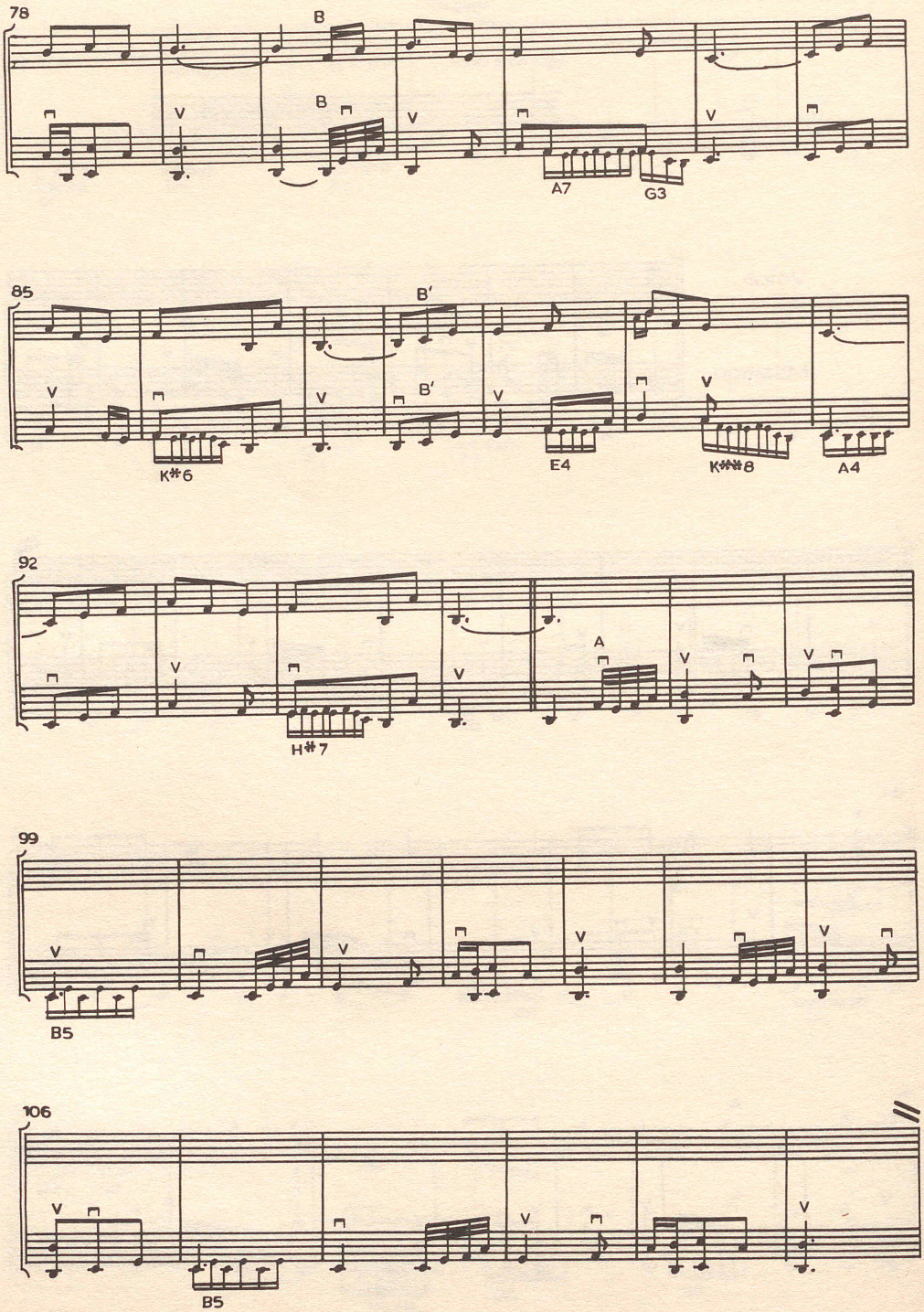
Interval sequence in cents: 135 360 120 345 235





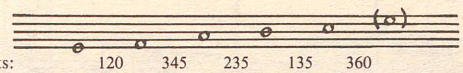




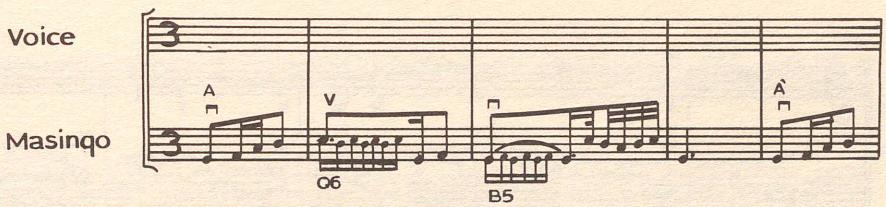

78
B
B
V
V
V
A7
G3
85
B'
B'
V
V
V
V
V
K*6
E4
K**8
A4
92
V
V
A
V
V
H*7
99
V
V
V
V
B5
106
V
V
V
B5

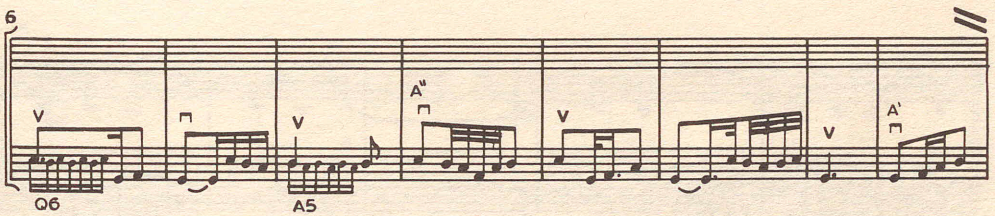
Song IV
(Measures 1–13, 34–93)

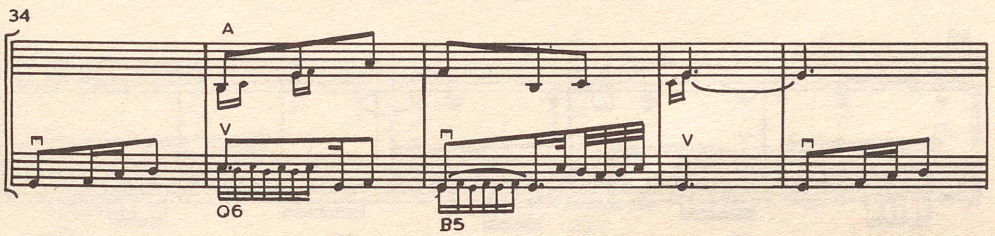
Ambasəl Qəñət Time: 3'10''

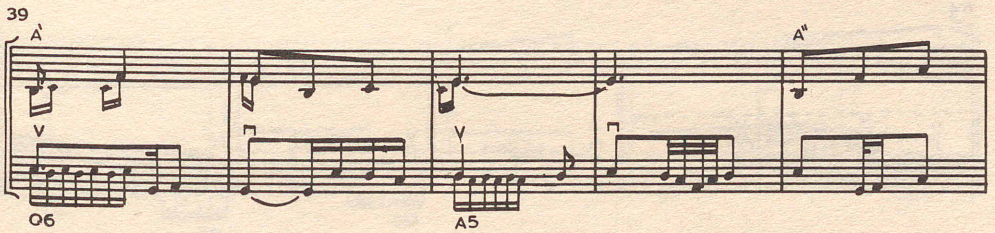


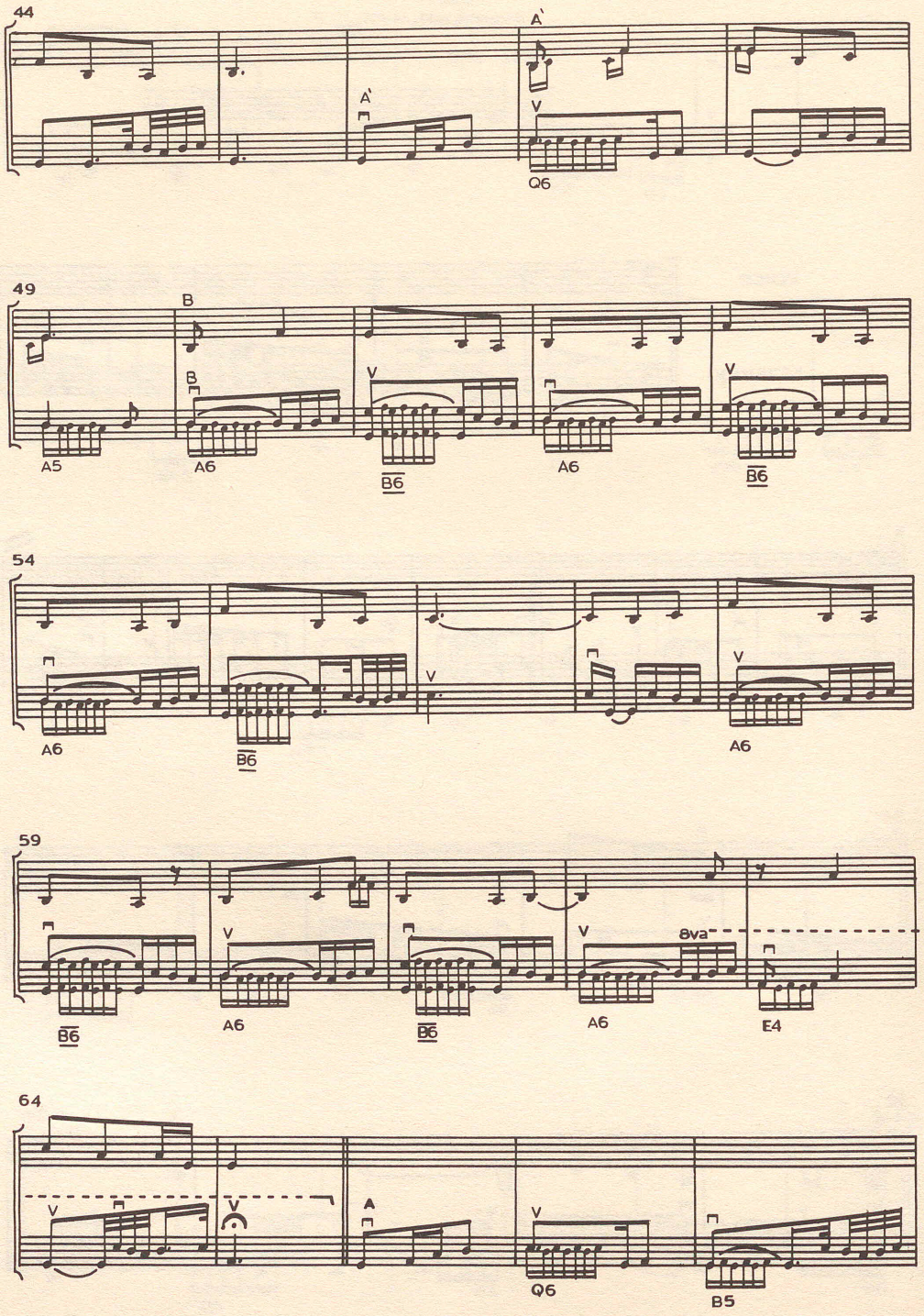
Interval sequence in cents: 120 345 235 135 360

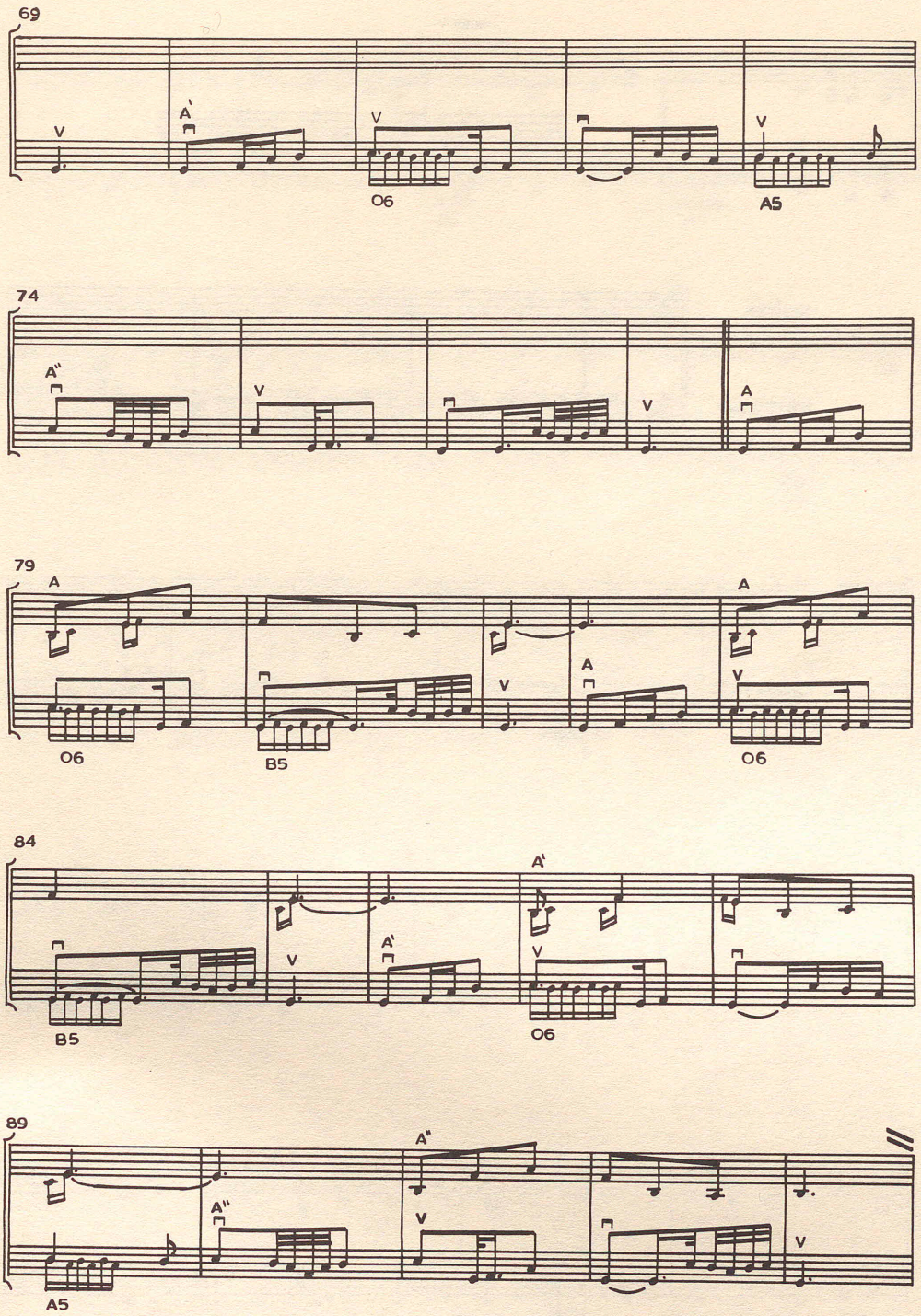






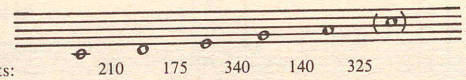



44
A`
A`
V
Q6
49
B
B
V
V
A5
A6
B6
A6
B6
54
V
V
A6
B6
A6
59
V
V
8va
B6
A6
B6
A6
E4
64
V
V
A
V
Q6
B5

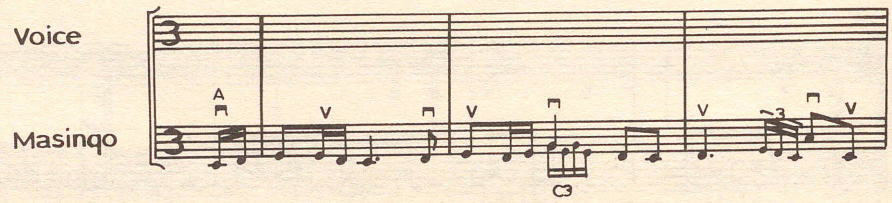

69
V
A'
V
O6
V
A5
74
A"
V
V
A
79
A
O6
V
B5
A
V
A
O6
84
B5
V
A'
A'
V
O6
89
A5
A"
A"
V
V

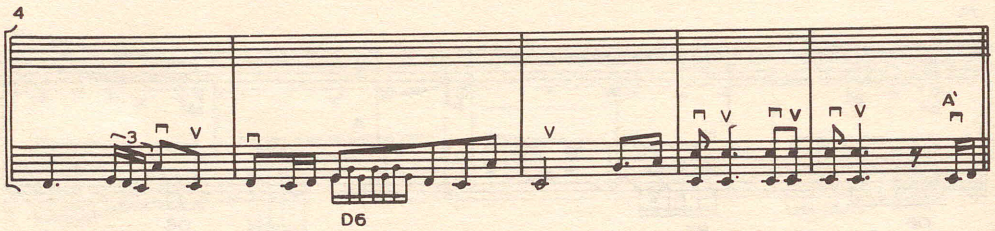
Song V
(Measures 1–32)

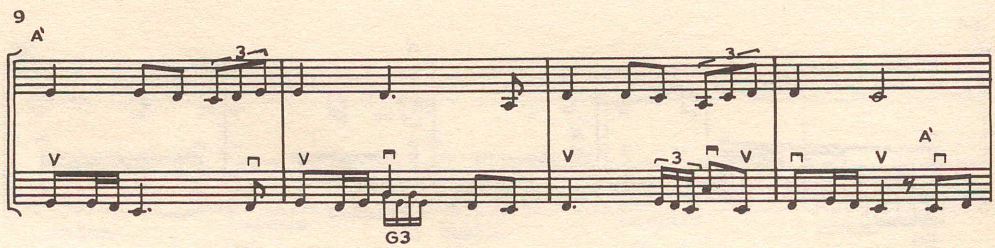
Təzəta Qəñət Time: 1'53''

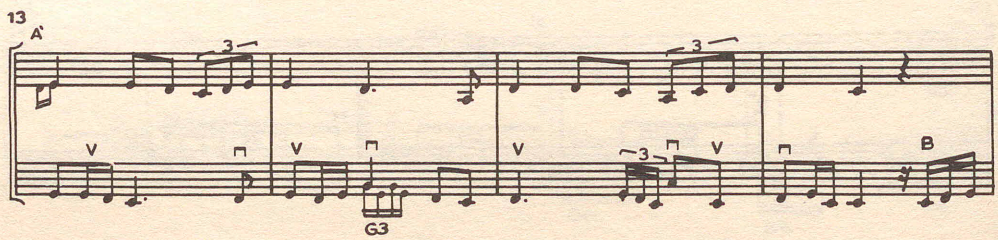


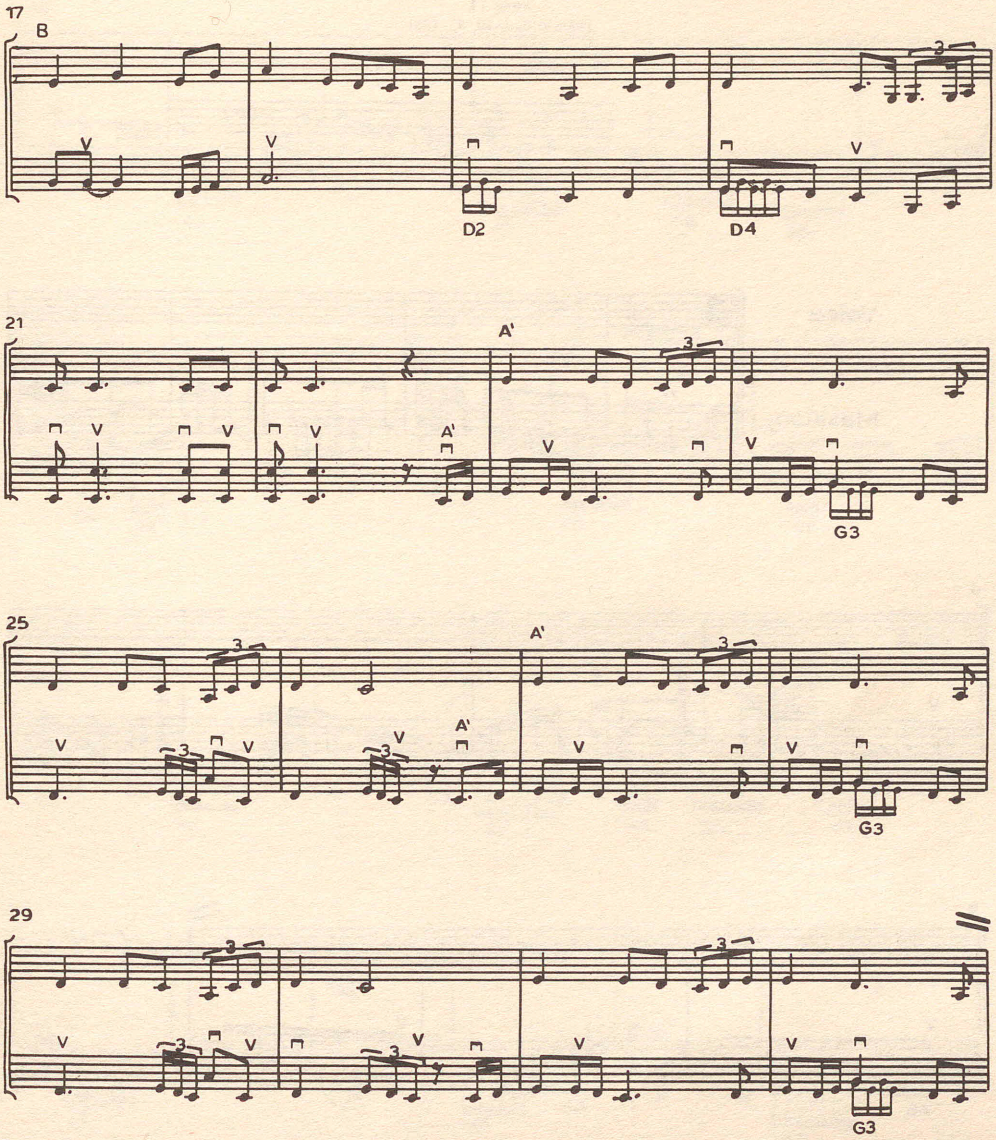
Interval sequence in cents: 210 175 340 140 325





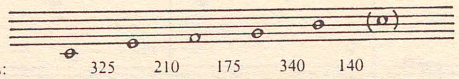




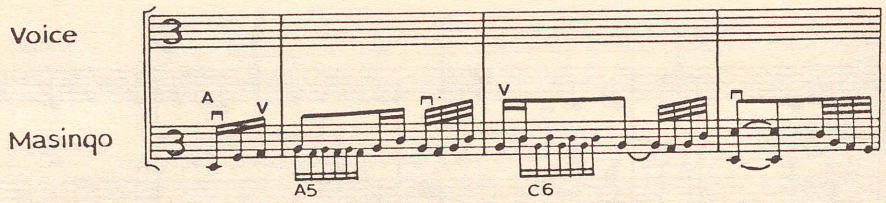

17
B
V
V
D2
D4
21
A'
A'
G3
25
A'
A'
G3
29
G3

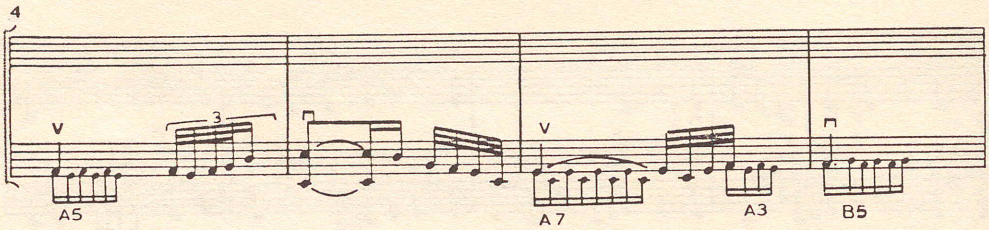
Song VI
(Measures 1–10, 43–106)

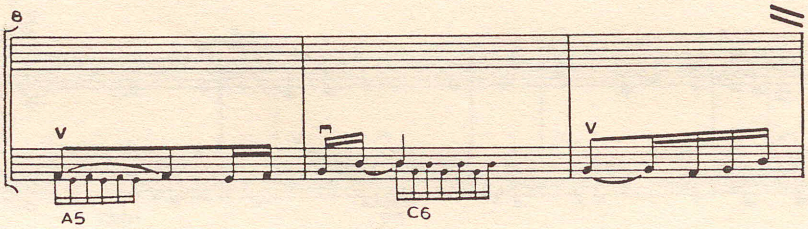
Bati Qəñət Time: 4'32''

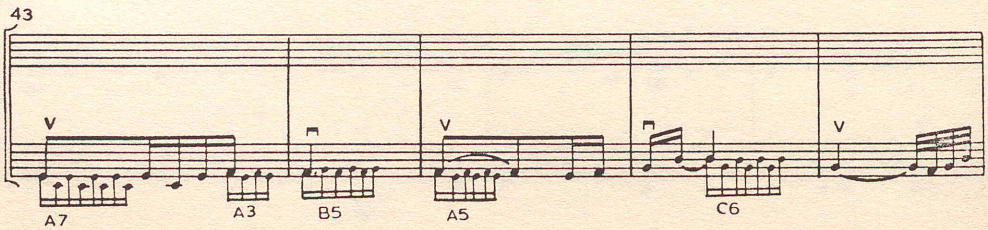


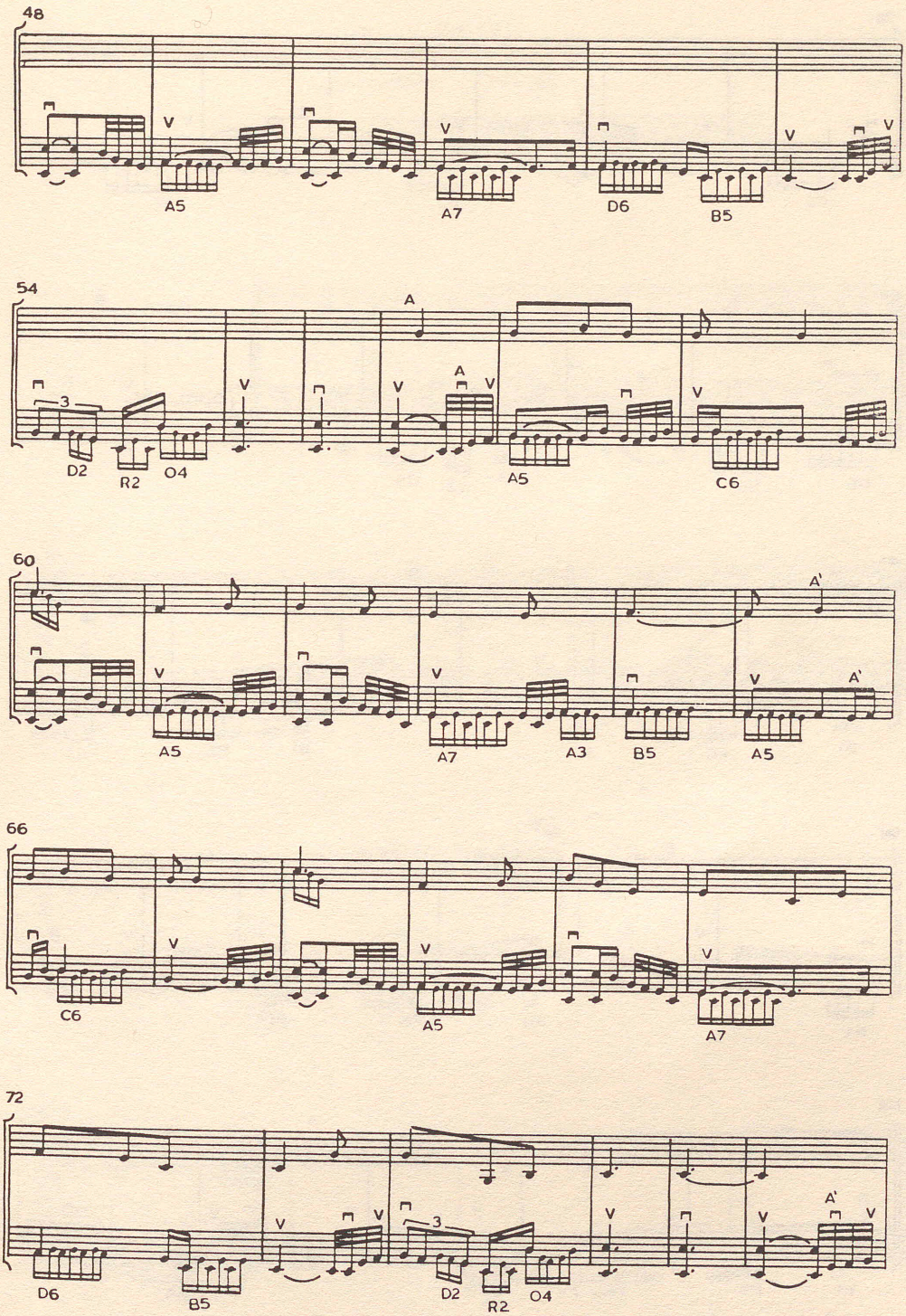
Interval sequence in cents: 325 210 175 340 140

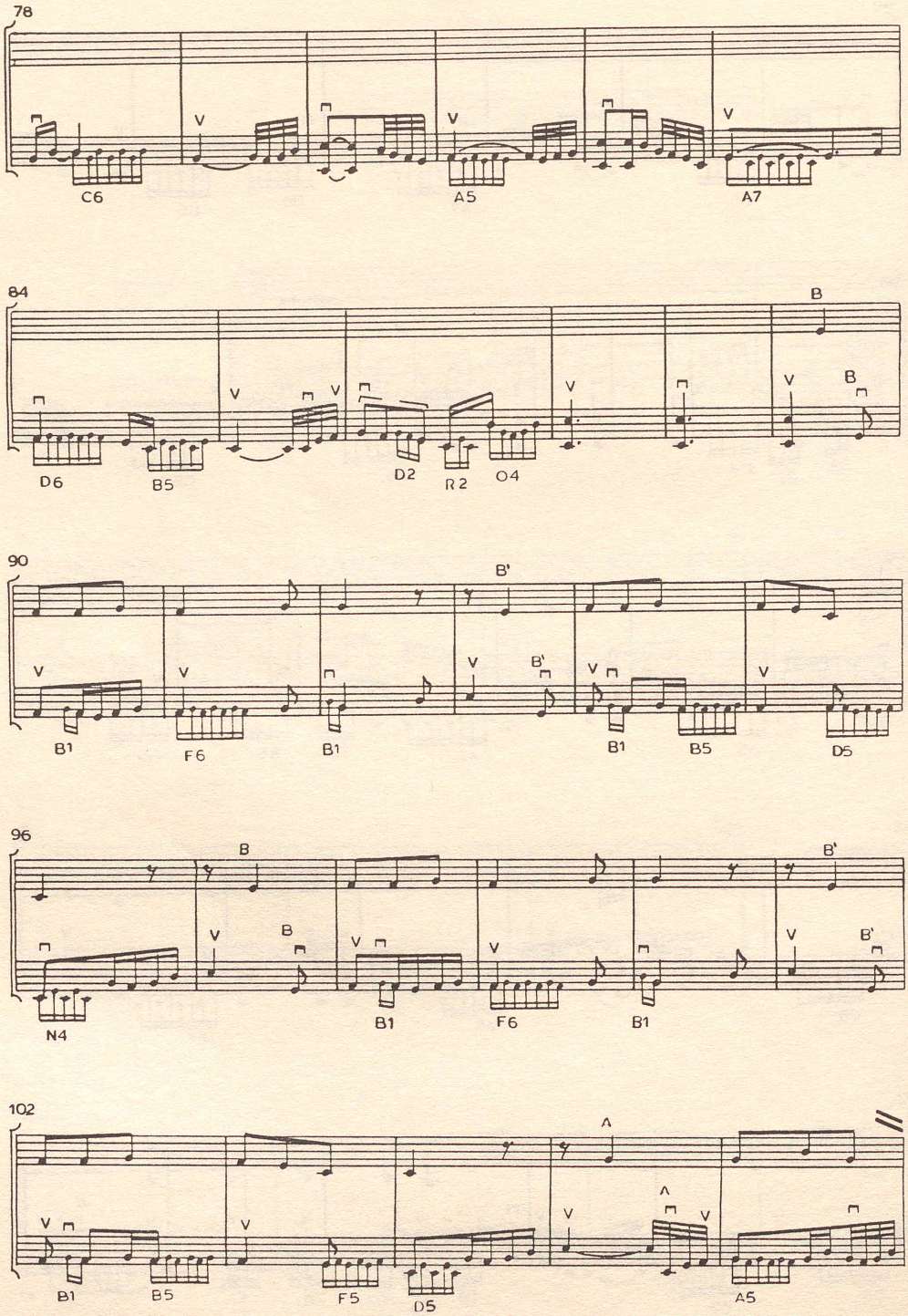






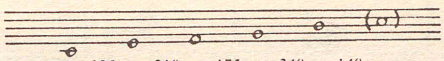



48
V
A5
V
A7
D6
V
B5
V
54
A
3
D2
R2
O4
V
V
A
V
A5
V
C6
60
A'
V
A5
V
A7
A3
B5
V
A'
A5
66
V
C6
V
A5
V
A7
72
V
D6
V
B5
3
D2
R2
O4
V
V
A'
V

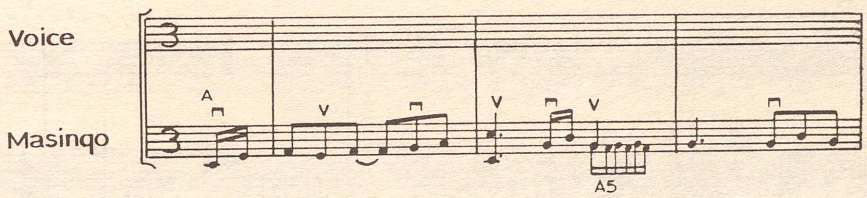

78
V
V
V
C6
A5
A7
84
B
V
V
V
V
B
D6
B5
D2
R2
O4
90
B'
V
V
V
B'
V
V
B1
F6
B1
B1
B5
D5
96
B
B'
V
B
V
V
V
B'
N4
B1
F6
B1
102
A
A
V
V
V
V
B1
B5
F5
D5
A5

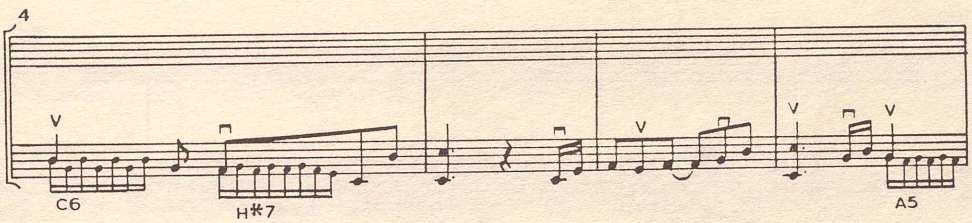
Song VII
(Measures 1–9, 86–133)

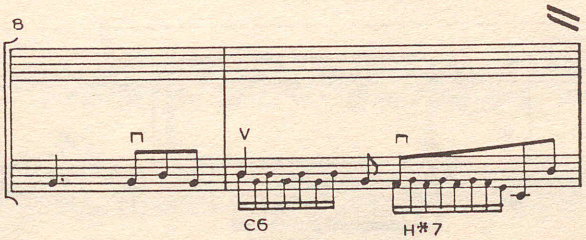
Bati Qəñət Time: 4'31''

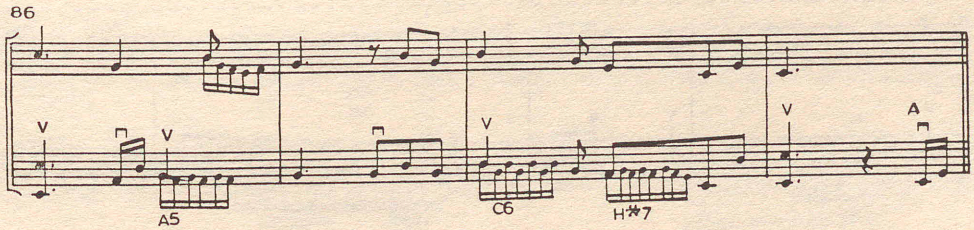


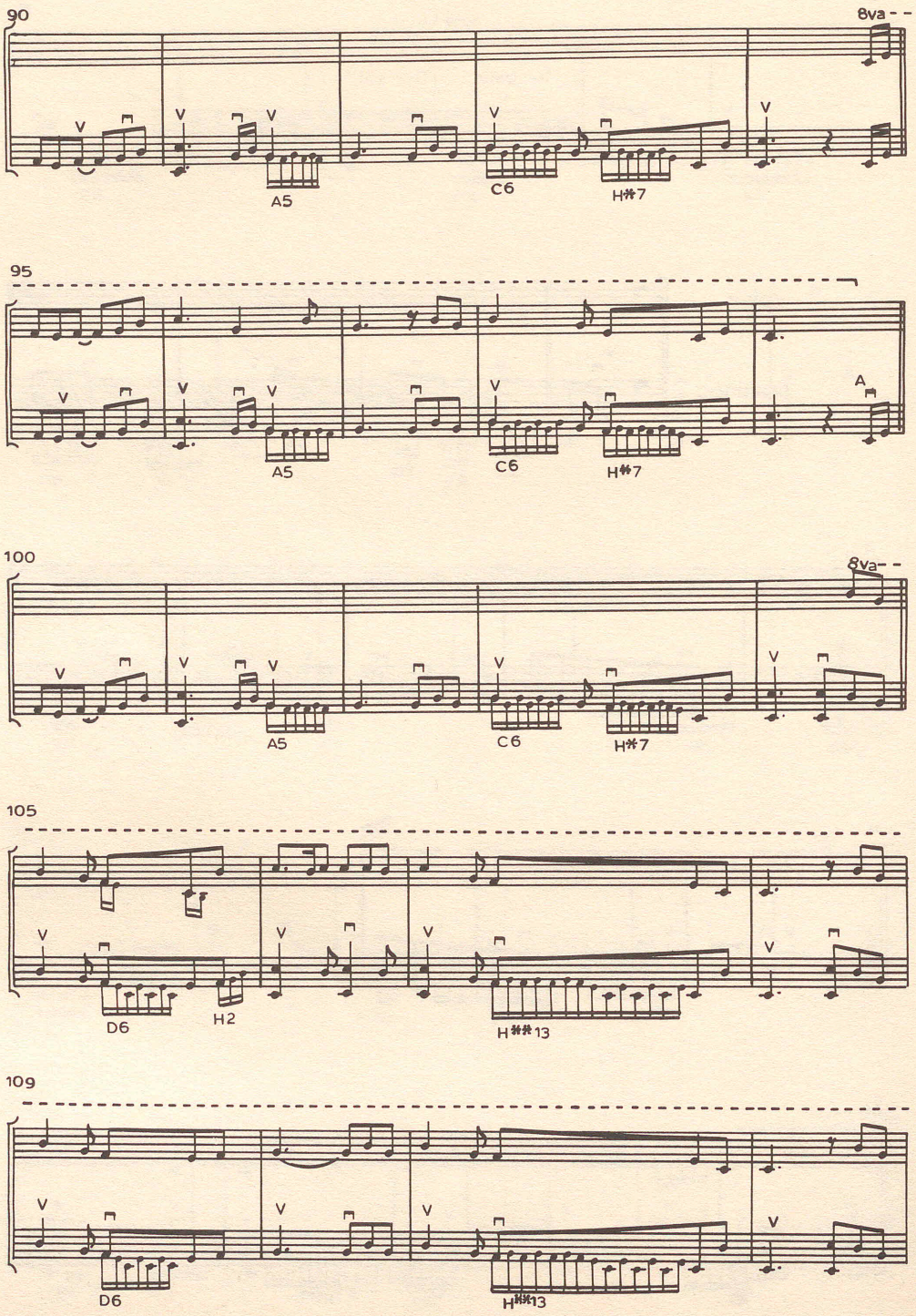
Interval sequence in cents: 325 210 175 340 140

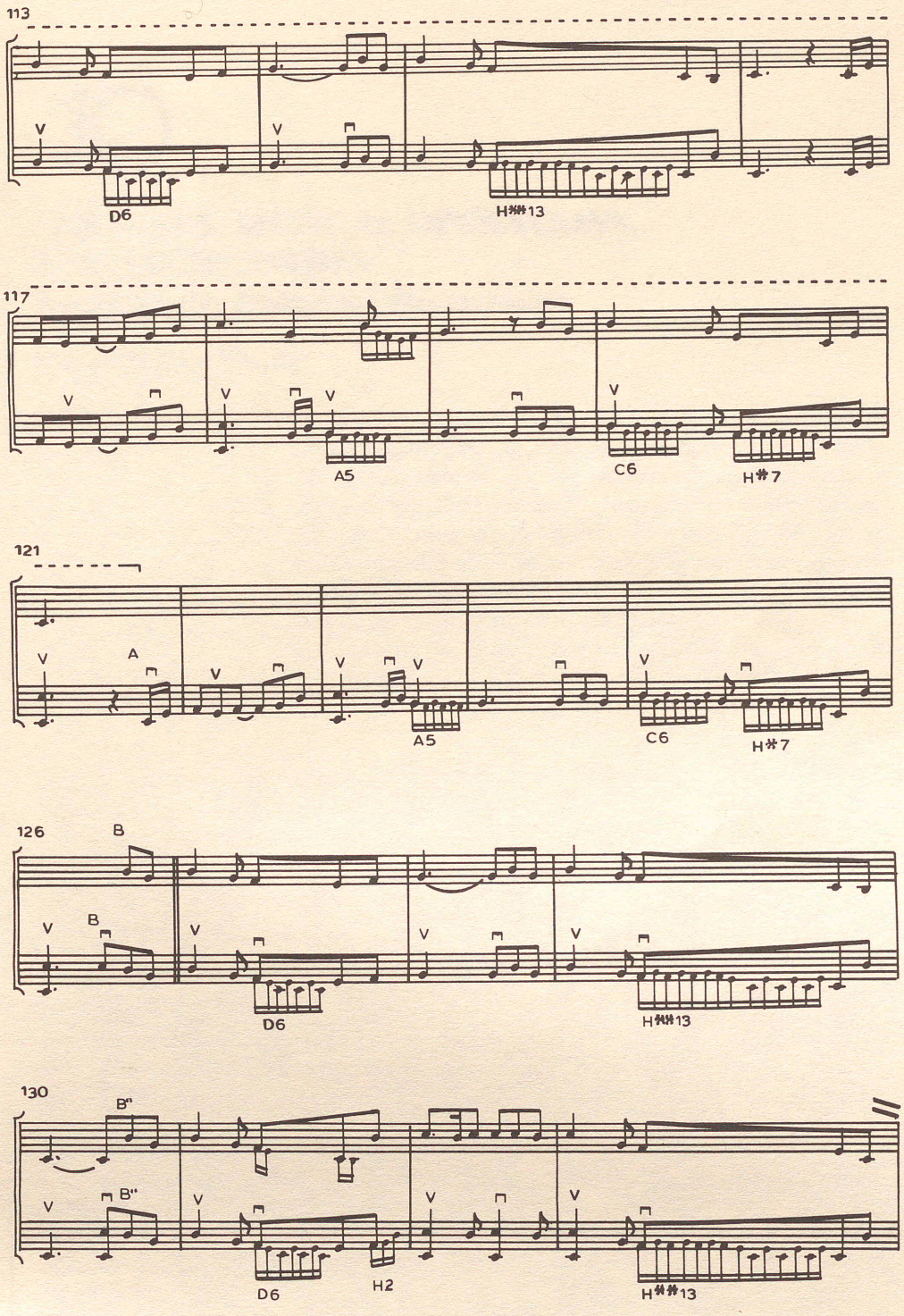








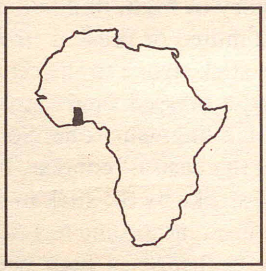

90
8va
A5
C6
H#7
95
A5
C6
H#7
100
8va
A5
C6
H#7
105
D6
H2
H##13
109
D6
H##13


113
V
V
D6
H##13
117
V
V
V
A5
V
C6
H#7
121
V
A
V
V
V
A5
V
C6
H#7
126
B
V
B
V
D6
V
V
H##13
130
B"
V
B"
V
D6
H2
V
V
H##13

10

FEATURES, MUSICAL OPERATIONS, AND COMPOSITION:
A Derivation from Ewe Drum Music

WAYNE SLAWSON



STATEMENT: Although Kwabena Nketia is in no way responsible for the speculations I have hazarded in this paper, he cannot be held entirely blameless. His uncanny ability to inspire curiosity, to ask interesting questions himself, and to lead others to ask interesting questions resulted quite directly in this work. In particular, his interest in seeking commonalities among related cultures suggested my attempt to define the features somewhat broadly. Perhaps the fact that he was a composer even before he was a scholar accounts in part for his way of seeing the value in the craziest of ideas and rejoicing in them. It is with the hope that he responds in his usual way that I submit this contribution to the celebration of his great accomplishments. □

Ethnomusicologists typically study the music of a particular culture, emphasizing the music's social and cultural milieu. Only seldom is the object of study music from the "main stream" cultures of Western Europe and the United States; almost never is it the concert music of those cultures. Music theorists, on the other hand, usually interest themselves in relationships among the events in single pieces; they analyze pieces of music and generalize about the results of their analyses. Almost always the music they study is the concert music, past and present, of the West. In contrast to both ethnomusicologists and music theorists, composers seek musical innovation—to design new musical structures. The structures they invent, almost inevitably, are based to some extent on those of previous music, but most composers try to find some extension or new interpretation of the earlier structures that will give their music freshness and distinction. The musical models for composers in the West are usually derived from Western concert music, but a significant number of pieces are also inspired by music outside of that tradition.

Many musical problems or topics seem to fall fairly easily under one of these specialties—or, of course, that of historical musicology—but certain problems call for interaction among disciplines. The topic of this study, an exploration of a technique of composition derived from what seem to be the fundamental properties of a musical genre from Africa, is of this latter sort, requiring in turn the outlooks of ethnomusicology, music theory, and composition. I hope to reach an audience both in the West—for whom a method of composition of a modest novelty is suggested—and

among musicians outside the West who, unlike their Western colleagues, often find themselves called upon to do ethnomusicology and music theory and to compose.

EWE *ADZOGBO*: THE OTHER VARIANTS

Locke and Agbeli (1981) argue convincingly that in the *adzogbo* music of the Ewe the strokes of the *atsimevu* player, the master drummer, reflect the "melody" of the phonetic tones in the Ewe text that goes with the music. A text is sung and then the drum ensemble enters, the *atsimevu* in effect repeating the text in schematic form with high sounding drum strokes corresponding to high linguistic tones, middle sounding strokes to mid tones, and low sounding strokes to low tones. Locke and Agbeli are able to demonstrate this strong correlation between linguistic tones and the "pitch" of drum strokes in several examples of the genre.

The correlation does not, however, account for all the variation in the sounds or the manner of playing of the master drum. Within each category of high, middle, and low drum sounds, a variety of different strokes occur. Thus a muted or pressed stroke by the stick to the center of the drum head, a free or bouncing stick stroke to the center of the head with muting by the fingers of the other hand, and a pressed finger stroke to the edge of the head, are all treated as representative of a high linguistic tone. Some strokes are apparently treated as high, middle or low partly on the basis of context. For example, in close temporal proximity to high strokes, a ringing stroke by the stick in the center of the head and a ringing finger stroke at the edge of the head, according to Locke and Agbeli, are treated as low. The same two strokes may be heard as high when preceded or followed by the ringing palm stroke in the center of the head, which is always low. Locke and Agbeli claim that—apparently over and above the context effects—the "inherent" character of these two context-dependent strokes suggests a mid pitch. We are left with at least three high-pitched strokes, two middle-pitched strokes, one low-pitched stroke with a possibility that the high and low categories, in certain contexts, contain five and three different strokes, respectively.[1]

DRUM STROKES AND FEATURES

To classify and organize the repertory of drum strokes beyond their linguo-mimetic functions, it seems appropriate to apply the concept from phonetics of *features*. Each distinctive "sound pattern" of speech, according to this concept, is characterized by its values with respect to a number of largely independent properties. One sound may be voiced, with affrication, without stopping or complete closure of the vocal tract, etc., while another may be nasal, voiced, non-affricated, etc. The list of the properties or features by which the sounds of speech are differentiated appears in large measure to be shared by all human languages so the features are among the properties of language that have been most convincingly cited as examples of linguistic universals (Chomsky and Halle 1968). Although it is at best premature to seek "universal" musical features that characterize the strokes in drum music, any proposed features ideally should be relatively independent and they should be couched in terms general enough to permit broad application.

A set of features that appears to encompass the variants reported by Locke and Agbeli includes primary features of PLACE, MANNER, and SOURCE, and auxiliary

features of 2NDary MUTE and SIDE STROKES. In this scheme PLACE refers to the location of the stroke on either the center or the edge of the drum head. MANNER distinguishes between free or ringing strokes in which the striker is lifted from the drum immediately after the stroke, and muted or pressed strokes in which the striker is held against the drum head after the stroke. The SOURCE—the term derived from the notion of an acoustic energy source—identifies the striker itself. This is a compound feature that in Ewe drumming distinguishes two hand strokes, cupped palm and fingers, and a stick stroke. When the non-striking hand, rather than the striker itself, mutes the sound the 2ND MUTE feature is invoked. Striking the side of the drum, rather than the head, invokes the SIDE STROKE feature.

As illustrated in Table 1, the *adzogbo* strokes cited by Locke and Agbeli are distinguished by this feature scheme. The strokes are labelled by the vocables that the drummers use for pedagogic and mneumonic purposes, and the linguistic "pitch," as identified by Locke and Agbeli, is given. Plusses (+) and minuses (−) distinguish opposites with regard to a feature and zero (0) indicates a null value for that feature, e.g., when there is no 2ND MUTE at all, as in */ga/*.

TABLE 1. *ATSIMEVU* STROKES IN EWE *ADZOGBO*

Vocable or ID #	Tone	PLACE Ce+/Ed−	MANNER Fr+/Mu−	SOURCE Pm+/Fgs−	SOURCE St+/0	2ND MUTE	SIDE STROKE
ga	L	+	+	+	0	0	0
de	M/(con)	+	+	0	+	0	0
pa(Anku)	L	+	−	−	0	0	0
tsi	H	+	−	0	+	0	0
tɔ	H	+	(−)	0	+	+	0
gi	M/(con)	−	+	−	0	0	0
dzi	H	−	−	−	0	0	0
kpa	none	0	+	0	+	0	+

Ce = center, Ed = edge, Fr = free or ringing, Mu = muted or pressed, Pm = open palm, Fgs = fingers, St = stick, 0 = null value for that feature.

The strokes in Table 1 do not exhaust the possibilities if the features are permitted to vary independently. Table 2 is an expanded version of Table 1 in which the secondary features are omitted, but by the inclusion of "potential" strokes that apparently do not occur in *adzogbo*, and therefore lack vocables, all combinations of the three primary features are presented. The strokes in Table 2, both actual and potential, are identified by number; the vocable is included where applicable. The additional vocable *pa*—a variant from the hand drum in Akan *adowa* drum music identified by the Ghanaian drummer and scholar, William Anku[2]—is included as a feasible extension of the *adzogbo* repertory. Although the free hand does the muting in *tɔ*, the fact of the muting is recognized, for the purposes of Table 2, by assigning a minus MANNER value and classifying *tɔ* and *tsi*—two of the three "high" strokes—together as item 6. The signalling stroke *kpa* is a special case and therefore is excluded from Table 2.

The proposed set of features, although clearly preliminary and subject to correction and refinement by experts in this and other West African genres, is by no means arbitrary. The slight abstraction and kinesthetically-suggestive nature of the names of

TABLE 2. STROKES REPRESENTING ALL COMBINATIONS OF THE PRIMARY FEATURES

ID #	Vocable	PLACE Ce+/Ed−	MANNER Fr+/Mu−	SOURCE Pm+/Fgs−	St+/0
1	ga	+	+	+	0
2		+	+	−	0
3	de	+	+	0	+
4		+	−	+	0
5	pa(Anku)	+	−	−	0
6	tsi/tɔ	+	−	0	+
7		−	+	+	0
8	gi	−	+	−	0
9		−	+	0	+
10		−	−	+	0
11	dzi	−	−	−	0
12		−	−	0	+

Ce = center, Ed = edge, Fr = free or ringing, Mu = muted or pressed, Pm = open palm, Fgs = fingers, St = stick, 0 = null value for that feature.

the features is intended, and follows the practice of linguists in identifying their phonetic features (Chomsky and Halle 1968). The drumming features, like the phonetic features, are intended to represent underlying fundamental categories of properties expressible in a variety of ways in different musical genres. Thus, whereas PLACE may be expressed by a stroke's location on the single drum head in Ewe *atsimevu* playing, the same feature may be represented in Akan drumming by the small versus the large drum of the master drummer. It is also possible that the muted value of the MANNER feature is expressed in the drum music of some West African culture by free hand damping rather than a pressed stroke by the primary striker, as it appears to be in Ewe *adzogbo*. If the features suggested here are correct, then this latter example would represent a cross-cultural interchange of a specific technique from expression of a secondary feature in Ewe drumming to expression of a primary feature in the other culture. Refinements or corrections of the set of features should be done so as to retain at least the low level of abstraction that would permit such cross-cultural comparisons.

Included among the potential stokes in Table 2 are instances of difficult or ineffective strokes. For example, strokes with the palm of the hand on the edge of the drum, either free or muted (*7* or *10*), do not sound very different from edge strokes with the fingers (*gi* or *dzi*). However, in another West African culture—the Akan cited above, for example, in which PLACE appears to be expressed by a distinction between two different drums—the performance of strokes *7* or *10* may be effective and easy.

If underlying, fundamental categories of sound and playing techniques are represented by the features, they may be regarded as a kind of common, possibly partially unconscious, knowledge shared by the people of the related cultures of West Africa. Thus the appearance of the potential strokes in Table 2 should not be taken, by themselves, as evidence against the features; the contingencies of ceremony, physical properties of specific drums, and perhaps a collective esthetic, will all affect the expression or non-expression of specific features or specific feature value combinations in a particu-

lar genre. The modes of expression of the features are roughly analogous to the modes of expression of linguistic features. Different languages may express features differently, certain features are not present at all in some languages, and some combinations of values of the features that are characteristic of a language are not actually expressed in its phonetic system (Chomsky and Halle 1968). Proper evaluation of the proposed features of West African drumming strokes requires that apparently exceptional cases be examined for the possibility that they may arise from culture-specific expression rather than a genuinely different feature system.

That being said, it may well be that the particular features proposed here do not represent accurately the musico-cultural dimensions underlying the repertory of strokes in West African drum music. West African musicians themselves will have to pass judgment on that issue. However even if the specific system of features has to be modified, the approach itself may be an appropriate means of characterizing the variants observed in the music, and the definitions of musical operations based on the features, to which I shall now turn, also need only be modified, not rejected out of hand.

MUSICAL OPERATIONS

Among the most influential innovations in Western musical thought since mid-century is the extension of the concept of musical operations to parameters of sound other than pitch.

The essential property of a musical operation is its transformation of some aspects of a musical entity while other aspects of the entity are preserved unchanged. Transposition of a motive in tonal music typically preserves contour, rhythm, etc., while in general changing pitches, register, and sometimes interval content. Transposition, inversion and retrogression of a set of pitch classes, which is characteristic of much twentieth-century music, preserves the interval content and certain order relations of the set while permitting change in rhythm, contour, register, etc. Wuorinen (1979), in an elementary summary of earlier work by Babbitt (1962), shows how these same operations can be applied in the time domain with preservation of time intervals. A cautionary note by Lewin (1984) points out certain problems in drawing direct analogies of this kind. But the value of seeking such analogies is compellingly illustrated by Pressing's (1983) demonstration of the similar underlying structures of such widely diverse musical entities as Western tonal scales, the time line pattern in West African drumming, and Macedonian rhythms.

A theory of operations on sound color (Slawson 1985) is a precursor of the suggestions advanced in the present study. Among the operations proposed in that theory is sound-color inversion. A crucial difference between sound-color inversion and pitch-class inversion derives from the difference in dimensionality of the two domains. In defining operations, the pitch-class domain is treated as essentially unidimensional and modular with respect to the octave; sound color, on the other hand, is multidimensional and has no analog of the octave. Inversion in sound color, therefore, is always carried out *with respect to some combination of the dimensions* and the contour pattern is always preserved in inverted or reflected form. The multiple features that appear to underlie the drum strokes of West African drumming ensembles present a framework that resembles the multidimensional perceptual space of sound color more closely than it resembles the unidimensional pitch realm.

INVERSIONS OF FEATURE VALUES

Given a set of fundamental features for the sounds and strokes in West African drum music, we can define musical operations with reference to those features as follows:

> The inversion of a drum stroke with respect to a given feature is defined as a stroke in which the value of that feature is changed to its inverse.

Thus, a free stroke by the fingers in the center of the drumhead (*2* in Table 2), when inverted with respect to PLACE, is transformed into a free stroke by the fingers at the edge of the drumhead (*8 gi*). MANNER-inversion of the same stroke, *2*, results in a muted stroke by the fingers in the center of the drumhead, *5 pa*. Simultaneous inversions of the same stroke, *2*, with respect to PLACE and MANNER results in a muted stroke by the fingers at the edge of the drumhead, *11 dzi*. For PLACE, MANNER, and the Hand SOURCE, this definition of inversion is clear and easy to apply. The appropriate pluses are converted into minuses; the minuses into pluses.

For the Stick SOURCE—and for the secondary features of 2ND MUTE, and SIDE STROKE if they were to be included—the definition of inversion appears not to apply. In *adzogbo*, Stick SOURCE is single-valued. Because the *atsimevu* player uses only one kind of stick and plays on the drumhead with it in only one way, there is no "opposite" with regard to the Stick SOURCE feature; the feature is either present (+) or absent (0). Similarly, according to Locke and Agbeli, there is only one way of muting with the free—that is non-striking—hand and only one way of striking the side of the drum[3] Although further study may indicate that some features appearing to be single-valued in *adzogbo* have opposites in other West African genres, no doubt certain features will be found to be inherently non-invertable in all genres. The point of the present study is in no way weakened by treating inversion with respect to features that are single-valued as undefined in particular genres.

A serious problem is the generation, by means of inversions, of stroke types that do not occur in the genre. If such potential strokes cannot be expressed somehow, the operation that generates them lacks, in the language of mathematical group theory, closure. A theoretically unsatisfactory solution would be to adopt a kind of ad hoc policy of examining each passage of music and permitting for that particular passage only the inversions that produce no potential strokes. A better solution would be to seek ways of expressing the strokes in question somehow within the genre itself. Certain strokes that are not used in *adzogbo* may nevertheless be easy to play and differentiable from strokes that are. Items *2* and *5 pa* in Table 2, both center strokes with the fingers—the latter occurring in Akan drum music—seem to satisfy these conditions; they are candidates for experimentation. Cases of potential strokes that do not sound distinctively or are hard to play—*7* and *10* for example—may be allocatable to other drums in the ensemble. A drum smaller than the *atsimevu*, struck by another player in the center of the drumhead with the palm, might express the minus PLACE value in the cases when it is impossible for the master drummer himself. Another solution would be to replace potential strokes with some neutral action, such as a rest. The problem remains a real one, but there appear to be several means of coping with it, any of which may be chosen to suit particular musical situations.

We can express the definition of the basic inversions and their combinations by means of an adaptation of the cyclic notation for mathematical group operations. In this notation (see Table 3) the effects of all the possible inversions on each drum stroke are

TABLE 3. CYCLIC DEFINITION OF THE INVERSIONS

PLACE	(1ga 7) (2 8gi) (3de 9) (4 10) (5 pa 11dzi) (6tsi/tɔ 12)
MANNER	(1ga 4) (2 5pa) (3de 6tsi/tɔ) (7 10) (8gi 11dzi) (9 12)
Hd SOURCE	(1ga 2) (3de) (4 5pa) (6tsi/tɔ) (7 8gi) (9) (10 11dzi) (12)
P×M×S	(1ga 11dzi) (2 10) (3de 12) (4 8gi) (5pa 7) (6tsi/tɔ 9)
P×M	(1ga 10) (2 11dzi) (3de 12) (4 7) (5pa 8gi) (6tsi/tɔ 9)
P×S	(1ga 8gi) (2 7) (3 9) (4 11dzi) (5pa 10) (6tsi/tɔ 12)
M×S	(1ga 5pa) (2 4) (3de 65si/tɔ) (7 11dzi) (8gi 10) (9 12)

specified exactly. To find the inverted form of any stroke in the cyclic notation, the stroke is replaced by the stroke immediately to its right within the parenthesized set. The replacement of the rightmost stroke within any parenthesized set is the first stroke after (to the right of) the matching left parenthesis. Sets that consist of a single stroke imply that that stroke is its own inversion.

We can observe from Table 3 that no inversion fails to generate at least one potential stroke. However with one exception, the MANNER inversion is closed with respect to *atsimevu*-proper strokes (those actually occurring in the traditional playing of that instrument). The exception for that inversion, *ga*, is inverted into a plausible potential stroke, a muted center stroke with the palm, *4*. Except for the Place and the PLACE×MANNER inversions, which generate no *atsimevu*-proper strokes, all the other inversions generate three non-*atsimevu*-proper strokes. It appears, therefore, that the MANNER inversion is particularly appropriate for traditional *atsimevu* playing, whereas PLACE and PLACE×MANNER inversions provide the most "radical" departures from tradition, requiring many strokes that are outside the genre. These properties of the inversions provide a basis for choice in composing variants of existing or traditional stroke patterns.

AN EXAMPLE

The sequence of *atsimevu* strokes in one of the pieces discussed by Locke and Agbeli is presented in Table 4. In addition to the identifying mnemonic syllables, the strokes are characterized by their values on each of the features. The resulting matrices of pluses, minuses, and zeros, have columns representing the features of individual strokes and rows representing the successive strokes. The division into "Lines" follows approximately the lines of the song imitated by the drumming, with the last stroke of the waiting rhythm of Line i apparently serving as the first stroke of Line ii.

A "conservative" variant can be derived by performing an inversion with respect to MANNER on the sequence of strokes in the piece. This operation transforms the waiting rhythm, *dzi ga+kpa*, of Line i into *gi 4+kpa*, and Line ii into *4+kpa tsi 4*. If we make the reasonable assumption that *4*, a muted version of *ga*, will be heard to have a linguistic tone no higher than mid pitch, then the tonal shape of Line ii, low-mid-low, is preserved by MANNER inversion, but with a transposition upward to mid-high-mid.

The original of Line iii *ga de degi de dzi tɔ de ga ga de* can be transformed by MANNER inversion into *4 tsi tsidzi tsi gi de tɔ 4 4 tsi*. Elimination of the 2nd MUTE distinction between *tsi* and *tɔ* in defining inversion leaves a choice between those two strokes when *de* is MANNER inverted. The choice of *tsi* for the transform of the first three and

TABLE 4. FEATURE VALUES OF *ATSIMEVU* STROKES IN A PORTION OF THE *ATSIA* (ADAPTED FROM LOCKE AND AGBELI 1981).

Line i:	dzi	dza*	(repeated 4 times; waiting rhythm)
PLACE	–	+	
MANNER	–	+	
SRC/Hd	–	+	
SRC/St	0	+	
2nd MU	0	0	
SIDE ST	0	+	

Line ii:	(dza*)	de	ga
P	(+)	+	+
M	(+)	+	+
S/Hd	(+)	0	+
S/St	(±)	+	0
2M	(0)	0	0
SS	(±)	0	0

Line iii:	ga	de	degi		de	dzi	tɔ	de	ga	ga	de
P	+	+	+	–	+	–	+	+	+	+	+
M	+	+	+	+	+	–	+	+	+	+	+
S/Hd	+	0	0	–	0	–	0	0	+	+	0
S/St	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+
2M	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
SS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Line iv:	ga	degi		tɔ	tɔ	tɔ	dza*
P	+	+	–	+	+	+	+
M	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
S/Hd	+	0	–	0	0	0	+
S/St	0	+	0	+	+	+	+
2M	0	0	0	+	+	+	0
SS	0	0	0	0	0	0	+

Line v:	dzi	dza*	(repeated 4 times; waiting rhythm)
P	–	+	
M	–	+	
S/Hd	–	+	
S/St	0	+	
2M	0	0	
SS	0	+	

*dza is the simultaneous sounding of ga and kpa.

the last *de* is suggested by the absense of any closely contiguous secondary muting, whereas the "new" stroke types introduced by the first *dzi* and *tɔ* in the original suggest the similarly new sequence *gi de tɔ* in the MANNER-inverted version. The tonal contour of the inverted sequence is a transposed form of the original for about the first half of Line iii.

Line iv is transformed from *ga degi tɔ tɔ tɔ ga + kpa* to *4 tsidzi de de de 4 + kpa*. Here the choice presented by the *de* in the original is resolved by imitating the analogous point

in Line iii. Only the very beginning of the tonal contour of the original is preserved, again in transposed form, in the MANNER-inverted sequence. The waiting rhythm of the fifth and final line is a repetition of Line i in the original and the MANNER-inverted version.

COMPOSITIONAL APPLICATION

The MANNER-inverted sequences can be applied to composition in a number of ways. One way, an expansion "from within" of the original piece incorporating the transformed sequence, is presented, along with an adaptation of the transcription by Locke and Agbeli of the original, in Example 1.

The expansion is carried out, in this case, by inserting small units of the inverted version into the lines of the original. The rhythmic patterns of the original are preserved, in large measure, in their inverted version and the inverted versions are differentiated from the originals by dynamics. In the expanded version, for example, Line i is doubled in duration to two cycles of the bell pattern.[4] It begins like the original, in a so-called "waiting rhythm," but the original pattern is interrupted by one and then three MANNER-inverted versions of the basic rhythmic pattern. The other lines of the original are treated in a similar way. The expanded version can be viewed, therefore, as a kind of free imitative piece with the imitations in, as it were, "MANNER-contrary" motion.

DISCUSSION

A number of issues are raised by the theoretical and compositional speculations advanced in the foregoing. The three issues that seem most important are as follows:

1. How might feature analysis contribute to theories of traditional music?
2. How is this study applicable to compositional design in general?
3. In what sense does this study offer a viable technique for non-Western composers?

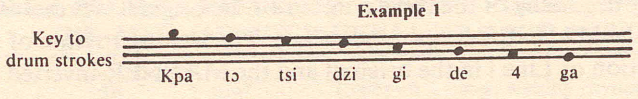
INVARIANCES IN TRADITIONAL MUSIC

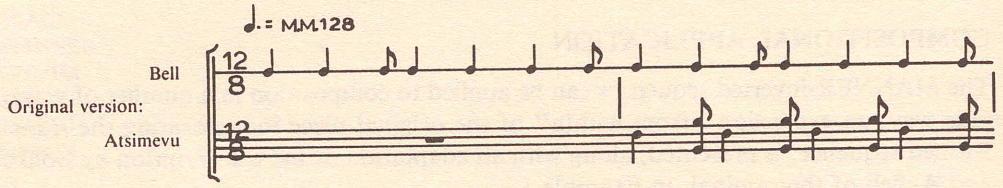
The arguments advanced above about an approach to Ewe *adzogbo* using features are not themselves culture-specific. In fact, others have employed similar approaches to a range of questions about a variety of musics.

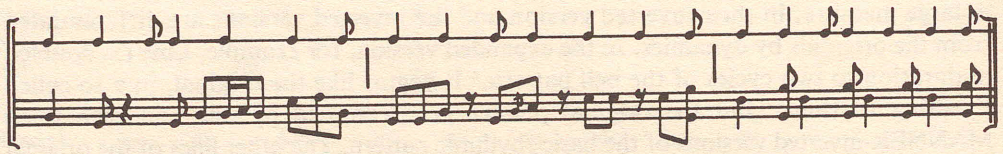
Bell Yung's study (1981) of identity in Cantonese opera establishes certain "criteria" whose values are the same for all pieces classified as belonging to a given aria type. The criteria in that case are concerned, not with the details of vocal or instrumental production of individual sounds, but with matters such as cadential pitch, mode, and voice-instrumental interaction. Otherwise Yung's criteria are analogous to the features of the present study. Cheryl Cramer (1986) has shown that certain properties of motives and tunes in Stephen Foster songs are preserved in the paraphrases of those motives and tunes later in the song. Although the properties she identifies are not independent, her work suggests that the value of no single property is sufficient to duplicate a listener's intuition about what is "the same" in a song; some combination of properties must be brought to bear on the matter.

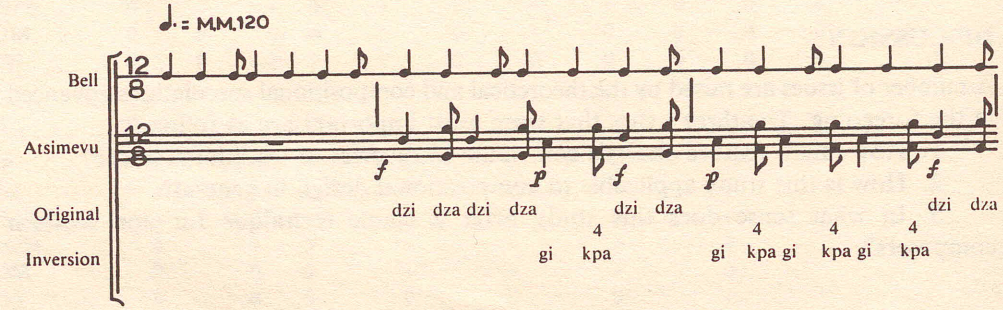
The crucial issue in Cantonese aria typology, in motivic and thematic identity in Stephen Foster, and—if the kind of feature scheme proposed in the present paper has

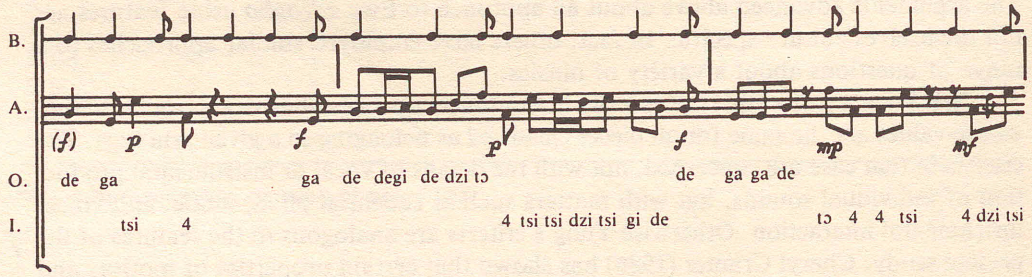
Example 1

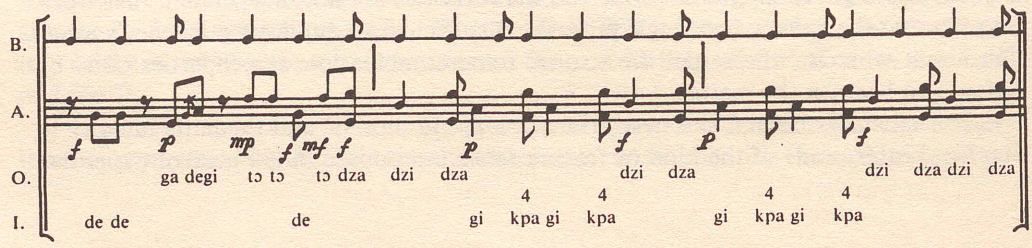

Key to drum strokes
Kpa tɔ tsi dzi gi de 4 ga


♩. = M.M.128
Bell
Original version:
Atsimevu




♩. = M.M.120
Bell
Atsimevu
Original
Inversion
dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza
4 4 4 4
gi kpa gi kpa gi kpa gi kpa


B.
A.
O.
I.
de ga ga de degi de dzi tɔ de ga ga de
tsi 4 4 tsi tsi dzi tsi gi de tɔ 4 4 tsi 4 dzi tsi


B.
A.
O.
I.
ga degi tɔ tɔ tɔ dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza
de de de gi kpa gi kpa gi kpa gi kpa

validity—in the classification of West African drum strokes, is a conjunction of values on multiple criteria. It seems worth emphasizing that a search for the features that underlie the invariances in any music is a plausible approach toward gaining a fundamental understanding of that music.

COMPOSITIONAL DESIGN

As noted above, the theories of contemporary music in the West have emphasized the treatment of pitch and rhythm as single-valued; the operations of transposition and inversion assume pitch and time to be modular, but otherwise uni-dimensional, phenomena. The approach outlined in the present study suggests the design of musical structures on the basis of values on several dimensions of sound taken together. One could imagine, for example, the definition of combinations of operations on pitch classes, time points, and, say, sound colors that would preserve certain kinds of musically relevant invariances.

On a more concrete level, the features discussed in this paper and the operations defined with respect to them may be applicable to music for Western ensembles. In particular, it is likely that direct expressions of PLACE, MANNER, and SOURCE could be identified in various ensembles of percussion instruments. It would be interesting to investigate whether any existing percussion music in the West seems to exhibit these or other features and possibly even some kind of operations with respect to them. In any case, it appears likely that new music could be composed whose design is based upon invariant structures derived from the operations.

Western composers who seek inspiration in music outside their own cultures may find the direction taken in this study relevant to their concerns. The mere sounds of Bali, India, West Africa, etc., are attractively novel, but composers who approach borrowed music by attempting to identify its underlying categories make available to themselves something of the authenticity and power of the original. Superficial exoticism is no more than fleetingly new. Deeper and more interesting innovation seems more likely to be heard in music that represents a marriage of the fundamental ideas in the musics of two cultures.

COMPOSITION IN THE MUSIC CULTURES OUTSIDE THE WESTERN MAINSTREAM

Some non-Western musicians find themselves drawn to seek to innovate in significant ways in their own music; in other words, they are acting as composers. The seriousness and personal validity of this impulse or esthetic stance, even if traceable in part to the influence of colonialist cultures, cannot justifiably be denied. Pursuing it, however, is sometimes thought to present special problems revolving around certain constraints on musical innovation that non-Western musical cultures may place on indigenous composers.

The first kind of constraint is said to arise from a felt need to reach both an audience "at home" and one that is international in scope. Few Western composers, at least in the United States, are free from the contradictions implied by composing for one's neighbors and one's national and international colleagues at the same time, but the difficulty may be greater in non-Western societies where audiences are conditioned by traditional or popular genres in which innovation is not greatly valued.

Another constraint—also felt by Western composers, but perhaps less strongly—arises from the desire on the part of non-Western musicians to compose music that remains somehow faithful to the traditional music of their own culture. I suspect this attitude, which should be distinguished both from a Bartok-like interest in folk sources and from searches in the West for characteristic national styles, is in part a result of the palpable richness and complexity of traditional music in many cultures, particularly in West Africa. It is perfectly understandable that sensitive composers would feel almost obliged to identify their own music in some way with their particular traditions. On the other hand, some of these same composers may also feel drawn to the procedures and forms of the "international styles" of the West, which are derived ultimately—if sometimes obscurely—from Western traditional music. For no other reason than a wish to be taken seriously in the international music scene, a non-Western composer may seek to adapt such procedures and forms to his or her own purposes.

Some version of the process leading up to the compositional exercise of Example 1 may meet some of the special needs felt by, in particular, West African composers. If the features proposed in the present study accurately reflect certain underlying categories of traditional West African music, then new music whose structure depends on the manipulation of those features may seem both somehow familiar to an African audience and innovative and well-integrated to both African and Western audiences.

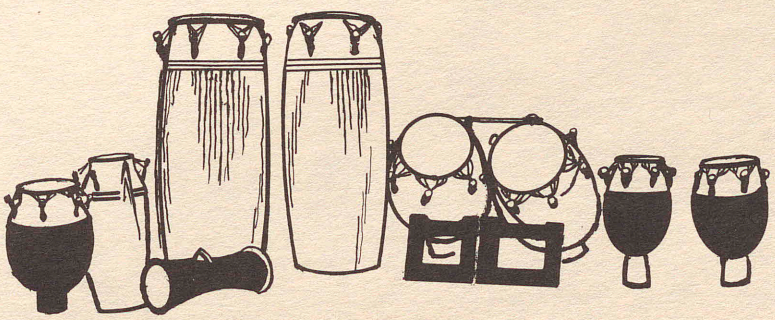
NOTES

1. Certain variants may be syntactically constrained beyond imitation of the tonal pattern of a linguistic utterance. Some of the sounds—*kpa* in Table 1 for example—appear not to have tonal meaning, but are used mainly for signalling and reinforcing or correcting the time line. Moreover, some strokes appear to occur in more or less fixed syntactic context—e.g., at the ends of phrases (William Anku, personal communication). Nevertheless, "free" variation among the strokes that fall within the prescribed tonal categories appears to permit the master drummer a significant degree of choice with regard to the identity of the striker and the place and manner with which it is engaged.
2. Anku (1986) is in general agreement with Locke and Agbeli, but Anku distinguishes three additional strokes, including *pa*, that occur in Akan *adowa* drumming. The other two strokes involve the stick on the side of the drum and may be classifiable as variants of the Ewe *kpa*.
3. Anku (personal communication, 1986) reports that the fist is used in some circumstances for secondary muting in Ewe drumming.
4. The cyclic rhythm identified in Example 1 as played by the bell is a constant background for nearly all West African drum music. Nketia (1974, 131–133) calls it a "time line" suggesting its function as a common referent for the other instruments of the ensemble.

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11

MOODS FOR FLUTE AND PIANO, I AND II

GERTRUDE RIVERS ROBINSON

STATEMENT: *Moods for Flute and Piano, I and II* is dedicated to Kwabena Nketia. These compositions are dedicated in the spirit of my dialogues with him that began in 1959, when he came to UCLA for the first time, as a Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation, for a period of two weeks.

Over the years "new dimensions and insights to my own musical equipment" were added, as I attended his lectures, read his publications, and heard some of his early piano compositions. My interest in musical synthesis was encouraged.

Through Professor Nketia's selection and on the request of Dr. Mantle Hood, Director of the Institute of Ethnomusicology, Robert Bonsu, an Ashanti master drummer and Robert Ayitee, an Ewe master drummer, were the first Africans from Ghana to come and teach African drumming in the program at UCLA. Under their instruction, I became acutely aware of the functions of the master drum in the West African drum ensemble. □

Moods for Flute and Piano, I and II, are now envisioned as part of a cycle of "*sumie*" like works for wind and percussion. ("*Sumie*" is a term that suggests a sparse approach to content delineation that is used in traditional Japanese painting.) These two works reflect such attitudes in my development as a composer, and particularly as an Afro-American composer, working with concepts and techniques of musical organization absorbed through years of study in ethnomusicology, analysis and transcription.

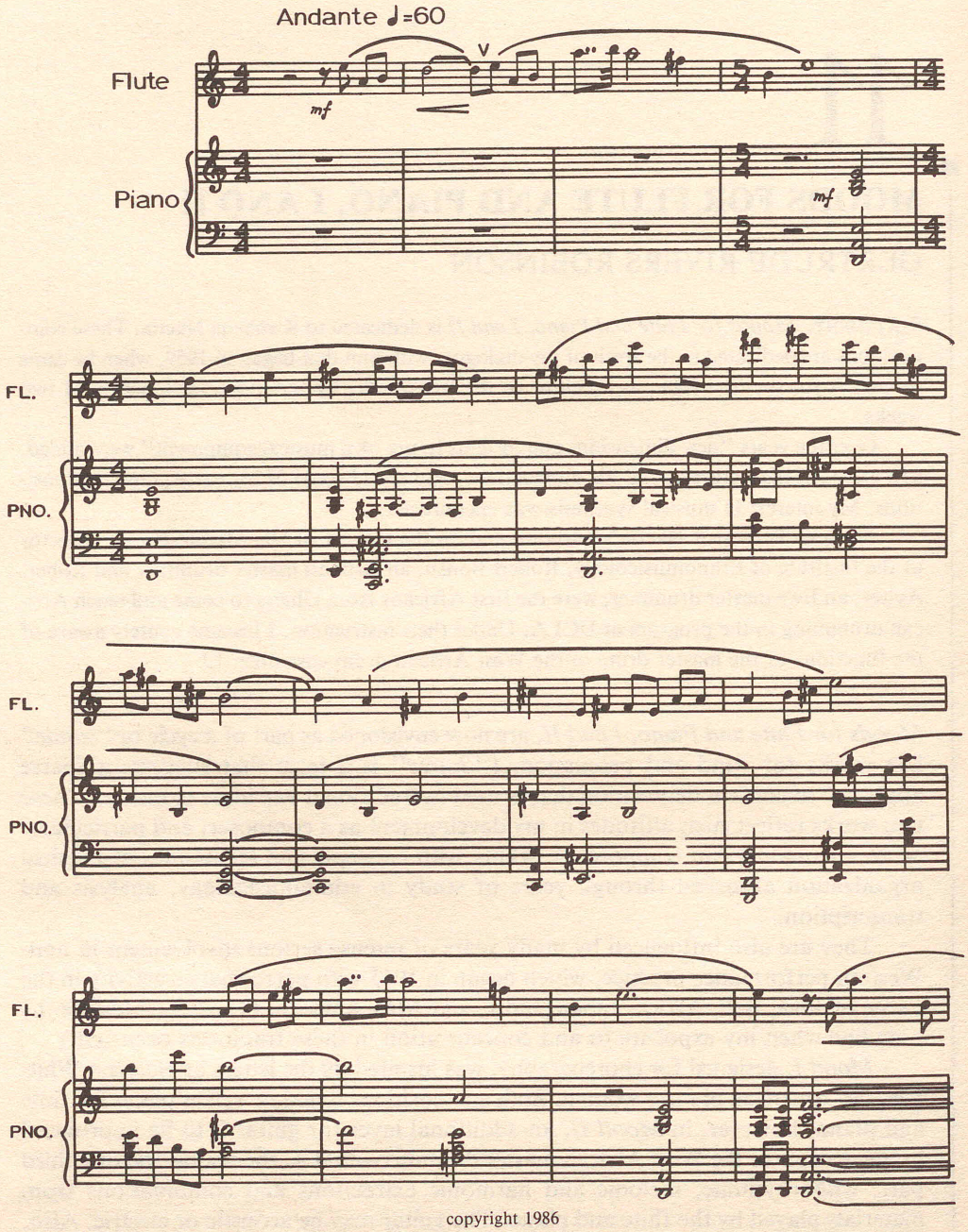
They are also influenced by many years of intense serious involvement in non-Western performance practice, which began in 1955 with performance activity in the music of Java, Bali, Africa, Japan, India, and Afro-America. (The list represents the time line when my exposure to and concentration in these traditions occurred.)

Mood I, designed for choreography, was inspired by the letters of Narcissa Whitman, an American pioneer woman. Both compositions function well as pieces for flute and piano, however, in *Mood II*, an additional layer for guitar is to be improvised in the manner of the West African master drummer—that is, the realization of a third part, with rhythmic, melodic and harmonic extractions and combinations from materials played by the flute and piano. The guitar may be acoustic or electric. Also, a soprano saxophone may be substituted very effectively in both pieces. With the soprano saxophone, a transposition down a major second from the original pitch is necessary in *Mood II*.

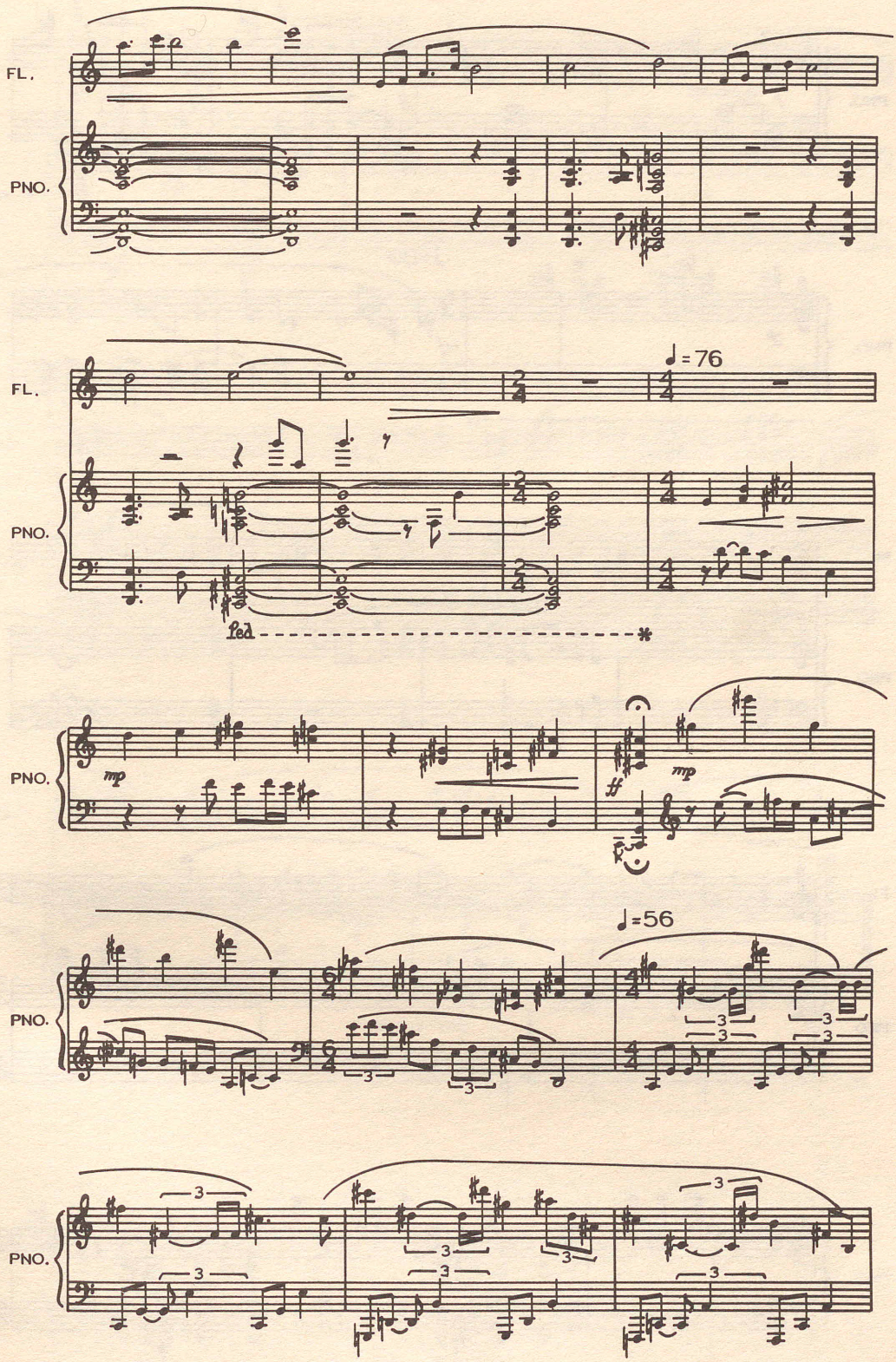
Moods for Flute & Piano

I

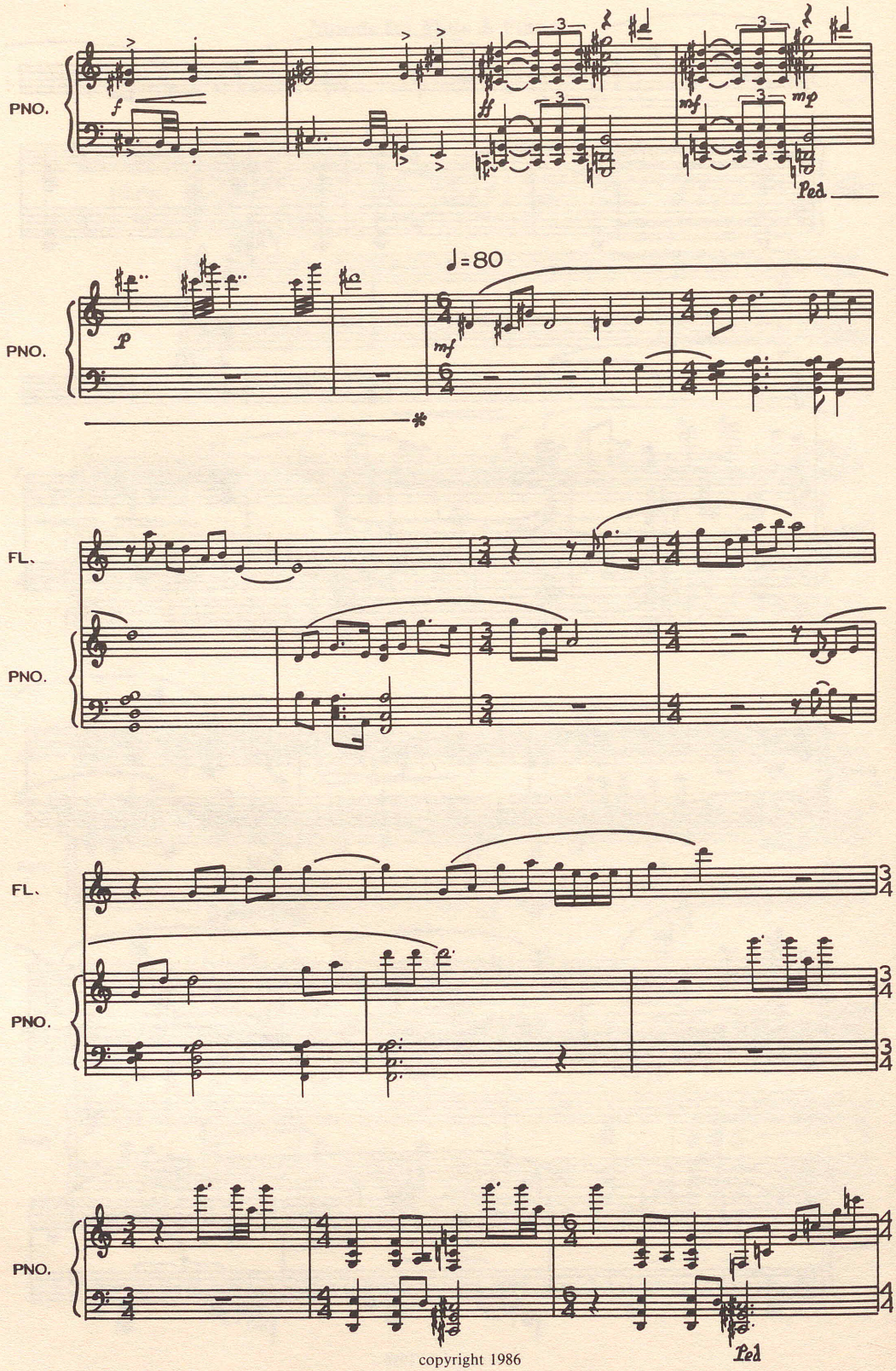
Gertrude Rivers Robinson
1986



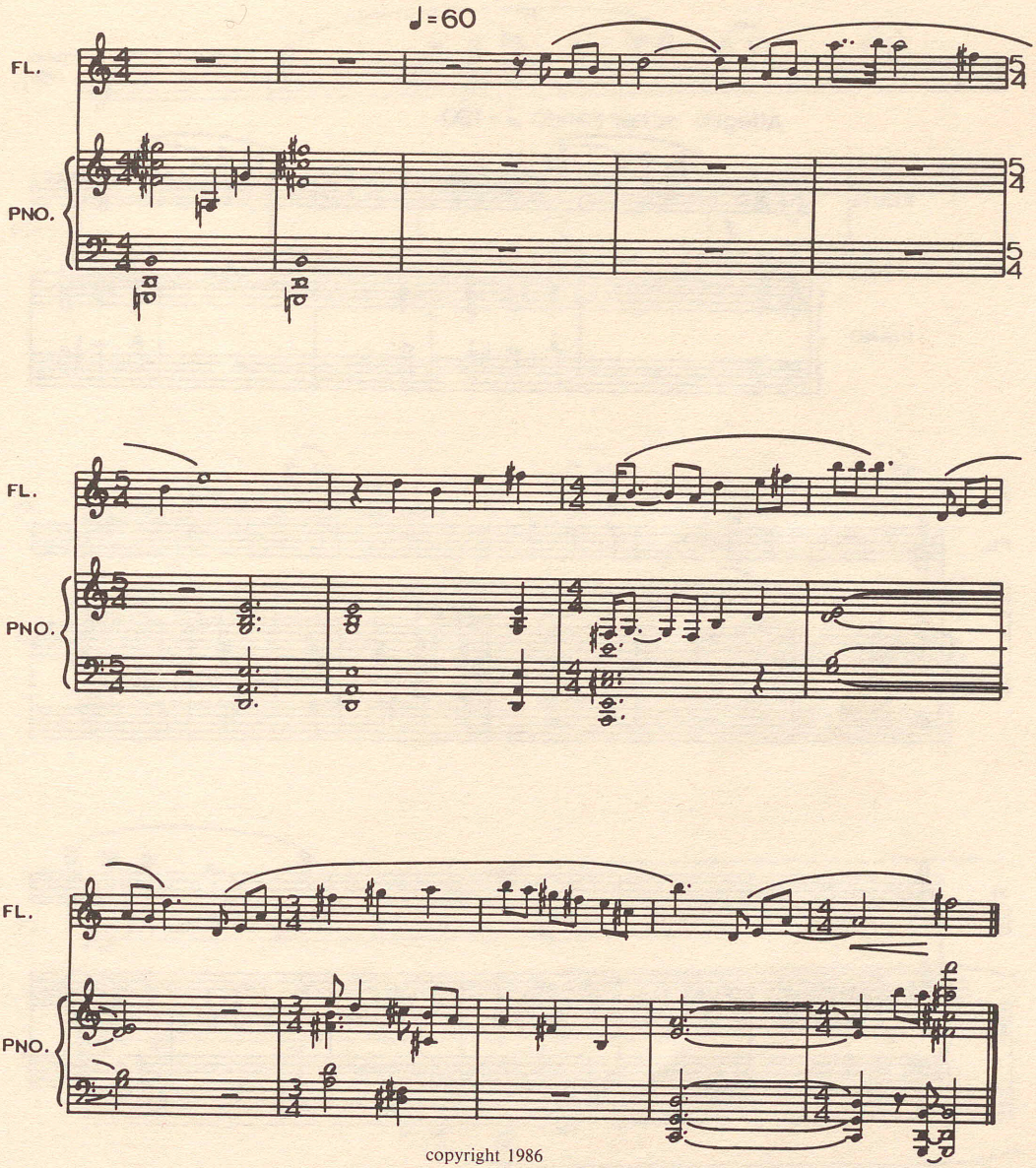
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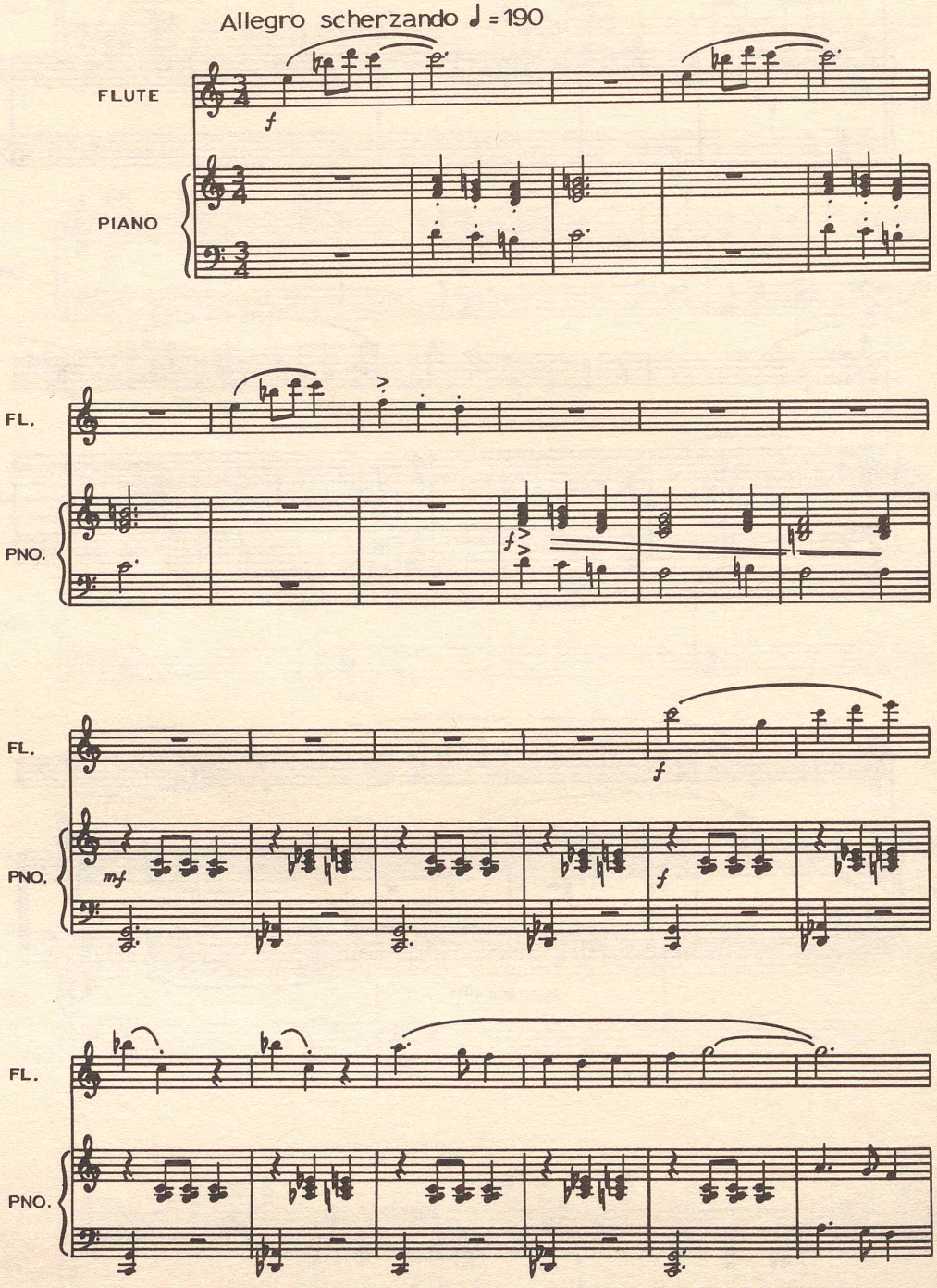


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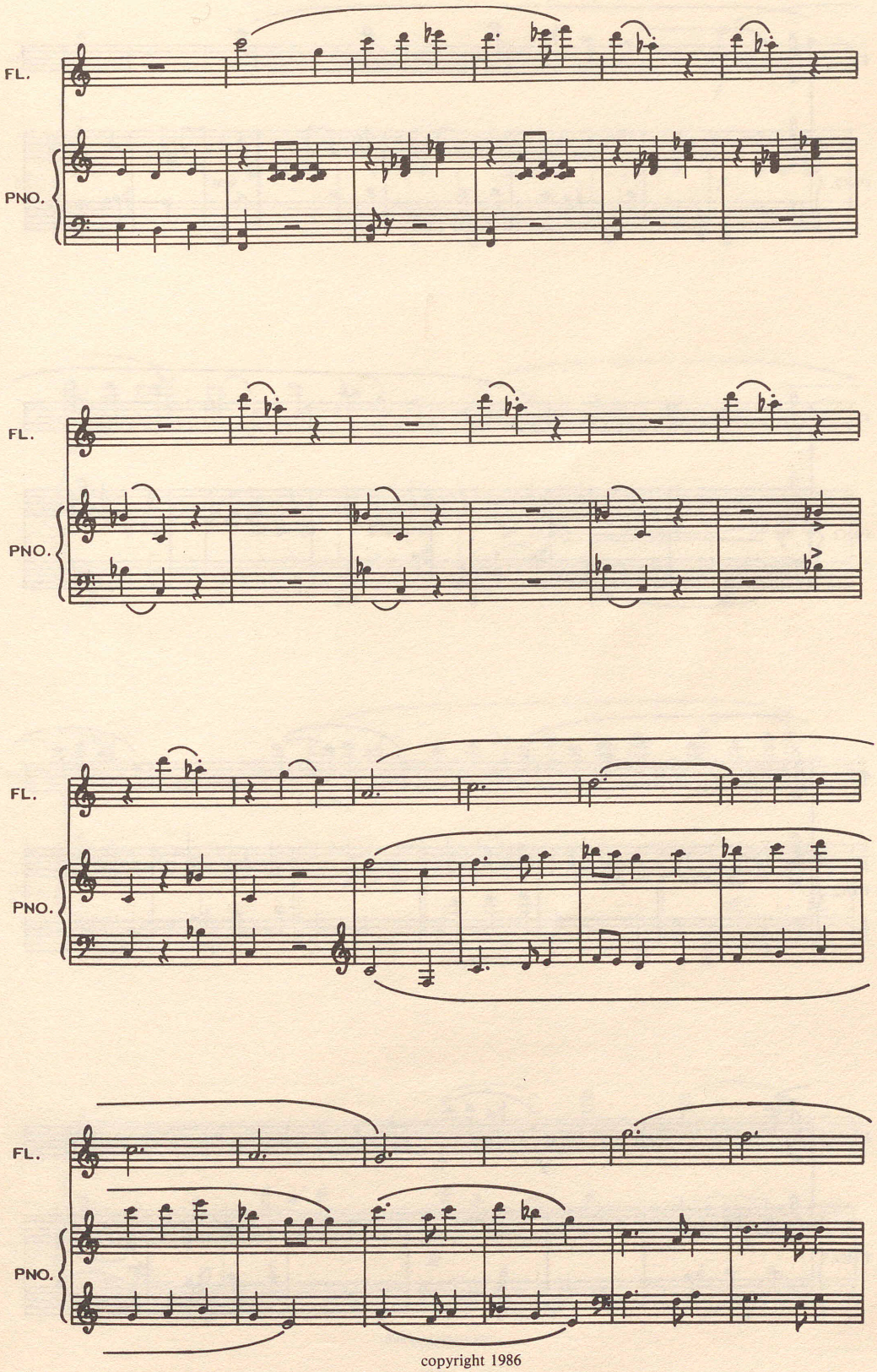
Ithaca New York

II*

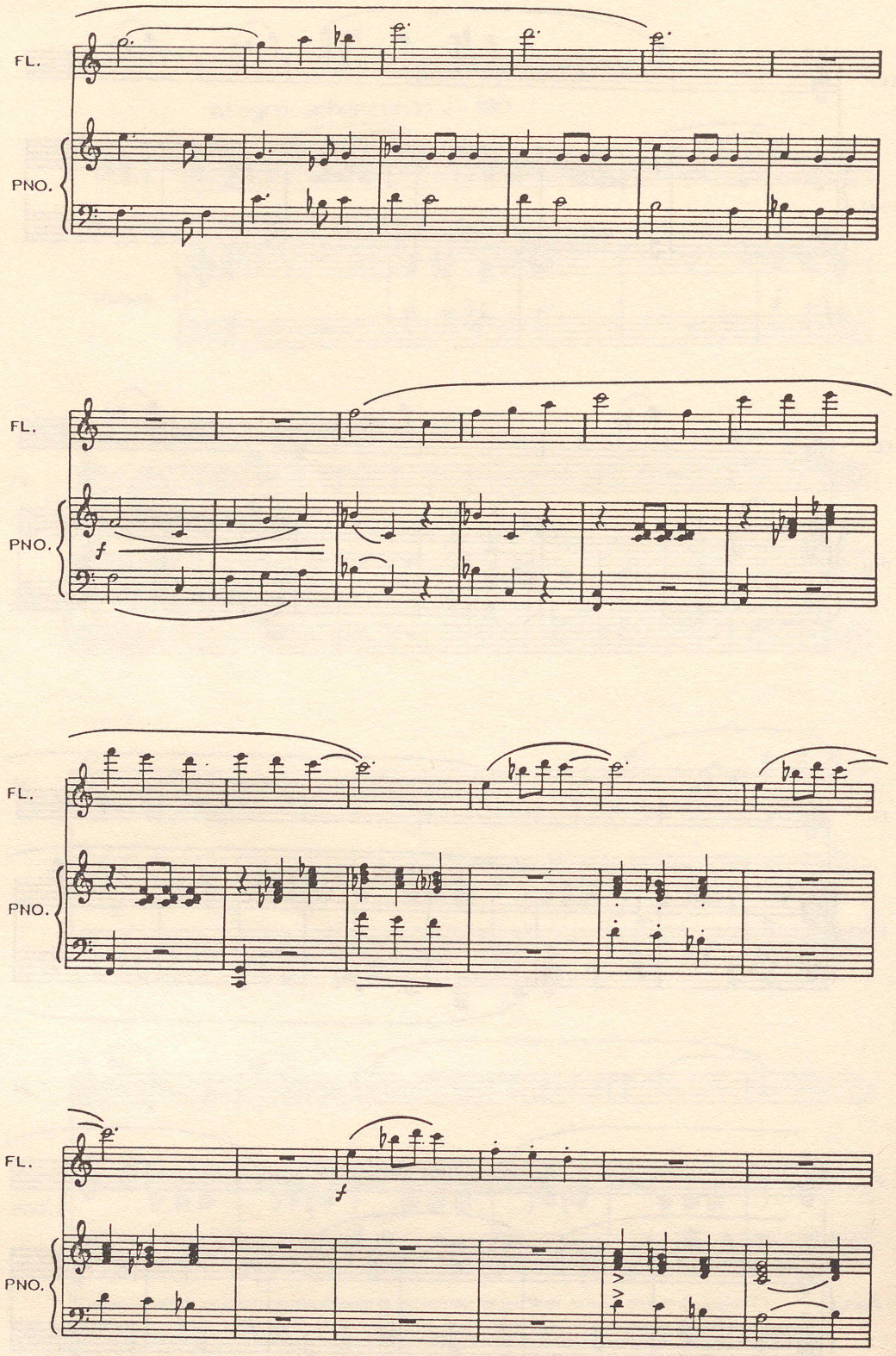
Gertrude Rivers Robinson
1986



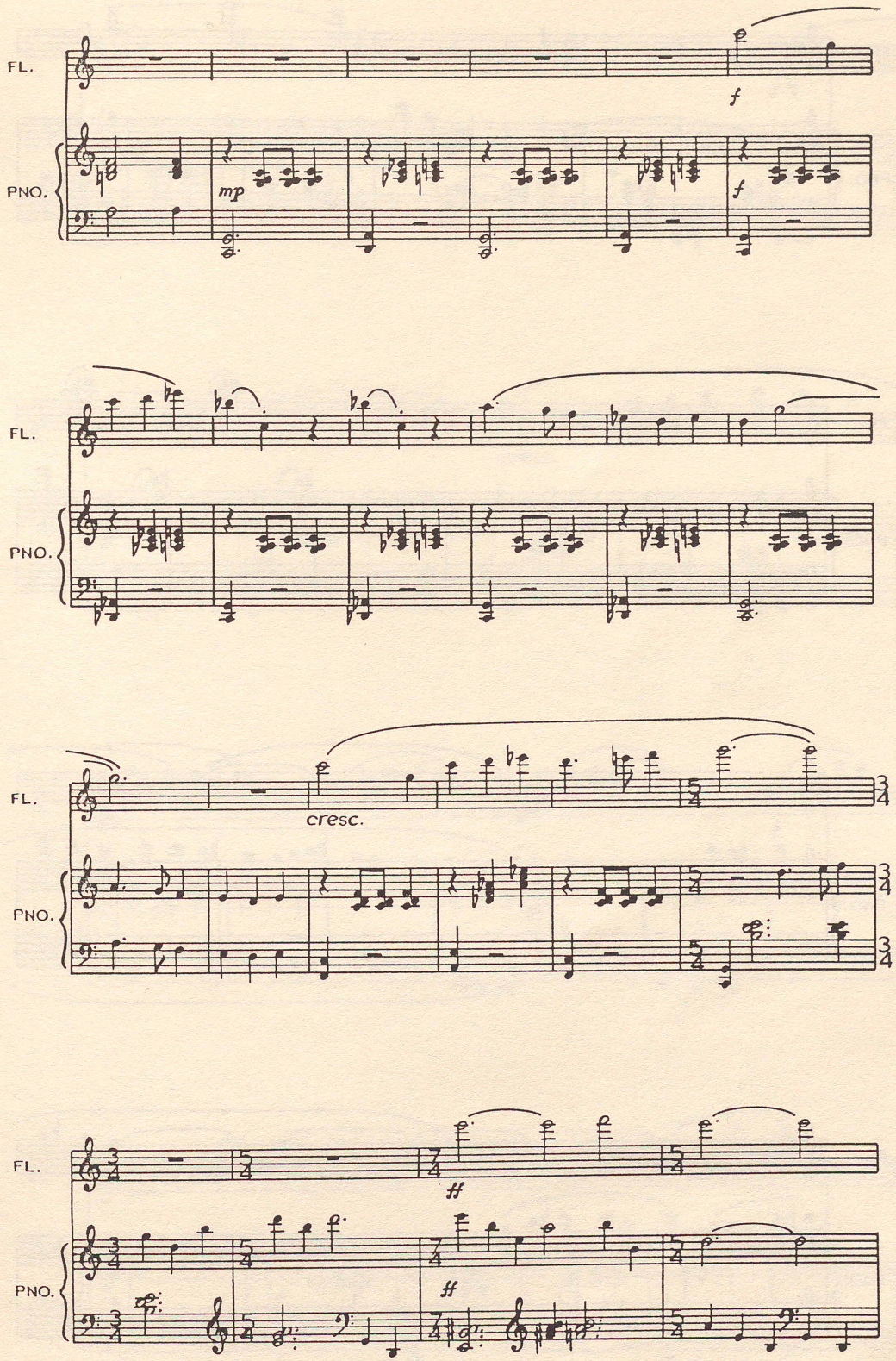
*Guitar—acoustic or electric improvisation in the manner of the West African master drummer



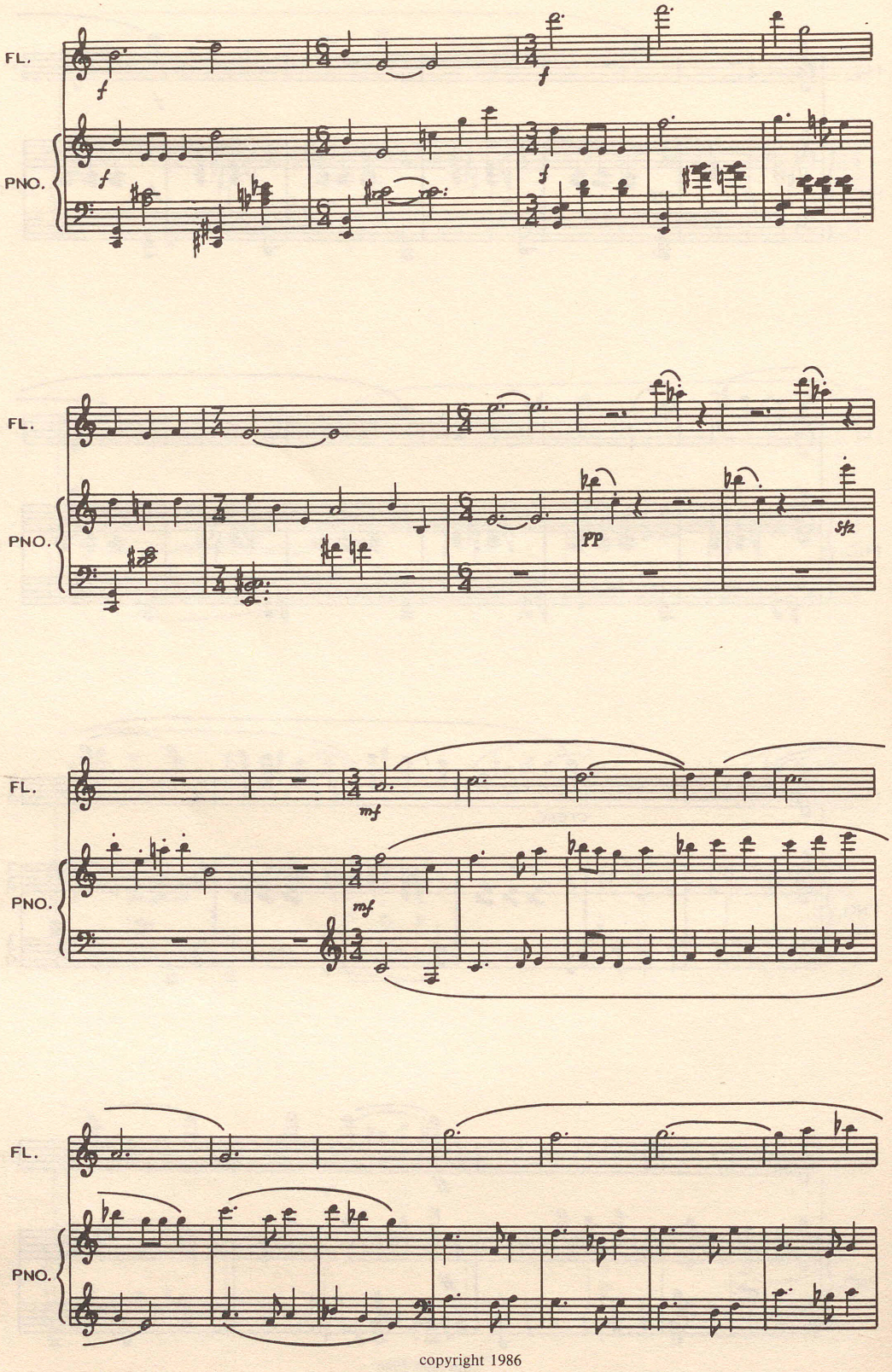
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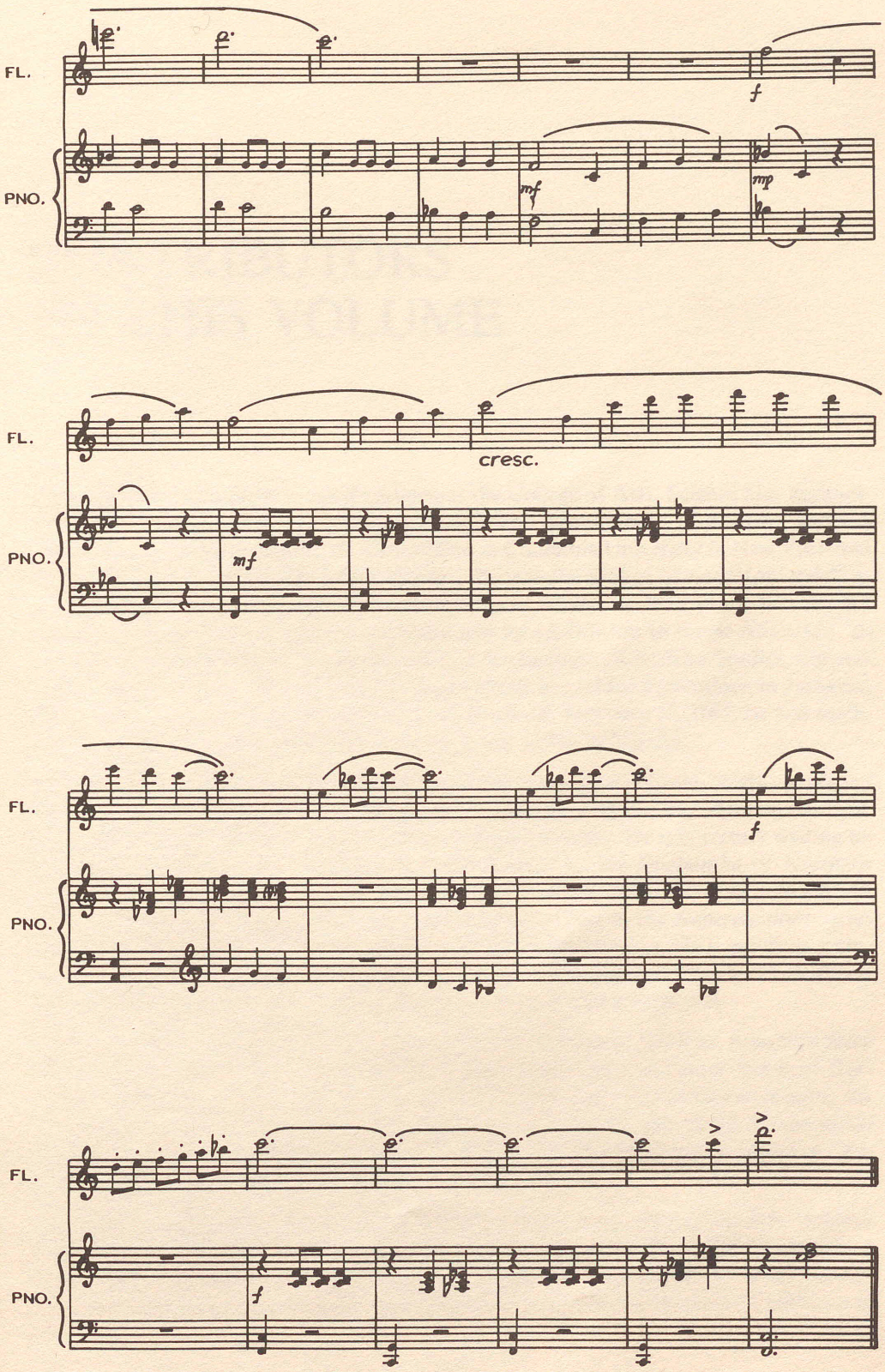
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