Namibian Music and Dance as Ngoma in Arts Education

by

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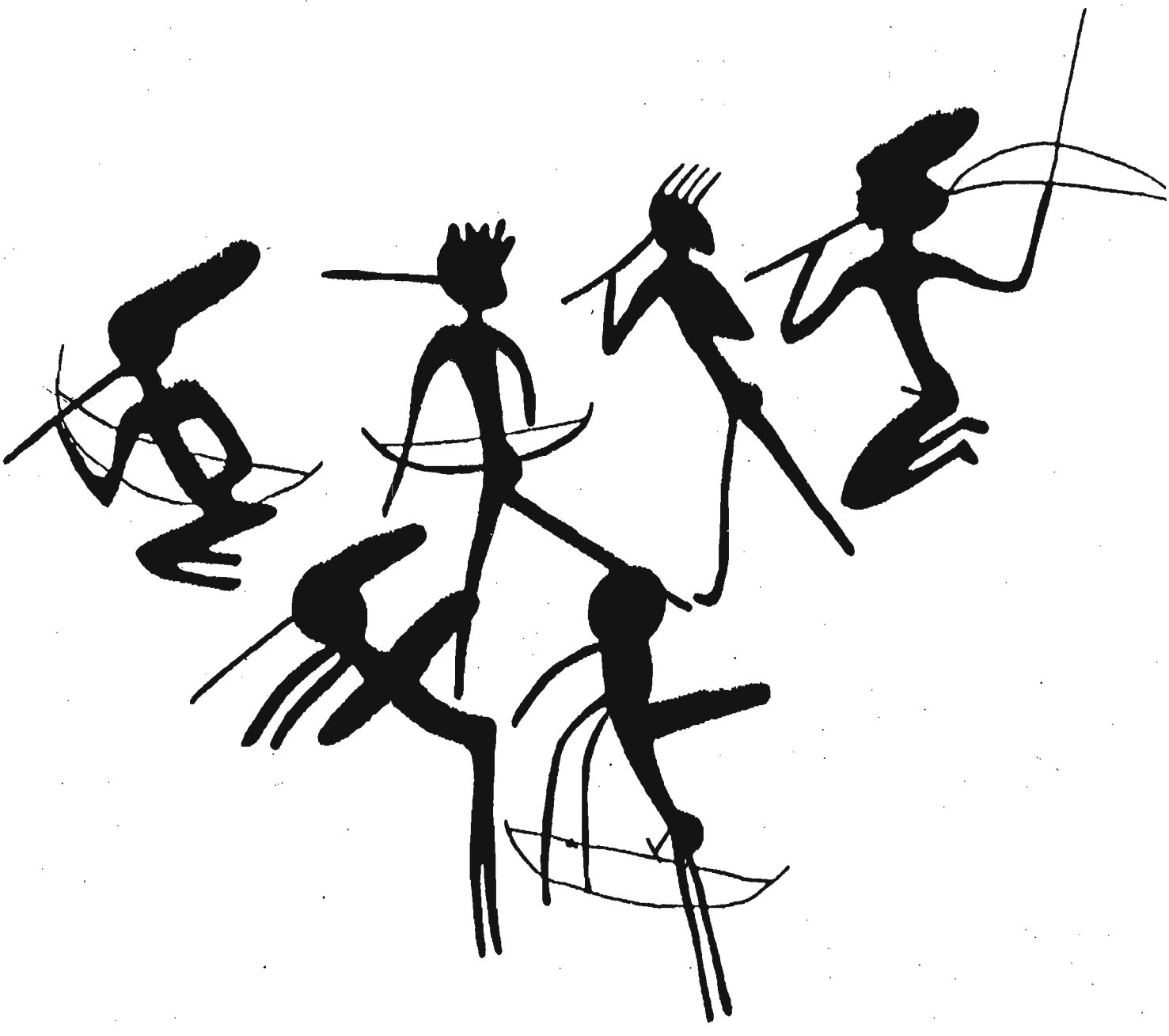
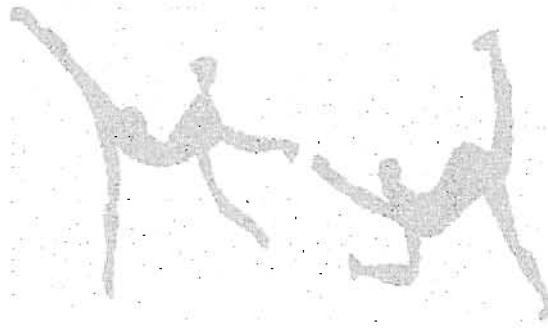


The Flute Players, from a site in the Klein Spitzkoppe, Namibia
Copy by Analise Scherz

Abstract



The aim of this thesis is to explore Namibian music and dance, to gain understanding of the character of different practices and through this, to provide teachers and learners in schools with materials suitable for use in the new arts curriculum in Namibia. In order to motivate the need for indigenous cultural materials, a brief historical background to Namibian arts education is sketched, highlighting the effects of colonialism on cultural identity and the separation of music from dance in education. In gathering examples of indigenous music and dance it became clear that for these practices to retain a measure of integrity in schools, new ways of thinking about performance in schools would be required. This leads to a discussion of an approach summarised within the term *ngoma*, which refers to holism, communality and orality among other things. It is suggested that music/dance as *ngoma* has a positive contribution to make to Namibian arts education. To support this suggestion in a practical way, I explore the indigenous traditions used to educate and socialise young people. Argumentation follows regarding possibilities of preparing teaching-learning materials in a manner appropriate to Namibian circumstances. A breakdown of diverse characteristics of indigenous music and dance is done in order to help the teacher identify and comprehend the individual characters of Namibian performances. In this way teachers should be better prepared to utilise the examples of music/dance events that follow. Various events are contextualised, described, transcribed and analysed with suggestions for use in the classroom. Finally the *ngoma* approach, the principles of Basic Education in Namibia, and the new arts syllabi are brought together by investigating some of the possibilities of music and dance as *ngoma* in schools.

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11. Ondjongo, Kunene.

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13. Nyakasanga, Katowa dancers, Caprivi.

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My thanks to my brother Mr Brian Stewart and his family for providing accommodation on my visits to Natal. I feel special gratitude towards my parents for having inculcated in me an enquiring mind and an openness and appreciation of the richness of the world's cultures. Most especially, my thanks go to my own family, my husband Jan and my sons Etienne and Keiran, who have not only travelled with me on some field trips, but have very graciously put up with a mother so occupied with studies. Thanks guys!

STATEMENT

All work contained in this thesis, and the ideas expressed, are the result of my own work, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text.

1 INTRODUCTION

My interest in Namibian music and dance only really began to develop about ten years ago, even though I was born and spent most of my life in this country. The reason for this apparent lack of interest can be found in the political environment prevailing in the decades before 1990. Having grown up in a privileged white home, my contact with indigenous Namibian cultures was limited, although not totally absent. Thus, as a child, I learnt a few phrases in Otjiherero, Khoekhoe and Oshiwambo. The only 'black' music I was exposed to was the 'approved' music performed for whites in the mining town in which I grew up.

As a lecturer at the Academy for Tertiary Education in Windhoek in the 1980's, I became involved for the first time in teaching Namibians from diverse cultural backgrounds. It became abysmally clear that we were unable to communicate meaningfully about Namibian music. This sparked an interest in me to learn songs from the various language groups. Slowly I came to realise that students from some cultures did not think of a song as a freestanding musical work, in the sense that westerners do. I found that the only songs students were able to conceptualise in this way were western songs with texts in local languages. For example, "*Kapukona, kaingona, kora moipi*" was the Otjiherero text for "Hänschen klein" or "Hansie Slim". I discovered that students were unwilling to sing certain songs without a proper leader, the different voice groups, appropriate instruments, the "right time of day" or certain dance movements.

Clearly, some Namibian music could not be isolated from function and context, factors unknown to me at the time. This meant that students were unable to perform certain songs in the classroom, as the context

was meaningless. Did this mean that indigenous[1] cultural music could never be translated to a classroom situation? I wondered, in fact, how music was being taught in Namibian classrooms.

Subsequently, I completed a study pertaining to music education in primary schools for Damara children in western Namibia.[2] This led to the realisation that the existing music syllabi, teaching competencies, and materials available were woefully inadequate. Music education at the 'white' schools of the time could not be described as successful either. The education system in the 1970's and 1980's was put into place by the South African government and, because they were based on the reprehensible Bantu Education policy for 'black' schools,[3] the system was grounded on an attitude of western 'cultural superiority'.

The observations above led me to speculate about the reasons for the dismal failure of music education at schools. Factors having a negative influence on the quality of music education included inadequately trained teachers, poor facilities, programmes that lacked relevance, and a lack of suitable materials, as well as resistance to the imposition of a foreign culture at many schools. It appeared that there was a fundamental lack of structure, approach, content or methodology for music education in Namibian schools. This was most apparent in the disadvantaged black schools of the time.

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[1] The term indigenous may be interpreted in different ways. As used here, it refers to those practices that have their origin in Namibia or in the sub-region where cultural practices extend beyond the borders. It will not refer to cultural practices of people that had their origins in Europe or elsewhere, even if those people have been settled in this area for a long period of time.

[2] Mans (1988).

[3] Bantu Education was based on the notion that black people did not require the same kind of education as whites, because they were destined to remain labourers. Namibian education in black schools was therefore in Afrikaans, the language of the occupiers and future 'bosses'. Educational policy was based upon South African Nationalism, and even history was taught with a heavy South African (Nationalist) bias.

With reference to teacher education, the existing music programmes were similarly inadequate and inappropriate. My experience in teacher education, as well as my research, indicated that student teachers and teachers in the field were often uncomfortable with the western (Afrikaans) songs they were supposed to teach. They were also inadequately prepared to use western notation in their teaching. In many schools, teachers appeared unconvinced that learners would benefit from their music teaching, and therefore often used the allocated time for other work. In practice, music education did not relate to Namibian customs that include dance; hence there was no mention of dance education, despite the central role of dance in indigenous performance.

Following a request from the Ministry of Education and Culture for me to serve on the various committees involved in curriculum reform after Independence, I experienced my lack of knowledge about Namibian cultural practices as a deficiency. It also became clear that there was a lack of suitable teaching-learning materials based on the Namibian experience. To rectify this situation, I began to investigate. I turned to the work of many fine scholars elsewhere, to try and gain from their experience in arts education and ethnomusicology.

The aim of this thesis is primarily to introduce materials for teaching and learning Namibian music and dance in schools, and to develop some guidelines for presenting such materials in new arts curricula. There is a need for investigation into music and dance performance among Namibian people. I raise the following questions: How does the Namibian cultural diversity express itself in music and dance? Does Namibian music and dance have a character of its own? Alongside indigenous performance, there is also a need to examine the kinds of music and dance education that exist in schools at present. An understanding of current Namibian educational practices lies in an exploration of the history preceding the present situation, and in the changes that are currently taking place in arts education. Are the cultural needs of the Namibian people are reflected in arts education? What kind of music and dance education would be relevant and workable? These questions are dealt with in the course of this study.

The inherent problems underlying issues of culture in education lead one to speculate on the feasibility of bringing indigenous cultural practices into the school system. Are schools places where cultural practices and values can or should be transmitted? It appears to me that the bringing together of divergent philosophical viewpoints is necessary for the following reasons:

- the education system under discussion resides within Africa and therefore needs to take cognisance of music as it is lived and practised in Africa in general, and more specifically in Namibia;
- schools and subject divisions are western inventions and require some insight into western ideas on subjects such as music or dance;
- the education of young people should prepare them for life in the broadest sense; this includes knowledge and appreciation of music and dance as it is found in other parts of the world as well as in Namibia.

Essentially, some form of compromise between diverse approaches may have to be sought in order to make proposals for arts education in Namibia both viable and relevant. While the educational aspects of the study require a comprehensive literature study, investigation into Namibian performance is based on first-hand observation, participation, recording, discussion and analysis. I turn now to examine in more detail how the respective disciplinary components have been combined and utilised.

On superficial examination, it became apparent to me that the status of indigenous 'African' music and dance performance genres in Namibia was potentially in jeopardy. The systematic impact of western culture on education and the present global invasion of American culture through world media, threaten and endanger performance genres that have been created via the functions of Namibian cultures. Young people in urban areas have become more than willing to cast off their 'Namibian-ness' to adopt the African-American look, language and values. Older people express their fears that the social fabric of Namibian cultures is being torn apart, and that they have no avenue by which to communicate with city children. It is no longer solely the task of the older generation to transmit their life's knowledge to the

younger generation. The school has become a major role player in this regard. The younger generation enters the school system and when students leave after about twelve years, they have taken on a value system. Their personal taste is largely formed, sometimes with a minimum input from families. City children tap into cyberspace and discuss the latest music videos with their peers, while their grandparents wonder when they will find the time to learn the drumming traditions.

In view of the existing situation, it was becoming clear to me that a personal investigation into Namibian cultures was required. The previous education system discouraged knowledge about indigenous traditions. Present global cultural trends are resulting in rapid cultural changes in Namibia. Clearly, now is the time to explore, study, teach and enjoy the variety of indigenous music and dance practices before it is too late.

I began delineating my field of study by doing a review of various ethnographic, anthropological, historical and sociological studies. My aim was to gain understanding about the ways in which cultures function and how cultural functions relate to education. From these readings I learnt that more recent writers were approaching issues of culture and society in Africa in ways unique to this continent. In this regard Coplan (1991, 1994), Clifford (1988), Comaroff and Comaroff (1993), Kaarsholm (1991), Mazrui (1986, 1990), Mudimbe (1988), Okpewho (1983), Stokes (1994), and Hobsbawm and Ranger (1988) provided stimulating ideas, conceptual understandings, and guidelines with which to approach cultural studies in the Namibian context.

For insight into the cultures of Namibian people, I turned to local ethnographic and historical studies. Despite diverse viewpoints, the literature provided a background to people with whom I intended to undertake research. Heywood, Lau and Ohly (1992), Vivelo (1977), and Ohly (1990) described Herero culture and oral traditions, while Jacobsohn (1990) and van Warmelo (1951) focussed mainly on the related Ovahimba culture. Williams (1994) provided valuable insight into Owambo traditions, Gibson,

Larson and McGurk (1981) into various Kavango cultures, and Enquist (1990), Kinahan (1991) and Stephen (1982) provided a more generalised background.

From this background, I was able to identify certain events and terms around which I could ask questions. In order to develop teaching-learning materials located within Namibian cultural practices, I needed to explore the existing situation in terms of literature on Namibian musics and dance. I searched locally for information on Namibian music and dance and found that the absence of accessible recordings and data hampered research. Despite the lacunae in the literature on Namibian music and dance, the work of Olivier (1994, 1997), England (1995), Kubik (1985) and Marshall (1976) showed that fairly extensive work has been done on Ju/'hoan (or !Kung) musical practices in Botswana and Namibia. Zinke (1992) conducted extensive research in the exile camps of SWAPO prior to Independence and was the only in-depth literature available on the music of a Namibian Bantu-language group. As a study of music of a particular time, place and situation it provided a starting point from which to approach Owambo music.

No work could be traced on the music and dance of people in the Kunene region, mainly Himba and Zemba people. While Jacobsohn (1990) provides photographs of dancers and briefly mentions dances in her text, her work is not ethnomusicological. Similarly, the music and dance of the people of the Okavango region and the Caprivi region remain undescribed in the literature. An earlier ethnology work by Gibson, Larson and McGurk (1981) describes an event like *epera* in relation to its history, context and meaning, but the music and dance itself is not addressed. Numerous songs in Khoekhoe languages have been collected, yet no in-depth study is available at the time of writing. The music of Herero people and Namibian Setswana-speakers, Hai-//om and other Saan (Bushman) groups have apparently not received attention.

Clearly, to develop teaching-learning materials for Namibian arts education, I was not able to rely on available literature, but would have to turn elsewhere. In addition, I found that the narrow focus of the

available studies made expansion of my study area more complex. While my observations indicated that indigenous Namibian practices displayed a holistic character, most ethnomusicological studies in Africa are narrow in technical, descriptive or historic focus. Furthermore, there is a distinct lack of literature bridging ethnomusicological and educational disciplines. Compounding the problem of narrow focus, I found that most educational studies in music or dance are based on western educational paradigms, contexts, philosophies and methodologies. These studies do not necessarily apply to the Namibian situation.

In searching for literature on the connections between music and dance, it became obvious that these expressive forms are generally seen as separate fields of study. This division appears more in western cultures than elsewhere. This caused me to wonder why and how the division occurred. Even with regard to Africa, most of the established literature analyses and interprets the music but not the dance. Apart from the works by Chernoff (1979), Thompson (1974), and Kubik (1974), I found few studies on African music and dance that look at key determinants in both phenomena as equal and integrally related aspects of performance. Authors tend to focus on either music or dance, neglecting key aspects of the complex inter-relationship. This is a result of education in the western world, where we have dance experts and music experts, but the music-dance expert is rare. While most Africans comprehend and appreciate the integral relation between music and dance, and the relationship between music, dance and social, mental and physical wellbeing, there have been few African authors up to now who describe this fluidity between music, dance and life from their own perspective.

Regarding educational issues, I was unable to trace many works that explored the principles involved in transforming cultural practice to a form applicable to a classroom, yet it seemed clear that Namibian arts education should include indigenous practices. Gerhard Kubik's numerous studies on music in Africa, for example, are informative in analytical and comparative ways, but do not suggest how aspects of these customs may be used in formal classrooms. While Dargie (1996) begins to address and compare the

different conceptualisations involved in western and African ways of teaching music, this is not carried through to implications for formal education. Yet it was evident that Namibian cultures have ways of educating young people in and through music. Exploring these indigenous methods could teach us new and effective ways in which to implement arts education.

Compelled to take 'the road less travelled', I combined my investigations of music and dance with educational and societal considerations. Thought-provoking studies such as Christopher Small's *Music · Society · Education* (1984) provided me with insight into the effect of existing western ideologies on the ways we think about and approach the musical cultures of others. Small points out that the western scientific approach to life – aimed at control of the natural world – impacts upon our musical ideas. Because so many of the problems we were experiencing in educational reform appeared directly linked to Small's observations, I discuss this in more detail.

In describing certain characteristics and conventions of western classical music, Small shows how both this music and western science, as products of "very deep-rooted states of mind in Europeans" (*Ibid.*: 3), followed similar paths. He maintains that the scientific approach contributed to the emphasis on purity of tone and definite pitch, the "domestication"[4] of tone colour, the distancing of art from everyday life, and the recording and retaining of music in a precise form. The above effects, as well as the emphasis on written compositions, are not shared by the majority of the world's other musical cultures (*ibid.*: 9 - 30). One result of the western approach, according to Small, has been that

> education, or rather schooling, as at present conceived in our society has worked to perpetuate those states of mind by which we see nature as a mere object for use, products as all-important regardless of the process by which they are obtained, and knowledge as abstraction, existing 'out there', independent of the experience of the knower, the three notions being linked by an intricate web of cause and effect. (Small, 1984: 3).

[4] This term, used by Small, is very descriptive of differences between western tone colours and those of Africa.

Learners in the western system deal mostly with knowledge as an abstraction. Dargie (1996: 31) calls this a "system of *essentialism*" [his italics] by means of which qualities are abstracted and defined. Because of this essentialism, learners' experience of the world around them is often impaired, and the knowledge they absorb has little relevance to their lives outside the school. This is also true of their experiences with the arts, whereas Small regards art as "knowledge as experience, the structuring and ordering of feeling and perception" (*op cit.*: 4).

Narrowing his focus to music, Small discusses the contrast of its role in other cultures, including African cultures, observing that music and dance in non-European cultures are regarded as important skills for staying alive and well. In other words, music and dance have a role to play as life-sustaining functions, they are not merely abstractions to be analysed and studied. It is in this sense that Small's arguments coincided with my observations about Namibian music and dance performance, its apparent holism, and its central place in most Namibian societies.

The western paradigms evident in the dance literature result in the conception of dance as a space-time art, requiring formal choreography for the shaping of its designs. My experience of indigenous Namibian dances, on the other hand, led me to believe that the dance experience had far more in common with the exclamation by Jacques d'Amboise in a video series:

> It's your pulse, it's your heartbeat, it's your breathing! It's the rhythms of your life! It's the expression in time and movement of happiness and joy and sadness and energy - it's a venting of energy (D'Amboise, *Dancing,* #1).

While much of the present literature on dance is thus esoteric and abstract, Adshead's (1988) analysis of dance and the various research issues in Royce (1977), provided important guidance in terms of my basic understanding of dance, which I had previously never verbalised. Similarly, Hanna's (1979) seminal work on dance indicated the important role of dance in many cultures. As some of her work was located in

Africa, the examples and inferences had direct relevance to my work. In contrast with most African dance literature, which consists of generalised descriptions, Alphonse Tiérou (1992) and Dagan (1997) have begun to look at specific components of African dance. This prompted me to begin to identify characteristic movements and components in Namibian dance. From these beginnings a more detailed frame of reference for African dance can now be extended.

Because the western education had such a marked influence on Namibian education, an investigation into prevailing western views on music and dance education was required. I found that one of the major thrusts of recent educational studies in music has been a move away from a conceptual-aesthetic approach, towards a view emphasising the process of music-making. In this respect, Bowman (1994) and Elliott (1994)[5] are leaders in the field. Whereas earlier philosophers of music education supported the aesthetic and analytical view of music as an autonomous object, these writers describe music primarily as something which people do. This appeared to tie in with indigenous Namibian practices of learning music and dance through doing.

In order to gain insight into the Namibian education system, I studied a variety of official documents dating from before and after Independence. My involvement with the process of curriculum reform, as chairperson and member of various curriculum committees, contributed fundamentally to my understanding of needs in Namibian arts curricula. From this it became clear that the inter-dependence of indigenous music and dance was not reflected in the Namibian arts curriculum. Following the knowledge gained from my experiences with Namibian students, I became convinced that formal education's disregard of the values and meanings underlying indigenous music was a serious omission. The pre-

[5] W.D. Bowman (1994 (a): Sound, Society and Music "Proper" in *Philosophy of Music Education Review 2*, no.1; and (b) Justifying Musical Education: Contingency and Solidarity, in *Canadian Music Educator* Vol. 35: 6. These articles discuss, among other matters, the perception of music and its place in society. David Elliott's book, *A New Philosophy of Music Education* (1994), provides much information and discussion on the processes of music.

Independence arts education did not conform to Namibian expectations and needs.

Hence, in order to develop relevant educational programmes and the necessary materials, it was becoming clear that the next stage of my research lay in getting to know Namibian music and dance through first hand experience.

1.1 FIELD RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN TO GATHER INFORMATION - A PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Because literature on music and dance in the greater part of Namibia was non-existent, field research was undertaken to gather materials and gain personal experience in Namibian performance. I realised that fieldwork would take me into unknown areas, both in terms of geographic location and personal experience. It was necessary to first set the stage for the fieldwork.

1.1.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of my field research was to discover, record and study some of the musics and dances that are indigenous to Namibia, so that they can be incorporated in arts curricula. Materials were gathered by means of recordings and interviews. Taking the lack of existing material into consideration, this information will form the beginning of a cultural database, and contribute to further research in music and dance. Information will be archived at the University of Namibia and the National Archives.

The reform process of Namibian education exposed an urgent need for Namibian materials. The utilisation of indigenous Namibian songs, instruments and dances in formal education would clearly contribute to the strengthening of a Namibian cultural identity, a matter that is discussed in chapter two. It

would, therefore, be in the interest of the Namibian people for cultural materials to be gathered and studied.

Field research allows the researcher to make personal contact with people in their social situations. In this way members of the community share their knowledge and understandings about the social context and functions, illuminating the meaning of the music and the dance. Talking to Namibian people about their hopes, fears, beliefs, and taking a small part in their lives for a short while is rewarding in itself and allows for greater insight into the culture as a whole. This personal contact was vital to me, as it is only in conversation that important but often unverbalised concepts may appear.

The paucity of information on Namibian music and dance is aggravated by the fact that almost all material or data previously gathered has left the country along with the foreign person(s) who made the collections or recordings and who then often utilised recordings for personal gain. This unfortunate situation appears to be the lot of many developing countries where rural people do not realise that they have musical ownership and rights in terms of their cultural practices. An additional, but informal, purpose of this fieldwork was therefore to alert rural musicians and dancers to their rights and to the inherent and material value of their cultures.

1.1.2 Process

I undertook field trips, made recordings and conducted interviews in the areas described in chapter 2. I was also assisted in dance, singing and drumming by members of certain cultural groups, for example Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Damara, Owambo and Valozi people. I asked for and received assistance in translating, interpreting and describing songs and events from persons who were recommended as knowledgeable and reliable by members of the different cultural groups. Mature students at the University

of Namibia, fellow teachers, other researchers and musicians provided help through discussion and demonstrations. Regular consultations, referrals and feedback from those who have insight into specific cultures allowed me to draw conclusions that may be useful to teaching practice.

1.1.2.1 Contacts with official bodies

The first step was to make contact with persons involved in or knowledgeable about cultural events and rituals involving music and dance. The Ministry of Education and Culture (Directorate Culture) was approached for permission to work through regional cultural officers. Information was requested in terms of cultural events in the various regions, for example rain festivals, harvest festivals, initiation rituals and performances of 'cultural troupes'. Unfortunately only one person, the Regional Director of Culture in Rundu, responded with a calendar (see Addendum 8.1).

A research proposal was then submitted to the Directorate of Culture requesting financial or material assistance. No reply was received. A similar proposal submitted to the University of Namibia resulted in modest support.

The Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) was approached for possible collaboration and access to recordings, as they were at that time launching a countrywide orature-tracing project. No reply was received. Since 1996 however, a senior producer at the NBC, Helen Shiimbi, has been of great assistance in tracing dance materials from their archives. Certain NBC recordings have therefore been utilised, with their permission, as secondary sources.

1.1.2.2 Contacts with individuals

Realising that this research would be undertaken largely at my own expense and without prior fieldwork training, I had to establish a support network of informed individuals.

Advice on video filming techniques was sought from the technicians at the media centre of the University of Namibia. In an attempt to gain information via cultural insiders and contribute to their overall training, interested music students (teacher-trainees) were also approached to visit, record and write about cultural events in their home areas. This produced a number of songs from the central Oshiwambo-speaking region.

Personal contact was made with local 'cultural leaders' through students and other acquaintances. My contacts maintained that much music and dance occurred at a day or two's notice, even hours, and that it would not be difficult to trace such happenings at almost any time of the year. This supported my supposition that cultural music and dance occurrences are relatively common in rural areas.

Informants and performers were informed that my research is educational and not for public broadcasting; that it is non-profitmaking; that a small monetary contribution would be made to performers and informants; and that they would afterwards receive copies of photographs and could view recordings if they were in the vicinity of Windhoek. In some cases, where facilities are available, copies of video recordings were sent to the contact person.

Subsequent to my field trips, various individuals in the Windhoek area were approached for more specific information on musics and dance. This included a member of the Namibian National Cultural Troupe who provided assistance in the analysis of dance and drumming patterns of material recorded in Katima Mulilo. He also provided insight into kinemic elements of healing dances. For information on *epera* and *oudano* various students were of assistance, through discussion and dance. Workers on farms in the Khomas Hochland were approached for help in terms of their customs, and pronunciation and translation of texts. In fact, wherever individuals were willing to discuss and demonstrate dances they knew, I was willing to listen and learn. In this way information gathered by means of recordings could, to a large extent, be confirmed and corroborated.

1.1.2.3 Preparing documentation

The scholarly work of the ethnomusicologists Kubik (1985, 1986, 1987, 1977, 1988 and personal communications 1990 to 1993), Arom (1989), Andrew Tracey (in workshops) (1989), Hugh Tracey (1948), Djenda (1996), Muller (1995), Blacking and Kealiinohomoku (1979); and ethnochoreologists Dagan (1997), Tiérou (1992), Hanna (1979) and Thompson (1974) informed my approach to my field work and investigation of Namibian performance. Both Kubik and A. Tracey provided me personally with much needed guidance in terms of research documentation and methodology.

The 'invasion' by a foreign research person with cameras and sound equipment into village life remains problematic. One can but attempt to disturb the flow of events as little as possible. I attempted to address the matter of the status of informants through consultation prior to visits, thus establishing that they were considered respected and trustworthy individuals in their communities, with a special interest in and knowledge of cultural practices. Similarly, individual performers were described to me by a number of individuals as the 'best' they knew of in the area, while communal performances were recorded as they took place in communities. In all cases I followed up my notes, recordings, description and transcriptions with discussion with persons who could advise on the accuracy and evaluate my written work on the events.[6] Similarly a number of people were supportive in ensuring correctness of written language and pronunciation. This resulted in the notes I have provided on pronunciation and orthography.

To document the performances, texts, observations, and personal views that I expected to encounter, a sample documentation sheet was prepared - see Figure 1.1 below. On this sheet all data concerning recordings, places, date and time of day or night, as well as personal information regarding informants or performers was recorded. This sheet is an adaptation of a sample field-research sheet designed by Moyo

[6] Among others, Mr. Ervast Mtota of NIED provided advice in terms of *oudano*, Mr. Roger Avenstrup provided advice on the methodologies and the way the events were described, Mr. Petrus Namiseb and others workers worked through the
(continued on next page)

Malamusi (in Kubik assisted by Malamusi, Malamusi and Kachamba, 1987: 74). My adapted form includes oral literature and dance, as well as costume or dress and other items.[7]

DOCUMENTATION SHEET	
TAPE NO. \ TRACK \ ITEM NO.	
PLACE OF INTERVIEW \ RECORDING	
DATE AND TIME	
THE PERFORMER(S): NAME AGE GENDER PLACE OF BIRTH MOTHER TONGUE	
HOME VILLAGE OR AREA	
LANGUAGE OF RECORDING	
TYPE OF SONG, DANCE OR ORATURE OR TOPIC (IN PERFORMER'S OWN LANGUAGE)	
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT(S) NAME IN VERNACULAR DESCRIPTION	
TITLE(S) OF SONGS, STORIES	
MEANING OF TITLE	
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DANCE	
COSTUMES, DRESS, ITEMS USED	
OTHER OBSERVATIONS	

FIGURE 1.1 DOCUMENTATION SHEET

konsertliedjies with me, Mr. Manfred Linyanda, a teacher in Rundu commented on the way the material on *epera* was used in a workshop, and Mr. Dominic Lunenge provided feedback on the material on *nyakasanga*.

[7] For the sake of space, I have shown spaces for writing on this form smaller than in reality. The original form covers two pages A4.

1.1.2.4 Delineation of areas of documentation

Given that the main purpose of my field research was to learn more about Namibian music and dance, and to gather materials that would be suitable for inclusion in reformed Namibian arts curricula, I had to decide on inclusions or exclusions of groups. This decision was based on geographical location, language, availability of existing materials, or known cultural practices. In addition to the literature review, I relied on consultations with students from outlying areas as well as my observations during earlier travels in the country.

Initially it appeared possible to include visits to areas of all the major language groups. However later, because of time constraints, the very wide scope of twelve language groups, and the lack of feedback from Regional Cultural Officers, it was decided to limit target areas. I thus focussed on those areas known to display distinct and easily identifiable cultural characteristics (mainly language, music and dance); areas known for their vibrant cultural practices; and areas whose music and dance materials were not available in recorded or transcribed form.

The box on the following page (Fig. 1.2) indicates target areas (refer also to the map Fig. 1.3).

The people of the eastern Caprivi, the narrow land strip between the Zambezi river (bordering on Zambia) and the Kwando (Quando) river (bordering on Botswana), were included because their cultural practices and languages are part and parcel of the greater Valozi group in what used to be called Barotseland (mostly in Zambia) (see Fig. 1.3). Their music and dance are very colourful forms of Namibian practice.

AREA / REGION	URBAN CENTRE	LANGUAGE(S) COMMONLY SPOKEN
Northeast / Caprivi	Katima Mulilo	Silozi Sifwe Subhia Siyei
North / Okavango	Rundu	Thimbukushu Rukwangali Rugciriku Sisambyu
Northwest / Kunene	Opuwo	Otjihimba Otjizemba Otjiherero -Hakahona -Kuvare[8]
Central west / Khomas	Windhoek	Khoekhoegowab (among many others)
Central north / Oshana Ohangwena Omusati Oshikoto	Ondangwa and Oshakati Oshikango Ombalantu Tsumeb	Oshikwanyama Oshindonga Oshikwaludhi Oshikwambi Oshimbalantu Oshingandjera Oshinkolonkadhi

FIGURE 1.2 PRIMARY TARGET AREAS

The people of the northern Okavango region, along the Okavango River, appear to have strong ties with their kin across the river in Angola, as well as the Ovambo people to their west. A number of their musical instruments, their festivals and rites have, under different names, many qualities in common - as is to be expected in such close proximity. This area is relatively highly populated (two to three person per square kilometre) and thus representative of a large section of the Namibian population.

8 Where the correct prefix for language is not agreed upon by ethnologists or language groups, or is unknown to me, I have preceded the name with a hyphen.

The north-western Kunene region was selected largely as a result of its isolation. It is located in the area extending from the northern border with Angola along the Kunene River, the Namib Desert in the west, and borders on the Etosha Game Reserve towards the east. The people of this harsh but beautiful area are reputed to have retained much of their culture as pastoral nomads. I could trace no research on their music and dance. While some of these people (the Ovahimbas) are known to have direct kinship (and thus cultural) ties with the Herero people of the central areas of Namibia, as well as with their kin across the border in Angola, they are also more distant kin to the Ovambo people to their east.

The central western area was selected largely for reasons of proximity and familiarity as I live on a farm among Khoekhoe-speaking Damara people. An interesting aspect of the culture of the Damara people is that their language is shared with the Nama people of the south. The older musical practices and dance of the Damara show close ties with Nama practices. In the region surrounding Windhoek, however, where the apartheid system's black townships created a melting pot of cultures, Khoekhoe-speaking people have assimilated a song form that appears to have roots among the Xhosa people of South Africa. Locally this is known as *konsertliedjies* (concert songs) or *aksieliedjies* (action songs) and this is a popular local form of performance. Given the unique nature of the Khoekhoe language and these intercultural influences, this area is included in my research.

The central northern area was selected because it represents the largest concentration of people in Namibia (five to fifteen people per square kilometre) with relatively uniform customs This includes all the language groups (indicated in the table) loosely described as Oshiwambo-speakers. As their culture was perhaps the most directly affected by the border war, recent developments in music and dance are of interest.

The map below (Fig. 1.3) serves to illustrate the areas mentioned above. I have made use of a representation from a simple school atlas[9] because it shows recent changes and because the images are clear and uncluttered.

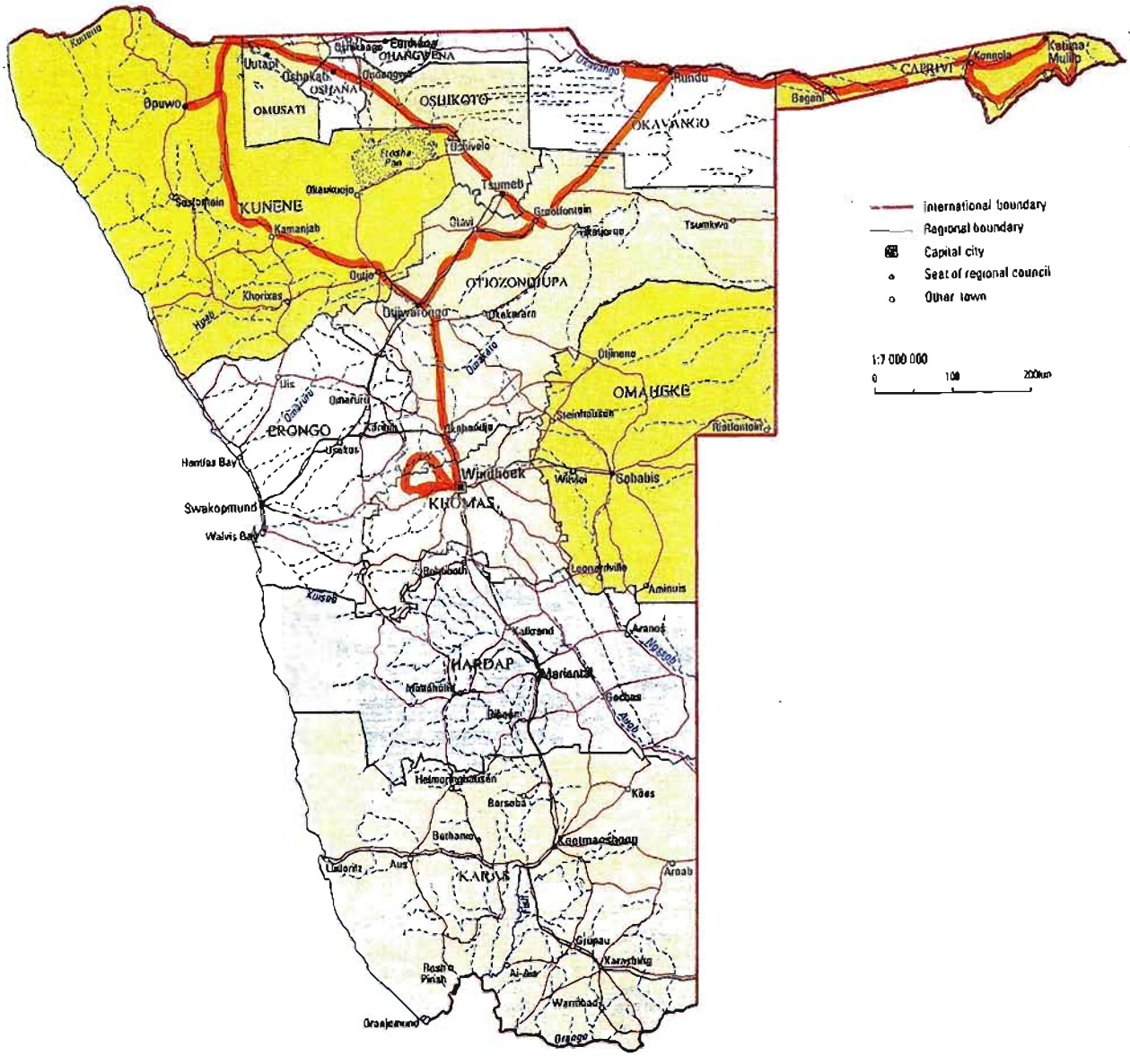

FIGURE 1.3 MAP OF AREAS VISITED

[9] *New Namibian School Atlas* (1993), Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers, Windhoek.

1.1.3 Journeys to Katima Mulilo, Rundu, Opuwo and Khomas Hochland

Three field trips were undertaken to the Caprivi, Okavango and Kunene regions, with additional short trips in the central area. Distances travelled by road were approximately 7 770 kilometres.

The first journey took place in July 1993. When Fullbright-Hayes scholars from the University of Maryland Consortium (USA) visited Namibia, they requested my collaboration in gathering Namibian cultural data for inclusion in Maryland county curricula. As this coincided with my work and research, I drove the group north. I introduced them to local people, while we shared responsibilities for recordings and discussions.[10]

After a two-day drive, we arrived in Katima Mulilo in the eastern Caprivi, where we contacted the Regional Director of Culture, Mr Kabajani Kamwe, and Mr Moses Nasilele from the Caprivi Art Centre, a private enterprise promoting Caprivian arts and crafts. Nasilele, our articulate and informed guide and consultant, took us first to the village Bukalo, south of Katima Mulilo near the *kuta*[11] of the local Masubhia chief. Here we observed local woodcarvers at work and visited Mr Sikwalunga Mului, where I recorded the "old tradition" (according to Mului and Nasilele) of playing the *silimba,* a gourd-resonated xylophone. This style of music on this type of *silimba* is not performed in present times in Namibia except by Mr Mului. He was retired and approximately 80 years of age at the time of recording. Previously he was the chief's musician, playing in the chief's courtyard "telling the chief to move out or what is happening" (according to Nasilele). He is considered a master performer in this musical genre. Drums and shakers normally accompany this older twelve key *silimba* (see Plate 1.1 below). Only five short pieces were recorded as the aged musician was in poor health.

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[10] The Centre for Visual and Performing Arts, University of Namibia sponsored a four-wheel drive vehicle for this trip, for which we were grateful.

[11] Silozi term for the headquarters of the Masubhia people, or the official village of the chief. The paramount chief of the Valozi is in Zambia in Barotseland (Valoziland).

After visits to a potters' village and a basket weavers' village, we accompanied Nasilele to Lizauli. This is a cultural village (described as a 'traditional village' by Nasilele) about a hundred kilometres to the west. This village was set up as part of a project to involve the local community in the preservation of wildlife. The notion of attracting tourists was developed in consultation with locals and a village was built by them to illustrate the traditions of the Caprivian people. Here we were introduced to aspects of local traditions of village construction, food preparation, agriculture, iron forging, basket and mat weaving and the playing of musical instruments and dance. The *silimba* which was played here was of the modern kind, with eighteen staves tuned more or less to the western diatonic major scale (Plate 1.3). This version of the gourd-resonated xylophone is generally played by more than one person. In the example recorded the lower pitched part is the vocal part, while the higher pitched part adds 'sugar' (according to Nasilele). The melodies played were modern and included versions of western songs. Other instruments observed included a *namalwa* or friction drum (Plate 1.2), a *kaholoholo* or unbraced mouth-resonated scraped bow (Fig. 1.4), a *kang'ombyo* or lamellophone (Fig. 1.5), and the typical group of three drums - *mulupa o mutuna* or father drum, *sikumwa* or mother drum, and *kandili* or son drum. A maize mortar and pestle were also used to accompany the music rhythmically.

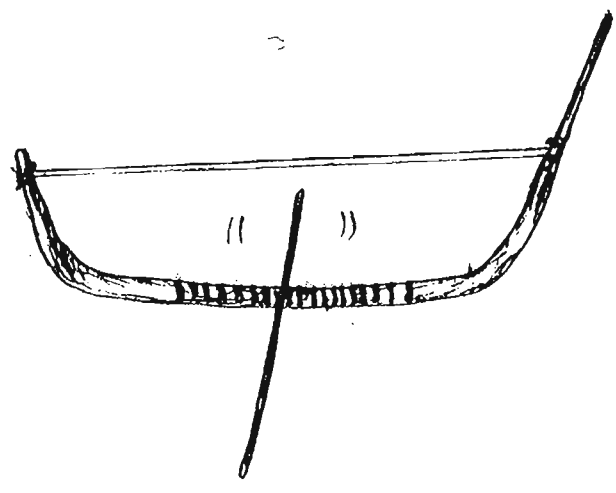

FIGURE 1.4 ***KAHOLOHOLO***

PLATE 1.1 Mr MULUI'S *SILIMBA*

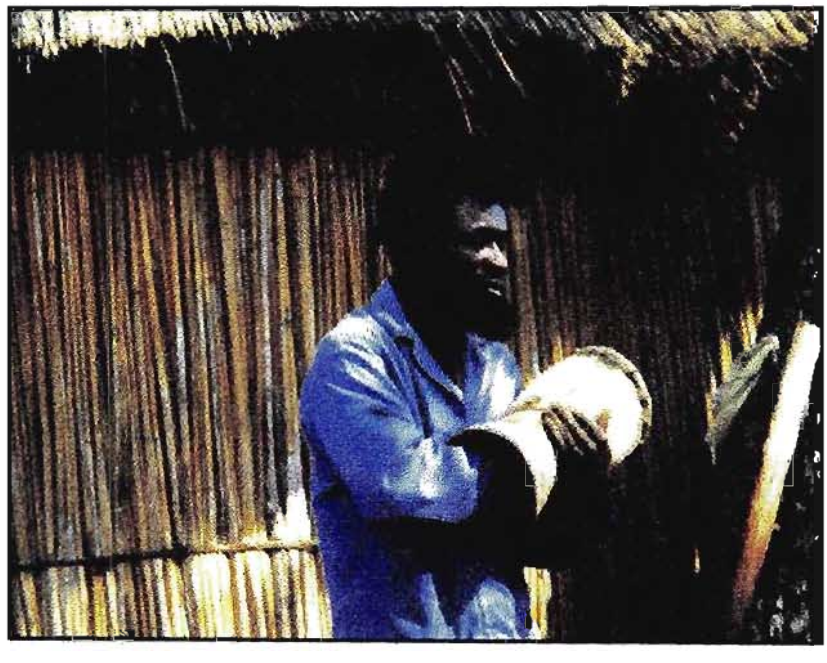

PLATE 1.2 *NAMALWA*

PLATE 1.3 DANCING IN LIZAULI, WITH MODERN *SILIMBA*

FIGURE 1.5 *KANG'OMBYO*

On our final day in the Caprivi we recorded the Katowa dance group in rehearsal at the Caprivi Art Centre. This group, led by Godfrey Katowa Mbambi, consisted of three female singers/dancers and five male dancers and instrumentalists. They performed three Caprivian dance genres: four *nyakasanga* (healing) dance-songs; four *simbayoka* (girl's initiation) dance-songs with contemporary texts; a *kayowe* (healing), referred to by these dancers as a Katowa dance. Katowa is the name of their leader, a healer. Six different *kayowe* songs were performed. The dances were enlivened by the singing and clapping of the girls, the three-drum group, as well as *mukakashi* - a stick beaten on the wooden side of a drum. The healer used tin shakers and a whistle (see transcription in chapter 5).

The beauty and power of the Caprivi and its music transported us to a new world of experience. From the gentle, hypnotic music of the *silimba* to the raw energy of the drumming, the music and dance quite clearly had something very specific to say about Namibian performance. I hardly expected that the next stop, Rundu, would bring anything new.

In Rundu we contacted the local Deputy Director of Culture, Mr A Dikuua, who acted as our guide and translator. He accompanied us to the Mbangure Wood Carvers' Co-operative where the master carver, Mr John Lumbala, described the meaning and origins of typical designs of the area. For the first time I realised what the meanings behind the familiar stylised faces on drums and masks were. I describe this in chapter 5.

In the village of Kehemu four local female basket weavers demonstrated their individuality of style within the framework of local traditions. On the following day an enactment of a healing ceremony, called *divare* in Thimbukushu, was recorded. Mr Samende Mulaula, a registered Zambian healer of considerable reputation, conducted the healing in Kehemu village, where people were soon attracted by the sound of the music, and joined in the ceremony. Mulaula, who arrived by truck and was dressed in female attire "for greater effect", later changed to his healer's costume and performed tirelessly in the midday heat.

Eleven songs were recorded. Despite the fact that this was not an authentic healing, Mulaula took the enactment seriously as his personal reputation was involved.

Later, Mr Dikuua took us to visit the Leevi Hakusembe Secondary School, some twenty kilometres west of Rundu. Here I recorded the school choir singing both religious and secular songs. The choir also performed *epera,* the Rukwangali term for a celebratory (harvest) dance (see transcription in chapter 5). This was done to the accompaniment of two drums, singing and clapping. These performances took place in the school hall and the choir was dressed in a colourful choir uniform. Nine songs were recorded. This choir is largely self-trained, rehearsing in the afternoons, only occasionally under the guidance of the principal, Mr S. Kavara. This well-disciplined and polished group illustrates the urge of youngsters to perform creatively, despite the fact that the school does not offer any music programme in its curriculum. As the situation here did not allow for much questioning, I resolved to follow up the meaning and structure of the *epera* event at a later date. The American scholars returned to the United States.

PLATE 1.4 *DIVARE* IN KEHEMU VILLAGE

My appetite now fully whetted, my husband and I departed for Opuwo in the Kunene region in November 1993. On arrival I contacted Mr Festus Tjoola,[12] who introduced me to Fabianus Mumbinda, our guide, informant and translator. This young man was of great help in finding and introducing me to interesting musicians in the area of Otuzemba. The first was Mr Mukolo Rutjindo, aged 78, who played the *otjihumba*, a boat-shaped pluriarc (see Plate 1.5). Some bystanders then gave an impromptu performance of a dance/game called *ondjongo* (transcription in chapter 5). Also recorded in the next two days were performances on *ondendele* or *outa*[13] (a braced mouth-bow) played alternatively by Tjimbuale Kakondo and an unnamed youth (Plate 1.6); *ongandeka* (a competitive dance-game); *elumba* (unbraced mouth-resonated bow with notched stave) performed by an elderly woman Mrs Mukakasaka Murimba; *otjisandji* (gourd-resonated lamellophone) played by an aged blind man, Mr Tjitundilile Kavandjande; *omburumbumba* (braced gourd-resonated mouth-bow) excellently performed with singing and droning by another elderly man, Mr Petrus Tjisuta (Plate 1.7); and a 'picnic' at which a large group of people near Orotjitombo played *ondjongo*. The self-delectative music sung and played on these instruments provided my first real experience of the quiet, gentle, and peaceful qualities that I had read about as being common in African musics. The unique voice tones that were employed and the instrumental expertise were a truly enriching experience that I wanted to share with others.[14] Owing to the extreme heat, windy conditions, theft, and lack of electricity, many problems were experienced with video and tape recording equipment. Thus, despite the stimulating and satisfying musical experience of this journey, it became clear that another trip to this outlying area was necessary.

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[12] A colleague, Ms Margo Timm, supplied the name of my main contact person in Opuwo, Mr Festus Tjoola.

[13] The Otjizemba and Otjihimba terms respectively.

[14] This trip resulted in a selection of elderly musicians (considered experts by their respective communities) being brought to Windhoek for performances and workshops. This was part of the Namingoma project, in which I aim to identify and give public status to excellent performers in older Namibian musical traditions, thereby stimulating interest and cultural pride in communities.

PLATE 1.5 ***OTJIHUMBA*** **PLAYED BY P. MAENJA**

PLATE 1.6 ***OUTA (ONDENDELE)***

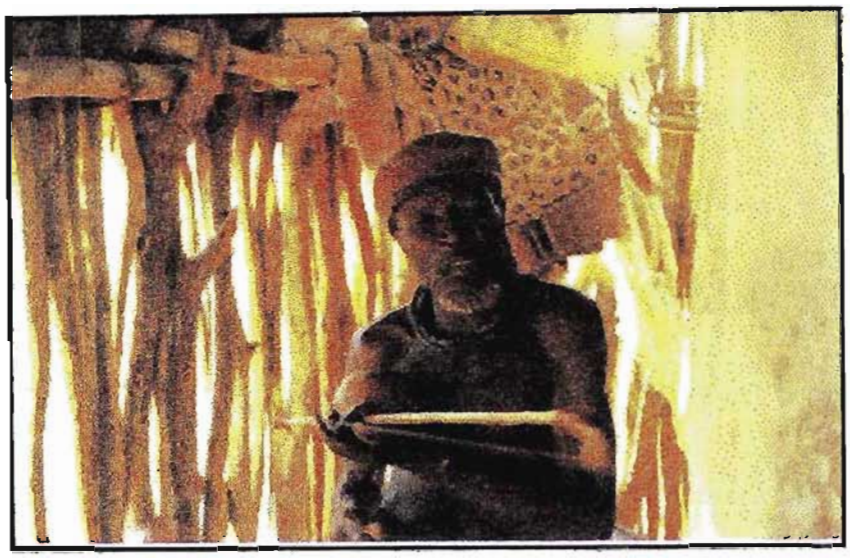

PLATE 1.7 *OMBURUMBUMBA* PLAYED BY P. TJISUTA

Informants in this area had some difficulties in following, understanding and replying to questions put to them, due to language and conceptual difficulties. The result was that some of my information was sketchy, and questions were frequently misunderstood. Repetitions of questions occasionally led to reluctance on the part of informants to continue, leaving certain aspects insufficiently covered at this stage. Thus, my family and I made a return journey in December 1993. Unfortunately however, most of the people who were recorded on the first trip had left for their watering places in the desert, and I was not able to ascertain when they would return. I was, however, able to do a second recording of Mr Petrus Tjisuta - once again in very windy circumstances. I was also able to make recordings of different *otjihumba* players, Mr Paulus Maenja and Mr Kasuku Mupapi.

On return to Katima Mulilo I unfortunately found that here too people had moved to outlying areas in Zambia for the holiday season. I was however able to attend a night healing by a female healer. As the only available light came from embers from a low burning fire, the visual quality of my recording was poor. I subsequently recorded another *silimba* player, Mr Gilbert Simukusi Tubabe, who, I was told,

played "old music, like about war and information" (according to informant Austin Kasiwa) on a modern sixteen-stave instrument. I was not able to interview Mr Tubabe due to his apparent inability to communicate through the spoken word.[15] Some discussion was held with two young men, Kasiwa and Chriso Muyunda, on antique masks of Valozi and traditional magical weapons used by witches in this area.

In the periods in between the journeys to the north, recordings were made on the farms Kariam, Silwerstroom and Bulow in the Khomas Hochland area. This included a wedding (service and reception) and various performances of *konsertliedjies* or concert songs (not to be confused with western art songs) and *Namastap* (see Plates 1.8 and 1.9). At the double wedding it was interesting to note that the Christian service included only western-style hymns, while the outdoor reception involved recorded as well as live 'traditional' music.[16] *Langarm* couple dancing was done to the recorded music. Another group of people moved around led by musicians playing two guitars and a piano accordion. They were followed by dancers performing *Namastap*. Most touching was the natural integration of children into the celebration and dance. At this wedding it became clear that the music and dance of this region is very different to that of the northern regions of Namibia. No drums are used, and it seems that links with both western and South African musical practices were apparent. I followed this up with subsequent recordings on Silwerstroom farm (1995) at a church 'picnic' involving about three hundred people, mostly from Windhoek and neighbouring farming areas. The formal programme included song and dance in different languages - Khoekhoegowab, Setswana and Xhosa. A noticeable trend in this formal programme was that the participation of children was minimised. The result was that many children wandered off to play. The performance product, the compulsion of sticking to the programme format and time allocation appeared

[15] Others described him as 'crazy' but a good musician.

[16] Langarm and Namastap are considered 'traditional' by the performers involved.

to have become more important than general participation. This was in sharp contrast to my experiences in the northern rural areas.

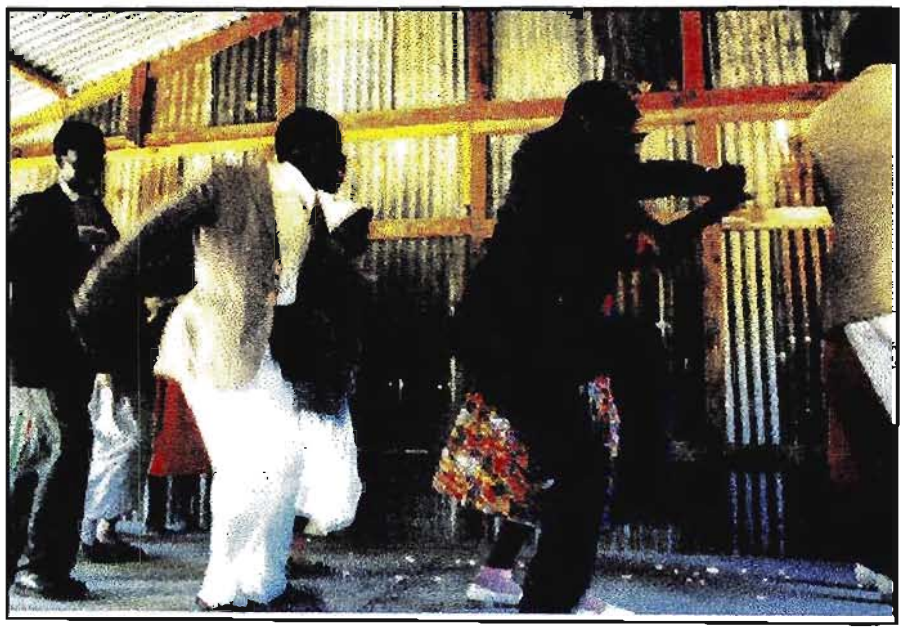

PLATE 1.8 ***NAMASTAP***

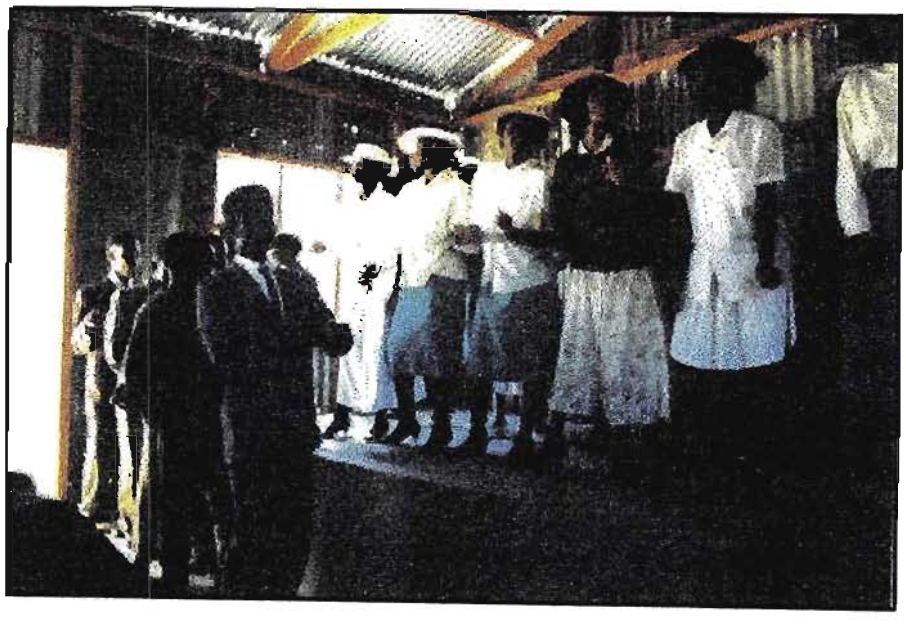

PLATE 1.9 ***KONSERTLIEDJIE***

At this time the NBC had started broadcasting television performances of various Namibian dances. On the strength of what I saw, I resolved to learn about *oudano,* as it was clearly a popular form of dance among young persons from the north. After viewing several recordings, I picked one song/dance more or less at random as an example to analyse and transcribe. As I commenced the endless playbacks involved for transcription, the diversity of movements threatened to overwhelm me. With the help of Nelago Kalilo and others mentioned earlier, the 'clues' that unlocked the puzzle of each event were slowly resolved. Unfortunately, the many viewings damaged the quality of my dubbing. On my return to the NBC in 1997 to make a fresh dubbing of the children's *oudano* from their master copy for the purpose of the video accompanying this thesis, I was informed that studio recordings were wiped out after three years in order that tapes be re-used. The quality of the recording included is therefore very poor, due to age. It is included for checking purposes. I have however included other dubbed recordings which I collected from the NBC (1997).

The process of collecting materials was truly a spiritual journey. My initial approach to events was backed by analytical observation. It soon became apparent, however, that I needed to enter into events as a participant from time to time if I wished to explore the spirit and meaning of each. In this way the energy levels and basic 'feel' of the dance became more real. When viewing the recordings for transcription and analysis later, I found myself singing the songs for weeks until they were assimilated. In this way, these songs in some ways became an extended part of my own culture. In being able to sing and dance some of the local practices, I was developing a new cultural identity that was more Namibian than it had been before.

For all recordings, a simple hand held video camcorder was used. On occasion audio recordings and still photographs supplemented video. As I handled all of these myself, it was impossible to photograph what was also being recorded. The videotape accompanying this thesis was used for analysis of selected

performances. The recordings are field quality, and are included here merely to illustrate certain events. The video is therefore not a professional production.

Where possible, I interviewed performers with the help of a translator/informant. As time was limited, this kind of recording and gathering is by definition superficial. In situations such as healings or picnics, I found that interviews with participants were of limited value as people were occupied with song and dance. Questions would have disturbed the flow of the event. Under the circumstances, however, my informants were of inestimable value in providing me with information. They explained the purpose of the recordings to participants. In all cases people were hospitable and keen to perform and share their music and dance rituals. This fieldwork requires follow-up studies in the future.

A brief outline of the thesis serves to indicate the ways I have approached some of the problems described so far.

1.2 THESIS OUTLINE

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and outlines the purpose and course of the study. A brief review is included of the literature pertaining to Namibian music and dance, as well as other works relevant to this study. The chapter also describes the field trips undertaken.

Chapter two is a reconstruction of the historical background to Namibia's education system - past and present - with the emphasis on arts education. After a brief description of recent Namibian history leading up to Independence, I explore the influence colonialism had on Namibian culture, on arts education, and specifically on the separation of music from dance in school contexts. Following an outline of pre-Independence arts education, I turn to the reformed system presently being implemented, with reference

to present changes in arts education. Questions regarding cultural identity and cultural diversity in arts education are raised and the goals of the Basic Education system relative to the arts are presented.

Chapter three responds to the need to satisfy current Namibian educational goals. This chapter proposes an approach to music and dance education that arises in Namibia. The term *ngoma* is suggested as a core concept around which to restructure arts education. Music and dance are known to have been used extensively in indigenous education prior to colonial occupation. How this occurred, and the impact on the processes of socialisation is explored. Colonialism, political change and modern 'development' have wreaked havoc on traditional education practices. Making use of aspects of the indigenous methods and approaches suggested in this chapter is thought to have value in terms of today's schooling.

Chapter four deals with a consideration of notations and descriptive devices by which Namibian musics and dances can be transcribed so that they may be used in schools. This necessitates a deconstructive approach to establish which general aspects of music and dance pertain to Namibian performances. Diverse Namibian performance characteristics are identified so that they may be used for teaching-learning purposes. Vernacular terms are used, but by means of this deconstruction, the future may see special terms being devised for characteristics that are peculiar to Namibian performances.

In chapter five a selection of performance events is found. These events illustrate features of indigenous practices and ways in which cultural diversity is expressed. I focus on events rather than particular musical or dance qualities, because this is in keeping with the idea of *ngoma* as discussed in chapter three. The events transcribed are selected from my recordings to provide a cross section of music/dance events, which may be suitable for translation to the classroom situation. Each event is prefaced with a contextualisation, describing location and history of the people involved and the event performed. This is followed by a transcription that notates sound as well as movement, and an explanation of the transcription. Suggestions are made for use of the material in the classroom. Simple drawings illustrate

certain stances and movements. The chapter is enhanced by field video recordings of the events I have described. In most cases, a video recording would greatly assist the teaching of these dances, but cannot, in my opinion, replace the transcription, for several reasons. Firstly, very few schools in Namibia are equipped with video and/or audio equipment. Secondly, the tempo of some music/dance actions makes it impossible to use a field recording as a direct teaching tool. Thirdly, the video cannot focus on everything at the same time; therefore, the different drumming actions, dancing, singing and clapping actions cannot all be followed at the same time. For these reasons the use of the transcriptions is recommended as primary medium, along with the use of experts in the community, or video and/or audio where appropriate and possible.

The final chapter pulls together the different strands of the preceding chapters. It looks at what has evolved with respect to Namibian music and dance as *ngoma,* and how this may be applied to new arts curricula. It addresses issues of relevance and practicality, among others. Suggestions are made regarding implementation. This thesis strives to create a bridge between indigenous Namibian educational practice through music and dance and the system of formal schooling, by locating itself in indigenous practices and emulating ideas arising from these practices. In this way I hope to make a contribution to the process of educational reform and to the maintenance and strengthening of Namibian cultural identity.

2 BACKGROUND AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

This chapter serves to illuminate the prevailing philosophies and paradigms on which the pre-Independence education systems were based. The effects which colonial occupation had on concepts of culture and tradition, and its reflection in arts education, are discussed. I look at the current comprehensive reform initiatives in Namibian education in the context of the changing Namibian society. Finally, the position of arts education is outlined, with reference to the direction that reform and renewal are taking.

2.1 THE NAMIBIAN POPULATION

In order to comprehend the situation within which educational reform and renewal is to take place, it is necessary to briefly describe the diversity of the Namibian population. The total population of the country is under two million,[1] and includes eleven main language groups. The orthography used is clarified in paragraph 9.1.

2.1.1 Language distribution

The historical and ethnographic descriptions serve to illustrate the background and influences leading to changes in education. See Figure 2.1, the map illustrating language and ethnographic distribution of Namibian peoples.

1 The figure for Namibia (excluding Walvis Bay) is given as 1 401 711 in the preliminary report of the 1991 Population and Housing Census, National Planning Commission (1993: 1). Owing to the problems experienced in gathering the census figures however, the actual population is suspected to be somewhat higher. The population growth rate is approximately 3% per annum.

FIGURE 2.1 APPROXIMATE LANGUAGE DISTRIBUTION

Arts education, in order to have relevance in Namibia, has to take cognisance of cultural diversity, yet acknowledge the urge to develop or enhance a Namibian culture. It is also important to find ways of incorporating into arts education a "new departure centred in the African reality" as an early educational reform document puts it (Swapo and The Namibia Association of Norway, 1987:3).

According to Strauss and Kenney in the SIDA Cultural Overview, the pattern of settlement in Namibia today generally reflects that of the pre-colonial era (Kenney, 1991: 3). Prior to Independence, different language or cultural groups were settled into 'homeland' areas, for example *Hereroland* in the east, *Damaraland* (for *Damaras*, also previously called *Bergdamas)* in the northwestern parts of the territory, while *Ambo*[2] communities lived in Owamboland in the north, although kinship was extended into what is now southern Angola. The various *Owambo* communities in the north are made up of groups with different but associated languages, who share common cultural characteristics based on lineage and settlement of the area, apparently dating back to the sixteenth century.[3] The dialects of this area include *Oshindonga, -Kwambi, -Kwanyama, -Kwaludhi, -Mbalantu, -Ngandjera, -Nkolonkadhi.*[4]

In the Okavango region languages include *Rukwangali, -Gciriku, -Mbuza, Sisambyu,* and *Thimbukushu.* In colonial times this area was called Kavango. The *Hambukushu* settlement also extends into the Caprivi strip alongside *Masubhia, -Yei, -Fwe, Ikwahani, Valozi, -Kwengo, -Totela,* and *-Tonga* people. People from the Okavango and Caprivi regions are not, however, confined to territory within the current borders of Namibia, but are part of wider grouping that straddle these borders into present-day Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana.

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2 The collective prefix ova- is used for the Ambo by other groups - thus it has become common usage to speak of Owambos.
3 See Williams (1994) for descriptions of early Owambo settlement according to oral history and archaeological diggings.
4 The different language and cultural groups in Namibia (and indeed Africa) make use of various prefixes and suffixes to indicate either their language e.g. Oshindonga for the Ndonga language, Silozi for the Lozi language, or collective tribal associations, e.g. Ovaherero, Valozi, etc. These prefixes and suffixes may be used differently by outsiders or insiders. In order to simplify matters without giving offence to any groups, I have settled upon a hyphen replacing whichever prefix may be appropriate.

The Rehobothers (*Basters*) established their community south of Windhoek in 1870. They are mainly an Afrikaans-speaking group. This *gebiet* is considered by Rehobothers to be their personal property and even in present times they are battling the government for release of this area of land for their settlement only.

Various *Nama (Khoekhoe)*[5] clans are settled in southern Namibia. The *Orlams* migrated from the Cape during the early nineteenth century. Predictably, the homeland in the south was called Namaland in colonial times. Socio-linguistically, *Damaras* and *Namas* share a common language group *(Khoekhoegowab)* and some cultural characteristics. Different, possibly related dialects of the language appear in certain regions, for example *Hai-//'om,* in the area south of Etosha, referred to as a Saan or Bushman group. This very old dialect is difficult even for Khoekhoe experts to understand. As pastoral nomads, Damaras are thought to have been very early settlers of the area some centuries ago, but owing to their later subservient role to the Nama, they may have taken on the Nama (Khoekhoe) language with slight dialectic and tonal variations. Since the early nineteenth century, both groups have lived alongside and interacted closely with *-Herero* societies, the latter forming fairly separate communities linked by language and culture. Thus in the extreme northwest the *-Himba, -Kuvare, -Hakahona, -Zemba* and *-Tjimba* groups have maintained some unique cultural traits, because of their isolation as pastoral nomads, while the dialects spoken have remained very close to *Otjiherero*. The term Tjimba is today considered derogatory, as it refers to 'poor' or cattle-less people. The Herero people in the central and eastern areas describe themselves as either -Herero or *-Mbanderu,* depending on family lineage. *Setswana* is also spoken in a limited area in the east bordering on Botswana, particularly in the Gobabis and Nina areas. The indigenous and traditionally nomadic Saan[6] (or Bushmen), on the other hand, remained linguistically insular. Previously they were settled in an eastern area called Bushmanland. Today the people of this area prefer to identify themselves

5 Despite the spelling Khoikhoi or Khoi-khoi still being common in parts of southern Africa, official Namibian orthography since 1977 gives the correct spelling as Khoekhoe. Ancient versions of the language most likely had a 'w' pronounced between the o and the e. Combinations of 'oi' do not exist in the language (Haacke, 1996).

6 The spelling Saan, is a compromise, and not presently in common use in southern Africa. Correct pronunciation is a long double-a sound, indicated phonetically as " ɑ̄ " (Haacke, 1996). As this sign is not commonly available on typewriters or word processors, the double a is being used by some in Namibia.

as *!Kung, Ju/'hoan, //X'au-//'e, Hai-//'om, Kxoe, /'Hua, ≠'Auni, ≠Xomani* and *!Xo* people. The living and hunting areas of these people extend into the Okavango and Caprivi regions. Most of the Ju/'hoansi[7] today live in the area called the Nyae Nyae. Others live along the Kalahari desert, in the Gobabis area, in the area north of Tsumeb, and around Rundu and western Caprivi.[8]

The population in urban areas such as Windhoek are culturally mixed. In towns and commercial farming areas one hears much German and Afrikaans spoken. English, however, is the official language of the country, and therefore is also the language of formal education.

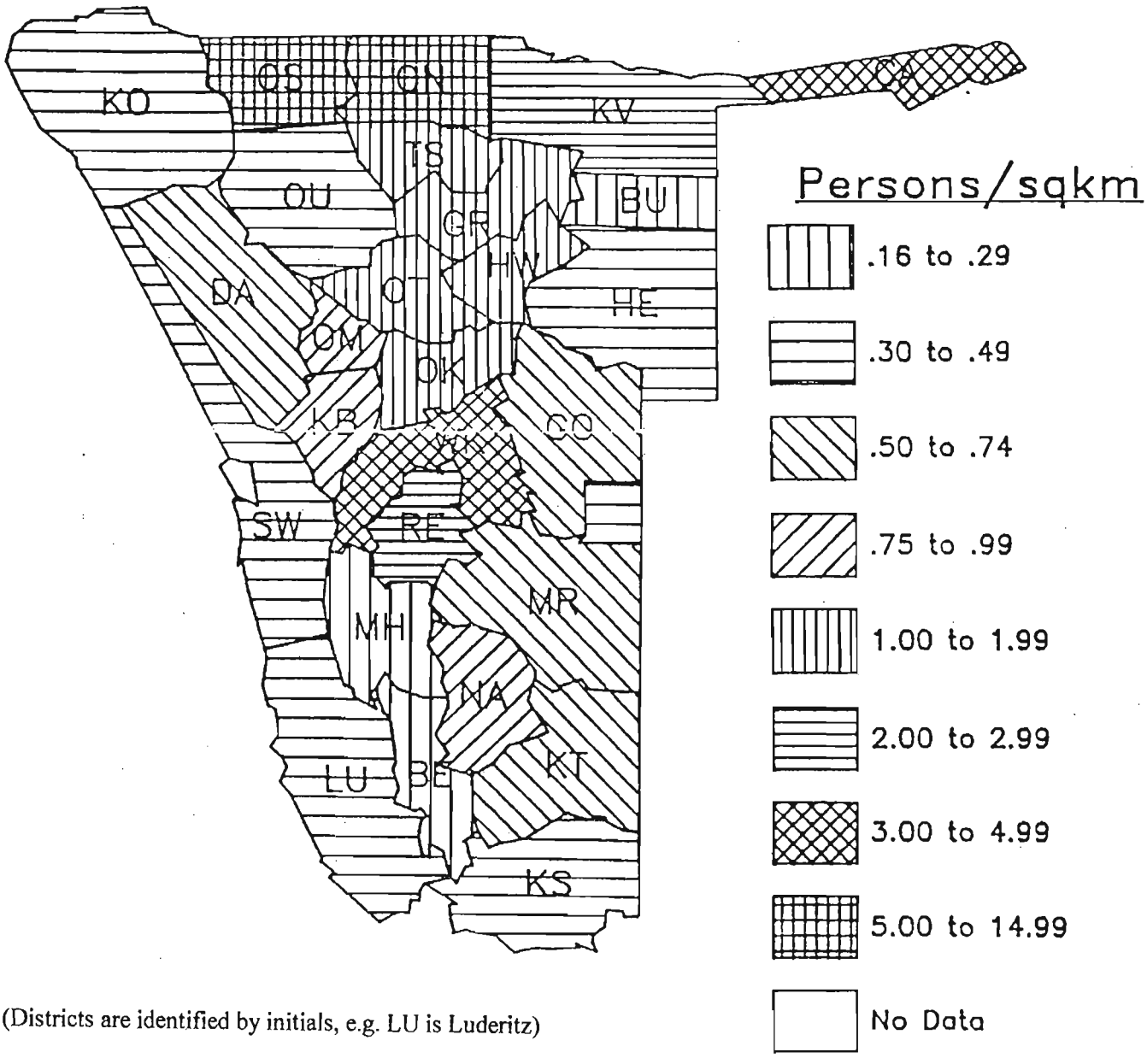
2.1.2 Population density

The sparseness of Namibia's population distribution has had a direct effect on education, development, and communication. More than fifty percent of the country's population is centred in the northern rural region, yet until very recently, this area had no electricity, poor roads, and the least developed schools. Fig. 2.2 illustrates the distribution of the population (Republic of Namibia, 1993:4).

Population density affects the servicing of schools directly. The isolation of certain areas has affected the placement of teachers, as most teachers prefer to work in urban areas. The effect is felt even more strongly in the arts, as arts teachers want to be closer to theatres and galleries. Certain schools are accessible only on foot,

7 The –si is a suffix and indicates the plural (Marshall 1976: 17).
8 The politically correct term for these groups of people remains problematic. Earlier researchers grouped together all the eastern hunter-gatherers as !Kung. The speakers of the central !Kung dialect refer to themselves as Ju/'hoansi and see the name !Kung as derogatory. According to Biesele (in Skotnes 1996: 338) the Ju/'hoan People's Organisation also reject the word "San" and seek to ennoble the previously pejorative term "Bushman". Yet the term San or Saan continues to be used by government and other official institutions, and by many people themselves. Thus, for want of a term acceptable to all, I continue to use Saan.

horseback or by 4x4 vehicles and serve rural areas some distance from the nearest town.[9] As relatively few schools have hostels and there is no public transport for learners, school attendance cannot always be enforced. Dropout rates are high and the social circumstances that require young boys to assist with cattle herding contribute further to the high dropout rate.



(Districts are identified by initials, e.g. LU is Luderitz)

FIGURE 2.2 - POPULATION DENSITY

9 The school itself, with its small hostel and teacher accommodation, can form a tiny village by itself. Examples include schools in the Namib (Khorixas and Kunene regions) and the Caprivi.

2.2 A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NAMIBIA

2.2.1 Recent political history

Present day Namibia, previously called Deutsch Süd-west Afrika and later South West Africa, has a history of being ruled by a series of tribal leaders as well as German and South African colonialists. After Germany's defeat in World War I in 1918, the territory became the responsibility of the League of Nations. As South Africa occupied the territory during the war, the League of Nations mandated it to South Africa in 1920 with instructions to "promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory" (Singham and Hune, 1986:1).

Unfortunately, the compliance with this instruction was not extended to the whole population. Instead the area was colonised by South Africa with extensive mining and agricultural exploitation. In 1946 South Africa requested permission from the newly formed United Nations General Assembly to incorporate the territory into its Union. This was refused; nevertheless the South African government thereupon declared that it would administer the territory without UN jurisdiction. Thus the abhorred South African policy of separate development for different racial groups (*apartheid*) became part of the South West African system.

In terms of the *apartheid* system, schools were separated according to race. Different schools were established for those classified as white, coloured, *Baster*,[10] and black. Schools referred to as 'black schools' were artificially separated from one another by means of accentuation of 'tribal' and language differences. The philosophy was separate development; the strategy was divide and rule. The harsh Bantu[11] Education policy was instituted in

10 Baster is the name taken by settlers in the Rehoboth area.
11 The word Bantu has come to have many negative connotations, especially when associated with separatist policies. While some read Bantu as referring to all black people, The term in reality refers to a group of related peoples and languages resulting from early migrations and settlements. The term is used in this thesis to refer to the language group (see Guthrie) in contrast with e.g. Khoekhoe languages.

black schools. White schools and those for persons of mixed race (referred to by government as coloured) made use of education systems designed by parallel racial groups in South Africa, for example the Cape Education Department.

In reaction against the *apartheid* system, attempts were initiated to negotiate self-determination by diplomatic means and through repeated submissions by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) to the United Nations. As a result of these submissions, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council passed resolutions between 1961 and 1969 declaring South Africa's occupation of the territory illegal.[12] In 1969 the Security Council recognised

> the legitimate right of the people of Namibia to struggle against South African authorities illegally occupying their land and called for moral and material aid from all states to assist the Namibian people in their struggle. (Singham and Hune, 1986: 8)

A thirty-year struggle for freedom and independence culminated in a protracted bush war between SWAPO guerrillas and the South African Defence Force around the country's northern border and in southern Angola.[13]

Despite vigorous objection from the non-aligned countries, South Africa sponsored an 'internal settlement' through the Turnhalle Constitutional Conference in 1978. In December of that year unilateral elections were held and the following year an interim government which lasted until 1989 was set in place by a number of interest groups. These groups or parties included the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), the National Party, SWAPO-Democrats, Herstigte Nasionale Party, and others. The resultant governing system continued to embrace separate development as a policy, which in turn led to an extremely cumbersome arrangement consisting of eleven different administrations - one for each of the larger 'population groups', according to race

12 These were United Nations Resolutions 245 and 264.
13 The reason for the border war taking place in the north was partly because the northern peoples were the initiators and greatest supporters of the freedom struggle, and partly because both Angola and Zambia provided assistance to SWAPO and allowed the establishment of guerrilla camps in their territories.

classification. Each of these administrations formed part of the Second Tier Government,[14] and was responsible for its own educational administration, including its financing. Income was handled separately for each administration and was based on subsidies and income tax generated by the particular representative population group. The relative wealth of the Administration for Whites was reflected in the quality of its schools, colleges and special institutions - in contrast with those of the other administrations that were characterised by a lack of facilities or trained staff. Despite the fact, therefore, that the 'Bantu Education' system was ostensibly no longer in use, the situation had in effect not improved at all. Schools in black communities remained under-staffed and under-equipped. Subjects like mathematics and science were discouraged for black students as "they would have no use for such subjects" - a statement typical of the time.

During the time of the struggle for political independence a widespread, initially underground culture of resistance developed, bringing with it dances like *omupembe* and *toyi-toyi*,[15] as well as songs and poetry of resistance and hatred against the occupiers.

> In more recent Namibia (sic) history, the decade before independence saw a wealth of songs praising the bravery of exiled Namibians, their sacrifices and suffering. Songs protesting oppression and Apartheid caused a great paranoia amongst the authorities. (Hofmeyr in Kenney, 1991:73)

At the same time large amounts of money from state coffers were being poured into the development of eurocentric arts and culture, mainly in the capital, Windhoek. In this way a "State Conservatoire", the South West African Performing Arts Council (SWAPAC), and the Windhoek Theatre were established under the protection of The Administration for Whites. In style and approach these institutions catered exclusively for the instruction and entertainment of whites.

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14 The 'First Tier' consisted of a cabinet of ministers, appointed without the benefit of a 'one person - one vote' election.
15 *Toyi-toyi* is likely to have originated in guerrilla training camps, and while danced by SWAPO supporters, it is more often associated with the resistance movement in South Africa.

Pressure on South Africa from the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement increased, as did warfare within the border regions. Finally in 1989, United Nations Resolution 435 was implemented by mutual agreement. The first national elections which were labelled 'free and fair' took place under the observance of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNTAG), and Namibia finally gained its Independence in 1990 with SWAPO (*vide* above) as the ruling party.

In order to confirm this new, free and independent status in the minds and hearts of the people, the government initiated massive educational reform through the media, through formal and non-formal education programmes and also through cultural programmes. "We are committed to a thorough overhaul of the education system that we inherited." (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1992:21).[16]

Despite the 'overhaul' in progress, many pre-Independence perceptions and beliefs linger on. Colonialism had a severe impact on the practice of local customs, on perceptions regarding indigenous culture, and thus on education, especially in areas pertaining to cultural practices. Issues of culture are discussed at greater length in the following paragraphs, with specific reference to Namibian arts education.

2.2.2 The effects of colonialism on concepts of culture and tradition

The word culture refers to the patterned ways in which people satisfy their biological and social needs, and adapt to their environment. It is, broadly speaking, a system by which a group of people understand themselves and their relations with others. Over time however, the term culture has come to be applied in many different ways,

16 Owing to organisational and structural changes and moves, this ministry has changed its name four times since 1990. The original name was Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, then Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. The latter two portfolios later formed a separate ministry. The education brief then belonged to the Ministry of Education and Culture. In 1995 there was another division. Now we have the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, which is concerned with schools and pre-tertiary institutions as well as cultural matters, and a separate Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology.

based upon diverse perceptions located in particular geographical and time frames. The term culture has come to be used to separate 'us' from 'them'. The 'other' culture is sometimes perceived from a very personal position. Adjustments and changes are made to aspects of the 'other' that one doesn't understand or appreciate, so that it may fit one's own cultural frame of reference. Alternatively, a less self-centred view involves one's own cultural frame of reference being adjusted in order to accommodate the values and meanings of the 'other' culture so that they cease to be totally 'other'.

The Namibian arts education in the past proceeded from the 'known' (western) frame of reference, looking out at the 'other' (Namibian) cultures. In order to understand how this came about, I examine how western cultural paradigms came to leave strong imprints on Namibian education. I follow Vail & White (1991); Brock & Tulasiewicz (1985); Mazrui (1990); and Mudimbe (1988) in a brief historical summary

Following the exploits of early explorers, the early eighteenth century saw a growing racial consciousness develop in Europe. As a result of improved modes of travel, racial consciousness was reinforced through increasing contact between Europeans and people of different cultures. Some of the cultural practices encountered by explorers were very strange and even regarded as offensive. In addition, burgeoning technological development in the west led Europeans to believe that their own culture was superior to that of 'under-developed' countries. By inference 'other' cultures of lesser technological development were inferior, whatever their philosophical, moral, social and artistic achievements may have been.

Early racial theories based on studies of physical differences between races[17] gave way in the nineteenth century to racism based on evolutionism. In this intellectual climate social 'development' was thought to be traceable

17 For a discussion from different viewpoints in terms of the effect of 'scientific' studies on Khoisan people of South Africa, see P. Skotnes *Miscast. Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen* (1996).

along a continuum from 'primitive' and 'barbaric' to 'cultured', civilised and advanced.[18] Early anthropology based on Social Darwinism set out to describe 'other' cultures to Europeans. The lack of the written and printed word in Africa was taken to be an indication of lack of civilisation. Examples of such approaches may be found in Tyler's *Primitive Culture* (1871); Frazer's *The Golden Bough*; Lévy-Bruhl's *Les Fonctions dans les Societés Inférieurs* (1910); Dudley Kidd's *The Essential Kafir* (1904).[19] The latter espoused the view that Africans were 'child-like', less intelligent than Europeans and unable to grasp abstractions, although they were able "to improve their minds".[20] African cultures were thus demeaningly described in terms of tribes and communities, while the word civilisation referred to European or ancient cultures.

By the early twentieth century certain anthropological theorists, led by Franz Boas, started emphasising the value of understanding foreign cultures in their own environments. Other anthropologists, however, continued to describe African cultures in terms of their resistance to change. "By representing African polities as rigidly bounded, stationary sociocultural units, social anthropology created an artificial universe of tribes that would serve as an ethnographic basis for apartheid" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1988: 252). Thus, despite Boas, the notion of cultural evolution lingered on. To those who espoused these views, European society was advancing continuously, while African societies were caught in a timewarp, filled with tribal differences and lacking 'development'.

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18 Gerhard Kubik (1986: 45 - 48) describes this as an approach whereby all civilisations are believed to proceed along a linear path. Some reach certain stages of development sooner that others. In this vein Edward Tyler, a proponent of the evolutionistic approach to cultural development said culture evolved from simple to complex and that all societies pass through barbarism to civlization (Ayisi, 1988: xvi).

19 The effect of such literature is discussed and analysed in *Myth in Africa. A study of its aesthetic and cultural relevance* by I. Okpewho (1983).

20 This view became firmly entrenched in the policies of the South African Nationalist Government who, under the leadership of Hendrik Verwoerd in the 1950's and 1960's 'enshrined' this view in the policy of Bantu Education. This had a devastating effect on formal education in Namibia.

In the wake of political changes in Africa, and the end of colonial occupation, attitudinal changes have been occurring slowly. Present day anthropologists, ethnomusicologists and social theorists have come to view culture as a system which embraces everything fundamental to the survival of humankind, and informs the whole social activity of a nation, people or group (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 1985: 3). Culture is shaped by society and in turn shapes the society it represents.

A discussion of how culture functions in a society has pertinence for education in and through the arts. Culture is embedded in the ways in which phenomena such as religion, rituals and traditions are produced through systems of meaning, structures of power and their various institutions. It refers to "processes, categories and knowledge through which communities are defined" (Donald & Rattansi, 1992: 4). Modes of production are layered through periods of time, thus reflecting aspects of history in the present. Within societies, cultural processes, categories, knowledge and feelings have over time become organised into systems. Cultural systems include ideological, attitudinal, sociological and technological components. In this regard Mazrui (1990: 30) describes the sociological and ideological components in terms of "inter-related values, active enough *to condition perception, judgement, communication, and behaviour* in a given society" (my italics). Cultural identities and values are expressed through the arts. Joann Kealiinohomoku refers to this as 'affective culture', meaning

> those cultural manifestations that implicitly and explicitly reflect the values of a given group of people through consciously devised means that arouse emotional responses and that strongly reinforce group identity.....Affective culture is exemplified by arts and rites (Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979: 47).

Cultural systems provide a basis for personal and group identity. If affective culture reflects and reinforces group identity, as Kealiinohomoku suggests, it becomes a powerful tool or medium. And if values condition individuals and society, as Mazrui suggests, then I argue that the educational role of culture gains considerable importance in formal education systems.

While arts education is influenced by the situation or cultural context of a school or country, it in turn has an influence on the ways in which people understand and value themselves and their world. This is one reason that indigenous culture(s) should take their place in education. In this respect Gardner argues:

> Culture makes it possible for us to examine the development and implementation of intellectual competencies from a variety of perspectives: the educational roles the society values; the pursuits in which individuals achieve expertise; the specification of the domains in which individual prodigiousness, retardation or learning disabilities may be found; and the kinds of transfer of skills which we may expect in educational settings. (Gardner, 1983: 57)

Although there appears to be a view among some educators that the inclusion of Namibian musical cultures in educational programmes could be contrary to 'development',[21] I concur with Mazrui that culture has vital sustaining functions in a society and that these functions need to have a place in the child's education. The functions identified by Mazrui (*ibid.*: 7,8) include the development of "lenses of perception and cognition" which condition one's worldview, thereby colouring the manner in which a person approaches the world. Culture also functions as a motivation for certain forms of behaviour; it provides criteria for evaluation; it forms a basis for social stratification in terms of class, rank, and status; it functions as a system of production and consumption, and an important mode of communication (particularly in terms of music and other arts).

Culture is abstract. It becomes observable through its traditions of music and dance, art and artefacts, dress, language, daily functions, and articulation and construction of mythology, belief and value systems. Because the term tradition is so commonly used by Namibians for their music and dance, it requires a closer look.

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21 This attitude comes across clearly in the many meetings of educators sitting on Namibian curriculum planning groups (1991 – 1996). These educators are tasked with educational reform, but many cling to the previous eurocentric system.

- Tradition

Namibian music and dance traditions reflect a certain stability through time, creating group identities. Traditions do, however, undergo the changes that are inherent in all societies. In this vein, Bruno Nettl describes tradition as "a concept that combines the stable nature of a culture's way of life with the implication that by its very existence over long periods of time this way of life is subject to change" (Falck and Rice, 1982: 3). Because the term 'tradition' is sometimes interpreted as inflexible and unchanging, Coplan (1994: 19) suggests that the term 'custom' has value as a label for "organic, situationally flexible cultural practices". In a sense, young Namibians underscore this view. During informal discussions,[22] traditions have been described to me as older beliefs and practices more commonly found in rural areas, practices which change to "fit in in minutes" with the needs of a particular time. To these young people tradition, on the one hand, implies the past as practised by older people who generally lack formal education. On the other hand, they understand that traditions may change – even "in minutes". According to these youngsters, today's culture in towns and cities is described as 'modern', not traditional. "Modern' as used here holds overtones of western or global, while 'traditional' implies a relation with cultural roots. They verbalise the popularly held dichotomies between traditional and modern, between urban and rural. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1988) warn that the term tradition cannot always be understood in terms of 'older', or relating to cultural roots. Certain aspects of what is claimed as tradition may have been deliberately invented in the service of political interests. There are numerous cases of 'traditional' dance or ceremonies that turn out to have been created consciously at a specific time or place for political reasons. The 'inventions' may eventually become tradition through customary use, yet ethnographic interpretation of such practices should be undertaken with caution.

22 Members of the Namibian National Cultural Troupe (NANACUT) and other students of the University of Namibia, September 1995.

Coplan suggests that one free the term tradition from italics, and read the "immanence of the past in the cultural certainties of the present" (Coplan, 1994: 19). In this way, the author states, tradition provides images; it expresses principles and aesthetic values by means of which "performances are both fashioned and made sensible" (*ibid.*). As systems of behaviours, values and beliefs that require participation and input from members, culture and tradition are also systems that are informed from the outside through non-members. Traditions are thus not unchanging edifices, neither are cultures static.

While some traditions are seen as rituals having outlived their original use (such as initiation rituals in some cases), others may be so significant as to be almost sacred and to embody the identity of a community (such as the healing ritual of the Ju/'hoan people).[23] It is in these significant forms that music and dance traditions become a way of life, a means whereby a community knows itself, and recognises and expresses its relations to the most fundamental things, such as its origins, its language, its neighbours, and so on (Lees, 1994: 2,3). In this way traditions link people (intellectually and emotionally) to their cultural roots and practices through the passage of time, conveying a sense of cultural history and identity, even where some of these practices are rather new. To bring Namibian culture into education therefore requires study, understanding and appreciation of the diverse traditions.

Why indigenous Namibian music and dance traditions were not considered suitable as subjects for formal education is a matter rooted in the European cultural beliefs and values, which the colonial powers imposed on Namibia. Moreover, European traditions approached music and dance as two separate and autonomous arts.

23 See E. Olivier (1994) for more complete descriptions.

2.2.2.1 Origins of western dichotomous approaches to music and dance.

Historical studies indicate that very early musical activities, dancing, painting and sculpture showed no tendency of being separated from the life contexts in which they made an appearance (Stockman, 1985: 17). Music and dance were integrally related. Biblical writings from the Old Testament as well as ancient Greek and Egyptian literature praise the ability to perform music and dance as vital to proper education. The ancient Chaldeans created great symbolic ballets in order to teach astronomy and Egyptian wall paintings abound with religious dance scenes. A holistic connection between arts and life is visible in these examples.

In ancient Greece, inspiration in the areas of music, epic poetry, history, lyric poetry, tragedy, sacred song, dancing, comedy and astronomy was attributed to the nine sister goddesses called Muses. Later the Greeks used the term *mousiké* ('art of the Muses') to refer more specifically to music, poetry and dance. All of these were considered essential aspects of proper Ionian education (Kraus, 1969: 37). Cary and Haarhoff describe the importance of the arts in this context:

> In polite Greek society every guest was expected to be able to sing a solo part and to accompany himself [sic] on the lyre...At Delphi and other religious centres virtuosos in vocal and instrumental music assembled from all the Greek lands and gave displays of their prowess. The principal performers ranked only below the athletic stars in popular esteem ..." (Cary and Haarhoff, 1966: 155).

There is some evidence that leading Greek philosophers supported the ability to dance as the ideal integration of body and spirit. Kraus (1969) maintains that even statesmen and philosophers would perform solo dances on important occasions - presumably to the musical accompaniment of lyre and maybe aulos. Thus the Greeks developed many categories of dance, along with music and drama.

One would expect that early western education, which located itself in classical Greek education, would have retained the emphasis on the arts, and value the ability to perform and appreciate both music and dance. This was not the case. A new notion put forward by Aristotle created a division between what was considered noble,

fine and honourable and what was considered ignoble, and therefore not worthy. The music and dance of Apollo, god of music and poetry, was considered noble, while the music and dance of Dionysos, god of wine and ecstasy, in time came to be considered ignoble. This 'class' difference contributed to the establishment of an artistically educated elite. At the same time the Greek philosophers were exploring the notion that human beings consisted of a body and a soul as two separate entities.

From the fourth century A.D. the rise of Christianity in the west exerted an ever-increasing influence on education. With the growth and spread of Christian monotheism, the dualism of body and soul became absolute. The body was considered 'lower' and less important than the soul, which was believed to survive the death of the body. From this concept arose the notion that 'body' is part of the material sensual world. The Christian goal is one which strives towards a heavenly realm of pure spirit.[24]

During the European Middle Ages (AD 500 - 1500) the Seven Liberal Arts of Martianus consisted of the *Trivium* (Literature, Rhetoric, and Dialectic) and the *Quadrivium* (Geometry - including Geography, Arithmetic, Astronomy, and Music). Under the strict control of the church, music retained its place in formal education, while dance and drama disappeared. There were even several prohibitions on the performance of dance. The earliest was that of the Council of Vannes in 465 AD. Many pagan festivals were nevertheless included in the church calendar in an effort to harness their powerful emotive qualities. For example, 'Easter' derives from the Norse goddess Eostre, who in turn was a derivative of the Phoenician goddess Astarte. Ultimately the church declared dance to be carnal and hedonistic, although ring dances and 'the people' still commonly performed round dances on secular occasions.

24 Islam tends to share this view. Mazrui (1990) claims that the dichotomous tendency of dividing all matters into e.g. good versus evil, is in its many forms typical of monotheistic religions.

During the Renaissance period (AD 1350 - 1600) the restraints of the church were loosened somewhat and court dances became fashionable once more. Court dances, along with more spirited developments in music, became indispensable to the education of the nobility. These dances (Galliard, Pavane, Minuet, etcetera) were set dances which allowed no room for improvisation. In order to minimise the body-relatedness of dance, ballet and other court dances came to emphasise vertical positions and movements - away from the earth - by means of lifts, ethereal-looking dancers, elevated foot positions (on *pointe*), and floating costumes.

The Rationalists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries devised 'new' philosophical systems. Descartes, with his statement *"Cogito, ergo sum"* - I think, therefore I am, assumed the supremacy of reason over all other human functions. This theory of mind "as an immaterial, non-extended substance that engages in various activities such as rational thought, imagining, feeling, and willing" as distinct from the human body *(The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Micropaedia,* Vol. 8: 151, 152), dominated western thinking for centuries. The philosophies of Descartes and others such as Leibniz and Bacon, strengthened the belief in the separation of mind and body in music (mind, rational feeling) and dance (body, irrational instinct). As a result the arts became 'disciplines' viewed from a logical-scientific point of view. Educational philosophy developed in this positivist and functionalist way, resulting in a compartmentalised, subject-oriented approach. Educators searched for and identified 'essential features' of various subjects as though these phenomena are universal in all times and places, like scientific laws. This approach is still firmly entrenched in education, compelling Small to write:

> With science it is the finished product that counts, the theory, the hypothesis, the objectified knowledge; we obtain it by whatever means we can, and the tool is the repeatable experiment. Art is knowledge as experience, the structuring and ordering of feeling and perception, while science is abstract knowledge divorced as completely as possible from experience, a body of facts and concepts existing outside of and independently of the knower. Both are valid human activities, but since the Renaissance we have allowed the attitudes and values of science to predominate over those of art, to the detriment of the quality of our experience. (Small, 1984: 4 - 5).

Many studies focussed on structural or aesthetic qualities of music, in abstraction from social practice. The positivist-scientific approach further contributed to the marginilisation of dance as common practice, because

dance was too earthy and unscientific. Dance, particularly 'folkloric' dances that often have erotic overtones, have always been controversial in Christian worship. Although some European folk dances are relics of pre-Christian religious practices - the maypole dance being an example – these were considered 'unrefined', not for 'cultured' people. Yet the church was not able to suppress all dance because, to many people, dance remains a symbol of life force, energy and tradition - central to musical practice, worship, and social mores.

2.2.2.2 The effect of this dichotomy on the practice of music and dance among the Namibian people

The travel documents of early European explorers, missionaries, and colonisers contain numerous descriptions of the music and dance of Africa, infused with varying levels of condescension and criticism. This attitude, based on an evolutionistic view of culture, was brought to Namibia by missionaries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thus, in this view, 'primitive tribes' have not evolved far enough and are in need of improvement and change, in terms of musical instruments, dances and structures. The missionaries set out to change and improve the 'pagan' practices of local people. In the northern regions of Namibia the missionaries taught that the dance and drumming of the area were inappropriate and barbarous. Rituals such as spiritual healings and initiation ceremonies were actively discouraged and even punished.[25] In their place the churches taught the more virtuous Western style of liturgical music, performed without dance. The pervasiveness of the baroque hymn in Namibian musical practice today still provides testimony to the vigour of missionary influence.

Despite the influence of missionaries who discouraged the 'profanity' of dance and drumming, local people showed a certain resistance, and many Namibians continue to infuse their worship with movement. Because of fears of supposed religious and political subversion, certain dances were banned by the state prior to

25 Personal communications with inhabitants of the area, Rundu region, 1996.

Independence. This was the case in the Owambo and Kavango regions of Namibia where communal gatherings with drumming and dance were often broken up by local (white) officials or the South African Defence Force in the 1970's and early 1980's. In this vein *omupembe*, a dance in which young men leap over the heads of other standing men was considered a dance of power and rebellion. The force of the stamping movements in *oudano* symbolises power and the will to struggle, while the power of the elevation in the leaps of *omupembe* symbolises power and freedom, a symbol of resistance.[26]

In urban areas the colonial influence impacted even more strongly. Today many consider music and dance (education) unrelated. Dance is still considered sinful by some, and although dance occurs at social occasions, it is not really an integral part of the life of most people.

2.2.2.3 The separation of dance from music in schools

In the sixteenth century De Montaigne wrote "It is not the mind, it is not the body we are training; it is the man and we must not divide him into two parts" (quoted in Kraus, 1969: 121). John Locke wrote "the effects of dancing are not confined to the body; it gives to children .... not mere outward gracefulness of motion, but manly thoughts and a becoming confidence" (quoted in Lange, 1975:14). Despite these singularly modern calls for holistic education, formal education systems in the western world removed dance from arts curricula in schools. The emphasis was firmly placed on music and visual art as the only worthwhile art forms to pursue in schools. In time, the ethos of 'a healthy mind in a healthy body' through sport, particularly for boys, gradually crept back into western systems. This is attributed largely to the efforts of Dio Lewis,[27] Francois Delsarte,[28] and others.

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26 This was described to me by ex-combatants from SWAPO-PLAN, namely Francois Tsoubaloko Haipinge and his friend Vicky, Khomas Hochland, April 1995.
27 *The New Gymnastics*, 1862.
28 See Kraus (1969) for a brief description of Delsarte's contribution to dance education.

Nineteenth and early twentieth century schooling in the United States was generally grounded on the 'scientific and rational' approach - the arts were viewed as extras. In certain systems dance was included as a part of physical education, but with the emphasis on moderately strenuous exercise, called callisthenics. This involved simple movements accompanied by music, often utilising equipment such as scarves, balls, and hoops for girls. Teachers were warned that such musical gymnastics should not be too dance-like (Kraus, 1969: 125). Hence body exercise was brought back into American education systems in the form of Physical Education as a school subject.

With the advent of dancers such as Isadora Duncan and Ruth St Denis, and later Martha Graham, freer forms of dance gradually became more acceptable. Educators such as Bird Larson and Margaret H'Doubler established techniques and programmes for dance - even up to tertiary level (*ibid.*: 131-153). The route followed in order to learn dance was frequently through extra-curricular private lessons. Dance, as an art form, was still frowned upon for boys. Boys studying dance were often judged as effeminate. In time, schools gradually started including folk dance, 'character' dance, gymnastic dance and sometimes modern dance in their physical education programs.

In Britain in the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the noble/ignoble dichotomy continued. Dance occurred either in dance halls (for the common people) or stately ballet theatres at which exquisite ballet dancers performed what had originated as court dances. The ethereal grace of the ballet dancers persuaded many mothers of the necessity of sending their daughters to study 'the ballet', to develop qualities of grace and beauty. In direct contrast to this, the burlesque of dance halls was considered coarse and socially unacceptable. Here too, dance education in schools initially occurred only via physical education classes (if at all), and boys and girls were strictly separated.

Early in this century a move was initiated to bring the importance of dance to the fore. Rudolf Laban's studies of movement and dance resulted in the incorporation of Modern Educational Dance into the curricula of certain schools and training colleges (Kraus, 1969: 158). Aspects of the work of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze using 'eurhythmics' in music education were also taken up in music education classes in Britain. Pupils marched, skipped, dabbed and glided to piano accompaniment. Unfortunately however, education through dance, and the holism of music and dance, remain undervalued up to the present, causing Brinson (1991) to describe dance as the most marginalised of the arts.

Given that western colonialists were directly responsible for the establishment of government and church schools in Namibia from the nineteenth century onwards, their attitudes both in terms of the value of dance in education, and towards 'ethnic' music and dance prevailed. Thus dance was excluded from formal education programmes, and the music and dance of the indigenous people in Namibia did not become part of the school curriculum.

In order to understand more fully how colonial philosophies and practices impacted on Namibian education, let us look at the formal education system in terms of the arts.

2.3. FORMAL MUSIC AND DANCE EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

2.3.1 The period prior to Independence

Music education prior to Independence reflected the values and attitudes of the previous regime, as does the system presently being developed under the current regime. There were eleven separate administrations, one for each main 'ethnic group'.

2.3.1.1 School music education under The Administration for Whites[29]

What was termed the aesthetic aspects of education at schools under the previous Administration for Whites, were provided for in the following way:

- Class music at both primary and secondary levels, prior to Independence, involved compulsory general music classes which were meant to inculcate an understanding and appreciation of music by means of vocal, instrumental and eurhythmic activities as well as western notation. Vocal music emphasised western Protestant church music, folk music in the Afrikaans, German, and English traditions, South African patriotic songs (generally in Afrikaans), and 'art' songs. Very occasionally Zulu and Xhosa songs, both foreign to Namibia, were included. From my own experience, observation and conversations with teachers, the situation in practice was often far from ideal. Instrumental and movement activities were seldom utilised. Unison singing was the predominant musical activity. The selection of songs was often inappropriate. Reading and writing of music notation was generally considered to be essential at primary level. Theory work in the form of written exercises took up about a quarter of the teaching time, but was rarely related to practical music making. Theoretical work was rarely continued at secondary level in the class music. Class music, in fact, tended to be neglected at secondary level, often because teachers without music qualifications were pushed into this 'unimportant' subject area. Such teachers would most likely play recorded music or allow students to do their homework.[30]

29 This was an official title.
30 According to own observations while teaching, and conversations with teachers S. Cagnetta, L. Nangombe, B. Bruys, H. Mulder, and others, from 1994 to 1996.

LEVEL	FORMAL SUBJECTS	EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES
PRIMARY	**Class Music**	**Piano instruction** **Recorder instruction** **Choir *** **Percussion groups *** **Concerts *** **Talent festivals **
SECONDARY	**Class Music** **Music (full subject)**	**Piano instruction** **Recorder instruction** **Guitar instruction** **Choir *** **Concerts *** **Talent festivals **

* These opportunities did not take place at all schools, nor did they take place on a regular basis.

FIGURE 2.3 MUSIC OPTIONS PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE

- Music as an examination or promotional subject,[31] at secondary level, taken up to standard ten, included an instrumental study, the history of western classical music, its tonal functional theory and harmony, and form analysis, as prescribed by the Cape Education Department, South Africa. Music as a secondary level subject was offered at only one school in the Windhoek region.
- Extra-curricular opportunities at primary and secondary levels refer to individual instrumental lessons - piano, guitar and recorder. These were paid for in part by parents and subsidised heavily by The Administration for Whites. Lessons usually took place during the course of a school morning. A specialist (graduate or diplomaed) music teacher was appointed for this tuition and pupils were entered for external examinations such as those of the University of South Africa or The Associated Board (Royal Schools).

31 Promotional refers to subjects taken for examination purposes. A certain number of these subjects have to be passed in order to be promoted to the following grade.

Extra-curricular pupils also received instruction in music theory (either during time allocated to instrumental teaching, or in additional extra-mural classes) and were likewise entered for external theory examinations.

Thus school music education in Namibia had two separate strains - the one was individual instrumental study, where the emphasis was on achieving mastery of the instrument; the other was compulsory class tuition at schools, where formal syllabi were followed. Unfortunately, little of lasting value appears to have been achieved in the general music classes. In fact the result was often the inculcation of a dislike for music amongst students.

2.3.1.2 Dance education under The Administration for Whites

Dance education has never had a character or place of its own in Namibian school education. Nevertheless physical education programmes made an attempt (theoretically) to include dance movements for girls, albeit in a somewhat restricted way, while class music programmes were supposed to include eurhythmics. In both cases personal conversations with teachers have revealed that dance in physical education programmes was badly neglected. To my knowledge schools implementing physical education programmes in Namibia in the past, mainly white schools, have never included boys in dance classes. This was corroborated by the Senior Subject Adviser for Physical Education.

2.3.1.3 Music and dance education under the remaining ten administrations

These were the administrations for Hereros, Ovambos, Kavangos, Damaras, Namas, Bushmen, Caprivians, Himbas, Tswanas, Basters.[32] The majority of the country's schools and learners fell under the control of these diverse administrations. Due to the political background sketched in 2.2, these schools were severely hampered by insufficient and inadequately trained teachers, poor facilities, and lack of relevant teaching materials.

- Teachers

With regard to teacher education, a 1987 survey of music education in western Namibia at Damara-speaking primary schools indicated that the situation was as follows (Mans, 1988):

Highest school qualifications of teachers of class music	
	%
Standard 10	**39,2**
Standard 9	**7,1**
Standard 8	**44,6**
lower than standard 8	**8,8**

FIGURE 2.4 TABLE

Of the fifty-six teachers interviewed at nineteen schools in the selected area, only 60% had post-school qualifications. Of this 60% the majority had completed two year teacher certificates (requiring standard eight or higher for entry), and only one had completed a two year teacher diploma (requiring standard ten for entry). The others had received training in various fields, for example agriculture. There were no university graduates among the group interviewed (Mans, 1988:126 - 129).[33]

32 These were the terms used by those administrations.
33 There are no similar surveys in terms of music education available for schools of other language groups during the period shortly before Independence.

- Facilities and teaching materials

The above mentioned survey of music education in western Namibia (*ibid.*) revealed that not one of the primary schools in this area was supplied with any musical instruments (although some of teachers owned instruments). There were no audio-visual aids available to teachers of class music at these schools. The music books allocated to schools at the time included an Afrikaans book of unison songs based on two-tone (soh, me) and three-tone (soh, me, doh) melodies,[34] the songbook by the Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuur (F.A.K.); and occasionally Philip McLachlan's *Notepret*. All used western notation that was unfamiliar to the teachers. The relevance of these materials for the particular schools was therefore highly questionable. There were no facilities that allowed for movement classes. Lessons took place in the normal classrooms. This survey revealed that music education (class music instruction at school) was in fact seldom implemented (Mans, 1988: 101 - 134), and that instrumental instruction was not an option offered at any of the schools in the survey area.

Because of general similarities in administrative, financing and teaching procedures, I conclude that the situation described above is likely to have been representative of so-called 'non-white' schools throughout the country, with a few notable exceptions of private schools and certain schools in the Rehoboth area.

2.3.2 The place of the arts in the new education system, subsequent to Independence

Independence and the new *Constitution of the Republic of Namibia* promised major social and educational reform. Article 20 of the *Constitution* states that

> All people shall have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.

34 Local children's songs are almost never sung in unison (except when alone) and Damara children's songs are not based on this two and three tone system.

Thus every child's right to primary education at least, was ensured. This is confirmed by educational policy which states:

> since our goal is that all of our children remain in school throughout their Basic Education, there is no reason for selection procedures or organised tracking through that period. ... We want *all* our children to reach Grade 5, and beyond. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1992:5)

This statement implies some form of 'mainstreaming'. All children, regardless of ability, are required to complete at least grade 5, after which some learners would presumably be directed towards alternative educational opportunities. The curriculum policy aims for education to contribute generally towards the elevation of the quality of life of people. At present, the term Basic Education refers to grades one through ten, education provided free of charge, except for school fees that differ from school to school.

2.3.2.1 Namibian cultural identity and Basic Education

Whereas education prior to Independence was based on the 'divide and rule' policy of *apartheid*, reform needs to counter the legacy of artificial divisions among different groups and search for commonalities and understanding. In the past, culture was used to divide people. Basic Education aims to overcome the attitude that some cultures are intrinsically more advanced than others.

Official documents that have appeared since Independence stress the importance of culture and cultural identity. "Enhancing Namibian identity through cultural expression", is mentioned as an important aim in cultural development (Strauss in Kenney, 1991:14). The Ministry of Education and Culture stated that it is committed to a policy of cultivating culture as a unifying and nation building force and plans to enhance the Namibian identity through cultural expression (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1992: 34). Indeed, the very name of the ministry indicates the importance of cultural matters.

Fortunately, policy also refers to diversity: "Accordingly the Ministry is using its resources and influence to encourage initiatives aimed at developing a true Namibian Culture, *an enriched unity in diversity*" (original italics)(*ibid.*: 34).

The Ministry of Education and Culture also outlined future policy in terms of education, culture and training. With reference to the arts, this document states:

> Prior to our Independence the institutional framework of instruction and performance in art, music, and theatre was a bastion of white cultural expression and influence. Our challenge, therefore, is to transform these institutions into centres of Namibian innovation, experimentation, and expression in the broadest sense. We need not only to encourage Namibian musicians and playwrights but also to bring their music and drama to a much broader audience... *Reforming our education to incorporate the perspectives, values, and ideas of all our people is the second dimension of our cultural responsibility*"[my italics] (*ibid.*: 36-37)

The task of arts education in terms of Namibian culture is clear. The meaning of cultural identity needs further clarification.

The term cultural identity refers specifically to ways in which people perceive and experience their own culture and those of others - forming and adapting their own identities through selective assimilation or repudiation of aspects in the cultures of others. Cultural identities are formed by drawing boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. Brock describes cultural identity as a way of structuring experience and the perception of it - a cognitive system of knowledge and belief which determines the way in which norms and values are taken up and attitudes and behaviour exercised (Brock & Tulasiewicz, 1985: 3). Hence cultural identity refers to a particularised pattern of life, including norms, values, meanings, attitudes and policies - the material and spiritual manifestation of these patterns in a particular society, community, or sub-culture.

Namibia with its history of apartheid and cultural division does not have only one cultural identity. With its diversity of patterns of life - urban versus rural, educated versus illiterate, 'developed' versus 'underdeveloped' - Namibia consists of a patchwork of different cultural identities. This infers an arts education which takes note

of the various cultural identities outside and within the classroom. One may ask - whose art and culture is to be the art and culture of the educational system?

Cultural identities are formed by means of immersion (enculturation), oral procedures (narrative, song, music, rituals, dance, etc.), the written word and communications media (radio, television, music and fashion industry); and not least, by educational and other institutions. Schools are very potent sources of cultural transmission in today's world. They do not replicate society elsewhere, but constitute their own subculture. Because schools play an important role in legitimising and reinforcing the ruling elite (Melber, 1997: 6), the role of music and dance as reinforcers of individual cultural identities should be clearly delineated. Stokes (1994: 8) argues that because music is so intensely involved in the propagation of dominant classifications, it plays an important role in the hands of government in the development of new states, or the reinvention of states. Music wields this significant ideological and political power because it can touch us in ways and places that nothing else can (Bowman, 1994 (a): 20).

A basic premise of the reformed educational system, as outlined in the Namibian Constitution, is "education for all", inclusive of "our peoples' cultures" (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1992: 34). I therefore support Makoni (in Kaarsholm, 1991: 68) who argues that all the components of that nation should be adequately and accurately reflected in its national culture, thereby creating a new interpretation of 'national'. I suggest that arts education for all should regard cultural diversity as a natural spin-off of human diversity, and diversity creates a rich patchwork of cultural interaction, thereby enabling learners to develop their own cultural identity.

At present new curricula in all areas of learning are being developed, for the first time taking note of different Namibian cultural identities. This is being done by various national curriculum panels and the subject committees that they elect. The panels include teachers and educationists from all areas of the country. The reform effort is guided by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) in Okahandja and

monitored by the Curriculum Co-ordinating Committee and the Examination Board.

The Curriculum Panel for the Arts (CPA) is concerned with overseeing curriculum reform in the arts at all levels of education under the auspices of the Ministry.[35] The CPA is also concerned with teacher upgrading and in-service training, arts workshops, and so forth. Various subject committees (Primary Arts – Core and Electives; Integrated Performing Arts; Visual Arts; Music; Dance; Drama) are tasked to develop new syllabi and materials, which are submitted to the CPA for approval and integration into the broader curriculum structure.

The Junior Secondary level (grades 8 - 10) was the first area to receive attention in terms of renewal and reform. The syllabi, which came about through the efforts of ad hoc syllabus committees, were implemented in 1991. In 1994 the first Senior Secondary courses were implemented. This was followed by Grade 1 in 1996 and Grade 2 and 5 in 1997.

The curriculum reform has unfortunately been hampered by many practical problems.

- Libraries and books

According to a survey by the Ministry of Education and Culture (1993 (a)) only 43 state secondary schools, out of the total of 94, have libraries with more than 1 000 books. In the Katima region (north east) only one secondary school out of the 23 has more than 300 books, while in the Windhoek region only 5 schools out of 28 have fewer than 1 000. Further, the schools least equipped are situated in isolated rural areas, divorced from

35 It consists of people from the fields of dance, drama, music, visual arts, crafts as well as persons knowledgeable about particular cultures.

general contact with other schools and the wider world. These libraries are not equipped with books on Namibian music and dance.

- Teacher qualifications

The 1995 Educational Statistics show that 31.2% of all primary school teachers in Namibia had no formal teacher qualifications. In a press statement by the Minister of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology, Minister Angula singled out the Okavango region in particular (*The Windhoek Advertiser*, Tuesday 15 April 1997). In this region 63.6% of the primary teachers did not have formal teacher training, and of those who did, 28% had academic qualifications lower than grade 12. The unpublished statistics of 1996, the Minister said, showed little improvement, with 1 137 (63%) primary school teachers in the Okavango still without the necessary formal qualifications. Of the total number of primary teachers in this region (1802) only 64 had more than two years of tertiary education. While this region has the worst statistics in this regard, the situation in other regions is not very much better. Clearly, there has been little change since the earlier survey described in 2.3.1.3.

- Number of learners per class at secondary level

While subjects in certain schools are oversubscribed, particularly in the central northern regions, almost all schools in the Windhoek and Rundu regions have undersubscribed subjects with smaller class sizes. The 1992 figures show that Windhoek secondary schools had 100 classes with fewer than 10 pupils, while the Katima region had only 7 classes with fewer than 10 pupils. The range of class size figures for the other regions lies somewhere in between these two extremes (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993 (a)). The Ministry of Basic Education and Culture[36] now intends to limit the number of undersubscribed subjects by implementing strict teacher : learner ratios.[37] The ramifications for arts subjects are considerable. Numbers of learners are usually small, and contact time is high because of individual student contact lessons. For this reason, certain schools are

36 New title as from 1995.
37 Personal communications, R. Avenstrup, Adviser to the Minister, Okahandja, September 1995.

discontinuing arts courses.[38]

- Music and dance facilities

Certain secondary schools previously falling under The Administration for Whites, are at present still fully equipped in terms of sound-proofed music studios with pianos, recorders, electronic equipment such as amplifiers, electric guitars, hi-fi sound systems. A secondary school in Tsumeb is still equipped for a complete brass ensemble, but there is no post for a music teacher. Schools throughout the rest of the country generally have no musical equipment. Secondary schools with some audio equipment (e.g. a cassette player) are as follows: (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993)

Region	Audio equipment	Total number of schools
Katima	2	23
Rundu	2	8
Ondangwa	10	20
Khorixas	7	11
Windhoek	23	28
Keetmanshoop	7	8

FIGURE 2.5TABLE AUDIO EQUIPMENT

There are no schools with special areas and sound systems for dance. There has been no ordered acquisition of indigenous Namibian musical instruments and other material goods required for teaching local cultural dance and music.

Currently therefore, the education system is still characterised by acute disparities, inequities and tensions. "Too many teachers are teaching at a level above their competencies, or schools are offering subjects for which they do not have adequate facilities and materials" (*ibid.*: 5). Suitable materials for music and dance need to be developed, equipment acquired and all of these disseminated to the various regions.

38 According to verbal feedback from schools at a CPA meeting, February 1997.

2.3.2.2 *Interculturalism in Namibian arts education*

The diversity of indigenous cultural practices and identities should be reflected in Namibian arts education. When more than one culture is represented in the classroom, this presupposes that the cultures represented are treated equitably, in an atmosphere of mutual appreciation.

The term intercultural is understood as an exchange, a sharing, among different cultures.[39] Learning from one another, not just looking in from the outside, but adapting 'own' to accommodate 'other'. In this regard Drummond states

> We believe that cultural identity is not compromised by intercultural activity; on the contrary, we continually find evidence that individuals and communities grow when they engage in a process of respectful interaction with others.... Cultural interaction is a learning process for all ... (Drummond, 1992: 67).

Nettleford (1994: 153) argues for an 'indigenisation' or creolisation process - "a symbiotic interaction between people and cultures in their separate encounters" which opens up radically new dimensions. Major cultural changes are reflected in music and dance either through new forms of syncretism or reinterpretations that match changing functional needs. If these adaptations do not occur, old forms fall into disuse. The Nama reedpipe ensembles in Namibia did not survive changing functional needs, whereas *konsertliedjies* (see chapter 5 for transcriptions), today considered traditional, are the result of an indigenisation process.

Change brought about by contact with other cultures and by the creative impulse of individuals has been the source of the amazing variety in musics and dances around the world. This illustrates the adaptability and growth of cultures. There are scholars who express warnings, such as Ramon Santos who points out:

> Changes in cultures continue to take place through the interplay of forces such as religion, politics, and economy. Various forms of acculturation, enculturation, assimilation and adaptation result from the contacts and confrontations of world cultures that can no longer

39 I use the term intercultural in preference to multicultural, as the latter carries with it certain negative connotations of separatism – maintaining segregation by emphasising differences, thereby inhibiting interaction across cultures.

> be isolated from each other's influences. Intercultural contact in various forms and circumstances has always effected change often resulting in detrimental loss along the way and rendering one or the other culture less pure or less authentic. (Santos, 1994: 28)

Despite this possibility of "detrimental loss", education in a culturally diverse context cannot exclude cultural contact and exchange without a potentially larger loss in terms of social and educational relevance. Music and dance are significant means for people to find and express identity in a community. Through intercultural contact and exchange, using music and dance, it is possible that processes of enculturation as well as increased cultural understanding would be enhanced.

To work towards an intercultural mode of education certain principles must act as guidelines. These include sensitivity towards others; taking note of environment, locale and context; the asking of questions rather than having all the answers; and the willingness to actually engage (rather than observe) in styles outside one's own experience (Drummond, 1992: 66). Typically, colonial education in Namibia did not encourage these principles of intercultural exchange. By ignoring the cultural milieu in which it was operating, colonial education in Africa in the past has been blamed for educational neglect and misshapen educational policies. The general arguments against colonial systems, of which Namibia was one, include uneven distribution of educational provision and dual standards; contents irrelevant to the social, vocational and psychological needs of the people; and too little concern for the development of mass education (Watson, 1982: 2). As this has been the case in Namibia, the results must be redressed, hence the importance of establishing and understanding relevant aspects of the Namibian cultural milieu in which the new arts education will function.

The cultural milieu or context itself dictates certain principles. In some areas in Namibia, a classroom will contain learners who all speak the same language and come from similar backgrounds. In other areas, for example larger towns, the classes are made up of children from various language groups, cultural backgrounds and socio-economic strata. Although I have suggested intercultural exchange in the classroom, it is not realistic to expect to gain 'insider' understanding of the diverse cultural practices in Namibia. The first step in cultural

arts education may be to affirm cultural identities present in the classroom as far as possible, especially at junior levels. As learners progress through school, increasing attention can be given to cultures outside the classroom, or those who represent a small minority in the class. From there, a progression can be made to cultures in other parts of the world and other times.

The discussion on culture and interculturalism in Namibian education will now be related to the new options in arts education.

2.3.2.3 The present formal arts education options

In the reformed Namibian Basic Education programme, music education is to form part of seven years of general arts education in primary school. This will include music, dance, drama and the visual arts and crafts, under the subject heading 'Arts', and will be based largely upon Namibian cultural practices. Arts are one of the compulsory learning areas at primary level. This learning area is structured around a core of basic arts competencies that all learners will acquire, along with an annually increasing proportion of the time allocated to elective modules. These may range from one arts area only to an array of activities in all the arts.

The time allocation at primary level is three forty minute periods a week (Grades 1 - 4) and two 40 minute periods (Grades 5 - 7).[40] The ultimate goal is to have the arts taught by subject specialists, possibly by means of team teaching. The reality at present is that a teacher with a minimum of training in only one of the arts is likely to teach the subject area. This practical problem prompted the need for a flexible design, so that teachers with different backgrounds and training would be able to implement it from their different perspectives. It is for

40 Ministry of Basic Education and Culture: Pilot Curriculum Guide for Formal Basic Education, Draft Version 10, August 1995, pp. 20, 21.

this reason that elective, more in-depth modules in specific arts may be selected from a given array of visual art, music, dance, or drama. Modules may be selected from one or more of these areas (see Fig.2.6 below).

At junior secondary level (grades 8 to 10) provision is made for a general arts education for all by means of a subject initially called 'Arts Appreciation' and now renamed 'Arts-in-Culture'. This subject aims at a combined arts approach to (re-)discovering Namibian cultural practices in terms of performance and visual arts and crafts. This subject is compulsory but in practice it is only being implemented at very few schools. As a so-called enrichment subject, it is not formally examined. The time allocation is one forty-minute period per week.

<table>
<tr><th>GRADE</th><th colspan="4">ARTS OPTIONS</th></tr>
<tr><td>12
11</td><td colspan="2">H/IGCSE ART & DESIGN</td><td colspan="2">H/IGCSE MUSIC</td></tr>
<tr><td>10
9
8</td><td>ARTS IN CULTURE</td><td>PRE-VOCATIONAL:
VISUAL ARTS</td><td colspan="2">PRE-VOCATIONAL:
INTEGRATED PERFORMING ARTS</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td colspan="2">CORE: ARTS</td><td colspan="2">4 ELECTIVE MODULES – 2 TERMS</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td colspan="2">CORE: ARTS</td><td colspan="2">3 ELECTIVE MODULES – 1.5 TERMS</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td colspan="3">CORE: ARTS</td><td>2 MODULES – 1 TERM</td></tr>
<tr><td>4
3
2
1</td><td colspan="4">CORE:
ARTS</td></tr>
<tr><td>COMPETENCIES</td><td colspan="4">EXPLORING, MAKING, RESPONDING, CREATING, COMMUNICATING, KNOWING/UNDERSTANDING</td></tr>
</table>

FIGURE 2.6 THE ARTS CURRICULUM IN NAMIBIA

On entry to junior secondary level learners at selected schools may, in addition to Arts-in-Culture, elect Music (until 1997) as one of their pre-vocational subjects. There is also a Visual Arts option. The Music syllabus

designed in 1990 was however rejected by schools in many regions because of its western orientation. This will be replaced with Integrated Performing Arts in 1999 at a few pilot schools.[41] The new integrated syllabus is based on the skills and understandings inherent in performance, without undue pressure to colour it in terms of any one cultural group. It aims at holism and an integrated arts approach. This flexibility will allow it to be applied usefully in both rural and urban areas, and in more eurocentric as well as in more Namibian-centric schools. More detailed references will be made to the Integrated Performing Arts syllabus and the primary Arts syllabus in chapter 6.

At senior secondary level (grades 11 and 12) the pupils who have successfully completed the junior course may continue in Music or Art and Design and sit for the Higher International General Cambridge School Examination (HIGCSE). Only two state secondary schools in 1996 offered Music as a senior secondary subject. Individual (extra-curricular) study in a limited number of western musical instruments is still offered at a few schools, both primary and secondary. This is presently being phased out owing to a lack of financial resources.

2.3.2.4 General goals and departure points of Basic Education

The overarching goals of reformed Namibian education[42] are described at length in official documents. In the process of reforming education there are a large number of issues to be attended to. Many of these relate to issues contained in the Namibian Constitution, while others refer more specifically to the quality of education and the structure of curricula. Extracting points from these documents in brief, the reformed education aims to redress the inequalities of the past by means of: expanded and non-discriminatory access; equity (referring to 'fairness'); the promotion of human rights; the promotion of national unity, justice and democracy; fostering the highest moral, ethical and spiritual values; civic responsibility, fostering and promoting spiritual and religious wellbeing

41 The initial number of schools offering to pilot the programme appears to be about 10 (October 1997).
42 Ministry of Education and Culture (1992: 24-30) and Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1995: 5).

with due regard to diversity and freedom of beliefs; promoting regional, African and international understanding, peace and co-operation; and laying a foundation for the development of human resources and economic growth of the nation.

With reference to the quality of education, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture sets out to improve the quality of instruction, of learning opportunities and of facilities. This involves inter alia: supporting and stimulating learners throughout childhood and youth in preparation for responsible adulthood; encouraging perseverance, reliability, accountability, and respect for the value and dignity of work; developing literacy, numeracy, understanding of the natural and social environment; developing *artistic appreciation and expression* [my italics], social skills, and promoting physical and mental health; developing the necessary competencies for academic or vocational training; promoting maximal development of learners' potential; These goals underpin educational reform.

It is worth noting that educational reform stresses the principle of expanded and equal access to education opportunities. Of vital importance to arts education, the development of artistic appreciation and expression, understanding the learners in their social environments and developing social skills feature as some of the overarching goals of Namibian education. No longer satisfied only with teaching abstract knowledge, reformed educational programmes seek to relate schooling to principles of democracy, and understanding the learner's life in relation to others. In general therefore, whereas the previous curriculum was largely subject based, the reformed broad curriculum shows greater concern with the learner and society, and giving education a Namibian identity. This thesis seeks to find ways in which arts education can make a contribution.

Several basic departure points define the scope of renewal for Namibian curricula in general. These are breadth, depth, balance, relevance, sequence, coherence and consistency, with the focus on the learner. Because the development of Namibian syllabi, materials and suggestions for implementation must recognise these curriculum

requirements, I discuss them in relation to music and dance in chapter 6. Before that, however, I examine indigenous educational traditions in the next chapter to determine the identity of indigenous Namibian education. This is done in order create a bridge between indigenous Namibian educational practices through music and dance, and the system of formal schooling, thereby contributing to a truly Namibian arts education.

3 NAMIBIAN MUSIC/DANCE AS *NGOMA* - A BASIS FOR RESTRUCTURING ARTS EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

The overview of the history of Namibian arts education has shown how the past attitude of 'cultural superiority' has impinged on arts education. The previous system of arts education based on a western aesthetic is no longer acceptable or relevant to post-independent Namibian society. In the absence of a contextualized and sound arts education philosophy, I wish to propose an alternative approach.

Because a society's conception of music and dance is conditioned by the philosophical viewpoints upon which that society is based, I argue that it is imperative to centre arts education philosophy in the local aesthetic. The ways in which people think about, feel about and value music and dance in Namibia must be explored. We shall discover the extent to which some of those ways are relevant to the education of the post-independence younger generation in Namibia.

For this, I turn to ways in which indigenous Namibian cultures used, and possibly still use, music and dance as an educational tool. I focus mostly on Namibian music as practised in rural areas, because it is in these areas that certain indigenous educational practices are still in place. Questions to be investigated are: did music and dance play a role in indigenous education? If so, what forms did such education take? Are there aspects of educational traditions which may be incorporated into the curricula of today's schools?

Through an exploration of fundamental but diverse roles of music and dance we shall come to appreciate the role and place which music and dance could and should take in today's arts education in Namibia. The ways in which music and dance interact with social structures within the conceptual framework of *ngoma*, a Bantu language(s) root, are crucial to this discussion. My conviction is that music/dance as *ngoma* can serve as a basis for restructuring Namibian arts education.

3.1 MUSIC/DANCE AS *NGOMA*, ARISING FROM EDUCATIONAL TRADITIONS IN NAMIBIA

While one cannot generalise about culture and educational practices in terms of the whole of Africa, there appear to be certain practices common to many sub-Saharan African societies.[1] In this section the emphasis will be on the Namibian situation. As the published literature available on Namibia is limited, reference will be drawn from other African sources as well. In this section I look at ways in which music and dance in Namibia interact with one another and with social structures. These holistic connections are reflected in performance.

3.1.1 Music and dance as *ngoma*

My conviction that the holistic approach to music and dance found in many parts of Africa has value for Namibian education centres on three factors:

- the unified experience of music and dance and their links to other arts, to society, and life-force;
- the communal participation in performance; and
- the central role music and dance have traditionally played in indigenous Namibian education.

The holism of arts in African cultures is relevant to fundamental aspects of life. Music, dance and other arts are functionally interwoven into everyday life and festive occasions as well as ordinary work. According to Dominic Lunenge[2] the approach to music, dance and ritual among people in the Caprivi exemplifies this holism, a notion supported by others working towards the reform of arts education.[3] The philosophical approach under discussion is perhaps most simply revealed in the broad understanding of the Bantu-language root *ngoma*.

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1 For the purpose of this study Saharan Africa will generally be excluded. African cultures as understood here, will be those thought to have originated in Africa, showing relatively little European or Semitic influence.
2 Personal communications, Windhoek 1995.
3 Personal communications - B. Shekupe, N. Shikongeni, E. Jacobs - Okahandja, NIED, October 1995.

3.1.1.1 The term ngoma

The term *ngoma*, as it is found in variants in the grouping of Bantu languages, can encompass music, dance, humankind, and the world as an organic whole (Bjørkvold, 1992: 48).[4] In Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama and Otjiherero *ongoma* (plural *oongoma* or *eengoma*) refers to a musical drum(s), barrel or cask. Among Vendas in South Africa *ngoma* (*dza midzimu*) is a dance of spirit possession, but the literal meaning is 'drums of the ancestor-spirits' (Blacking, 1985: 65). This is echoed by a Silozi-speaker who describes *ngoma* as the communication between drums and spirits - impossible without dance.[5] The fact that so many languages incorporate music, dance, and other actions in one word indicates that the *ngoma* nature of these actions is something common to many African cultures.[6]

According to Bjørkvold (1992: 63) the traditional idea of *ngoma* is not merely the doing together of different things, but rather a case of one thing becoming another - a transformation. Thus, when a small child moves her/his body to the visuals and sounds perceived on television, that child is actually dancing the story; when the child is singing its own little song while drawing on paper or sand, Bjørkvold sees this as actually "singing the drawing" (*ibid.*: 63). Anyanwu of Lagos wrote in 1987:

> The logic of art or aesthetics is the logic of integration or co-ordination whereby the individual and the universal are fused together, while intuition and imagination transform the sensuous and the intellectual experience into one aesthetic continuum .... African thought makes no clear-cut distinction between subject and object, mind and body, self and world .... Life-Force, Sound and Word are identical. (Anyanwu quoted in Bjørkvold, 1992: 50).

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4 This is the case in Kiswahili. In Zulu the following are included: *ngoma* - sing the first-fruits dance song; sing hymns; crib or grass hut for storing grains; festival dance song; national anthem; hymns or sacred song. *Ngomane* - uproar, din, applause, great conflagration, 'witch-doctor', profession of diviner (*sangoma*). It is interesting to note the connections between song, dance, food, power, and healing. The term *ngoma* is also applied to specific Zulu male choirs who perform song/dance particularly popular among female audiences. Bentley's Dictionary and Grammar of the Kongo Language (1967) describes *ngoma* as drum (also starch) while the term *ngombo*, in that language, means 'witch-doctor'. It is notable that Hugh Tracey chose the title *Ngoma* for his 1948 book on music for southern Africans, although he doesn't explain why, nor does the term appear in the index of the book.

5 Personal communications, Dominic Lunenge, Windhoek 1995.

6 It must be noted however, that the holistic *ngoma* nature of music/dance does not preclude self-delectative music, such as the playing of a musical bow or lamellophone.

In performance, the individual becomes part of community, but also part of the music, linking earth to heaven, past (via ancestors) to future (via children). Apart from the holistic thinking in terms of music (sound) being one with Life-Force and world, the centrality of the music-sound phenomenon to creativity, intelligibility and rationality is of crucial importance to an educational philosophy. Performance as *ngoma* implies that music/dance has a purpose and function larger than itself. It prepares individuals and community for the tasks intended, whether mundane or spiritual. By means of this preparation the performance encourages total involvement, which in turn feeds back as excitement and enjoyment, leaving a sense of satisfaction. Clearly the conceptual framework of *ngoma* differs radically from the traditional western dichotomy of music and dance described earlier. I intend to show how arts education in Namibia, specifically music and dance, can be approached as *ngoma*.[7] I suggest that this notion of music and dance education as *ngoma* can serve as a philosophical basis to restructure arts education in Namibia. How this may be achieved will be discussed in chapter 6. As the term *ngoma* contains within it both the unified nature of music and dance and their ties with life in all its phases, these ideas are probed in more detail.

3.1.1.2 Music/dance as a unified experience

Within the broad African context, music and dance, particularly in rural communities, tend to be conceptualised as two aspects of the same experience. Thus Arom says that in Central Africa "there can only be music inasmuch as it is *measured*, and danceable" (Arom, 1991: 11 (his italics)). This relationship and dependency is so close that it appears that the rhythmic basis or pulsations of most of the continent's music is based upon its danceability. In other words the structure of much African music depends upon how it can be danced. This has led Waterman to the conclusion that "since almost all African music is dance music.....there must be a relationship between dance movements and the accompanying musical

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7 This holistic approach should, I believe, filter through to other subject areas as well.

pulsation" (*ibid.*: 181). Further, not only do the structure and form rely upon the danceability, but also the qualities by means of which music is judged. Hence:

> As dance gives visible form to the music, so too does the dance give full and visible articulation to the ethical qualities which work through the music, balance in the disciplined expression of power in relationship. (Chernoff, 1979: 144)

In accordance with these statements dance, along with music, have meaning and value that best find their expression in a balance of power. The authors quoted above imply that the experience (and the learning) of music occurs through the dance and vice versa. The whole (music and dance together) is more than either could be on its own, and in fact they are thought of in one 'breath'. I quote etymological examples from various cultures to substantiate my point.

A review of the literature shows that African languages often do not have a generic term with the same connotation as the western word 'music'. Most of the terms used refer to specific musical and dance actions or events. Thus, in the Central African Republic, rhythm "is simply thought of as the *stimulus* for the bodily movement to which it gives rise, and, for the most part, is then given the same name as the choreography that it sustains" (Arom, 1991: 10). In Cameroon the word *wún* means song and/or dance; in Nigeria the word *nkwa* means song, dance, play (Bjørkvold, 1992: 52). Among the Ubakala people of Nigeria the drumming is so necessary to the dance that the word for dance also denotes drum and play (Hanna, 1979: 18). In Lugbara (Uganda) the word *ongo* means dance as well as song and in Samburu dances the word *engikuran* "is used as an embodying metaphor for dancing or singing" (Aguilar, 1997: 86). For the Agiri masquerade performance in Nigeria music is essential and creates the traditional atmosphere but also "enhances mode, rhythm and balance" (Bell-Gam cited by Nseendi 1997: 100).

According to Kubik there are no terms in eastern Angola congruent to the western terms music, dance or games, nor is it easy to find a general or collective term for musical instruments.[8]

In Namibia a brief etymological survey indicates a similar situation. Otjiherero has no single word for music, but one finds several related terms which may indicate an instrument (such as *otjihumba* or *ongoma*); women's dance (*outjina*); men's dance (*omuhiva*); 'to begin dancing' (*hangiza*), 'to sing' (*inbura*). These terms are verbs, and denote the doing nature of the music and dance practice.

Thimbukushu makes use of a single term, *dimbo,* for both music and dance. Other terms are used to denote specific instruments or musical activities. A Thimbukushu dictionary (Wynne, 1980) indicates twenty-one different words and phrases, each relating to specific dances, including the term *rwimbo*, which connotes the noise of dance (i.e. music and the movement sounds).

Ju/'hoansi do not have a generic term for music, although the term *tzísì* comes close. They have various terms indicating whole repertoires, exclusions and performance details for events. For example *n/om tzísì* includes many songs for the hunt, curing rituals and lullabies. The term includes songs, clapping, and dance. The musical repertoires corresponding to girls' initiations (*n!ang tzísì* [9] or Eland repertoire) are always danced, while boys' initiations (*tcòqmà*) are shouted and danced (Olivier, 1994: 7).

In Oshikwanyama the meanings of *oudano* are described as play, dance, dallying, trifling, toying (Turvey, Zimmerman & Taapopi, 1977: 122). According to Zinke (1992: 109) the term is inclusive of, or implies dance *(okudana)* and play (*okudanauka*) along with the songs. The language has no specific word for music but uses words like *oudano wovamati* for a men's dance; *efundula* for girls' coming-of-age or

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8 This integrated notion is not limited to African cultures. The use of one word for music and dance is also common in other parts of the world. This is discussed by Royce (1977: 9) referring to Australian Aboriginal people; Hanna (1979: 19) referring to Mexico; and Bjørkvold (1992: 52,53) referring to China and Samoa.
9 This orthography is one used by Olivier (1997). England (1995) uses *n'in tsi'si.*

'traditional marriage' ceremony with its music, dance and walkabout; and *ongovela* for songs/poetry for cattle.[10] In Oshindonga *imbo* means to sing, and the meaning of the word *oshiimbo* is similar to songs, except that it implies communal practice, or group singing (Zinke, 1992: 108). *Ongovela* refers to the ceremonies, musical instruments and songs relating to cattle, while *ohango* refers to the 'traditional marriage' with its songs, instrumental music and dance.

Languages in Namibia thus tend not to approach music and dance as separate or abstract entities, but as a unified function. The labelling of music and dance is by function within the social context, not according to the perceived attributes of musical works or dances. Intricate connections exist not only between music and dance, but also the other arts.

3.1.1.3 Music/dance and the links to the other arts

In practice music and dance are seldom isolated from other arts and society. Leopold Senghor of Senegal stated in 1958 that

> Because it is an *integral technique*, art is not divided against itself. More precisely, the arts in Black Africa are linked to each other, poetry to music, music to dance, dance to sculpture, and sculpture to painting. (Quoted in Arom, 1991: 7).

This holism is reiterated by Chimombo who describes the integrated nature of the arts in Malawi linguistically by means of various axes passing through the central *-mb-* found in all arts terms in the Chiwewa languages, and the *-so* (appreciation) which is experienced as a unified sensibility.

> [W]ith this kind of interrelatedness it is not a single axis that can be taken into consideration. Account must be taken of all the other *-mb-* axes. For example, *mwambi* (a story) is not only *kamba* (narrated), it is *yimba* (sung), it is *chamba* (performed), it needs *choumba* or *cholemba* (decorated masks or carvings or woven costumes) for its full realisation. (Chimombo, 1988: 69).

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10 Personal communications, Betty Hango-Rummukainen, Windhoek, 1993.

Whether such linguistic devices are found in Namibian languages remains to be explored. Closer to home however, many rituals including the *makisi* of northern Namibia and other masked rituals such as the *mukanda* of south-eastern Angola, embody the totality of arts connections through the use of music, dance, masks, painted bodies, drama, mythology, physical prowess, education and social mores.[11]

Having described the notion of *ngoma*, I turn now to a description of music/dance in indigenous (non-formal) education in Namibia to investigate whether there are aspects of educational traditions that may be incorporated into today's school curricula.

3.1.2 The oral character of indigenous Namibian educational traditions

A primary characteristic of indigenous Namibian cultures is the orality of transmission. Historically, African cultures have, by and large, been oral cultures.[12] I have shown that anthropological models of the past contributed to the perception that the absence of an indigenous written language (and musical notation) in Africa indicated an absence of 'proper' education. Yet, education is part of all cultures, whether occurring via the written word or orally. African and western writers today challenge the concept that an oral culture is inferior to one based on a written form (cf. Kubik, 1974, 1986, 1987, 1989; Arom 1991; Chernoff, 1979; Mazrui 1990; Okpewho, 1983; Vail & White, 1991; Coplan, 1991; Tay, 1989; and others).

Far from being non-existent, educational practices in Namibian societies prior to the advent of government schools included initiation 'schools', 'child-to-child' and peer education, apprenticeship, and a wealth of specialised life-related knowledge to be imparted to the new generation. In these societies

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11 For more detailed description see Kubik (1974).
12 This statement does not negate the fact that schooling and literacy in Africa are steadily on the increase, and so is the publication of anthologies of written poetry and novels as well as academic texts.

teaching/instruction took place mainly through an oral/aural medium. Music, dance, stories, narratives, games and ritual were major means through which knowledge, life skills and social values were transmitted. Educational methods were generally pragmatic and based on real life situations. Learning took place through enculturation (immersion in the total cultural environment), by means of imitation, through adult or peer intervention (instruction, induction, apprenticeship), self-instruction, and participation in community activities. This provided learners with a simple but comprehensive education that would benefit the community. Although formal school-based education is now the main means of educating the younger generation, some of these educational practices are still functional in rural parts of Namibia.

As socio-cultural events, music and dance were central to most Namibian educational practices prior to formal schooling. Taught orally, music and dance were utilised in the development of life skills through rituals, daily tasks and play. All of these contributed not only to individual learning, but more broadly to the socialisation of the younger generation. The orality of local cultures played a key role in the attainment of the goal of socialisation.

The fact that traditional teaching and learning occurred through an oral/aural medium had a fundamental influence on the nature of the education process. The ways in which members of oral cultures structure the education of their young differ significantly from those based on written forms. In the past children were incorporated into the economic and political life of a village from an early age. Through involvement with daily tasks they assumed responsibilities gradually, each working at a pace suited to his or her own abilities, yet watched over by older siblings or parents. Although the younger generation in Namibia now attends school, this was not the case for the present older generation. Despite a high rate of illiteracy, there exists a significant canon of knowledge and skills among illiterate Namibians - what Mazrui (1990: 140) describes as "oral wisdom". In the past this wisdom formed the material content of education. Whether aspects of this wisdom can be applied to education today is a factor that needs to be

explored. The oral character of traditional teaching refers both to the material content and to the means of transmission.

The term orature [13] refers to the total treasure house of mythology, stories, music, dance, rituals and other oral cultural forms of particular groups, places and times. According to Nseendi (who refers to many other African authors in this regard) music or song "is perceived, in the African context, as the vehicle for the largest part of the oral tradition/literature" (Nseendi, 1997: 98). The modes through which orature is transmitted (music, dance, ritual, etc.) are vitally important to the maintenance of the culture. At the same time, these modes are influenced and revitalised by regular performance. In this way

> music is perpetually being renewed, an organic and in some sense a self-perpetuating renewal reinforced by elements derived from the surrounding traditional world, and the influence of ethnic group on ethnic group (Arom, 1991: 5).

Oral cultures are not static. In many cases an oral system encourages creativity through the development of forms of innovation, problem solving, (e.g. new songs are created or older ones are adapted, as songs become redundant), along with the discipline of precise transmission. Supporting the educational value of orature, it has been suggested that the "associative thinking characteristic of oral culture as against the more rigid propensities of the scribal outlook" demonstrates a more expansive grasp of the cultural universe than the written culture which "reduces reality to static symbols" (Okpewho, 1983: 236). On the other hand, the oral transmission of a culture tends to be passed on from an older generation to a younger generation who are expected to listen, observe and conform. This implies that traditional oral cultures tend to transmit only that which is generally accepted and respected. This is illustrated in ritualised behaviour, fixed drum patterns, and agricultural traditions. Taken to extremes, oral transmission could, in certain situations, lead to the rigid retention of conservative and familiar forms of behaviour rather than innovation and experimentation (Epskamp, 1992: 12 - 14). The challenge in education would be to strike

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13 Coined by Ugandan Pio Zurimi and popularised by Kenyan Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Coplan prefers the term auriture. He devised this term to caution against the Western category of literature when speaking of African texts. Coplan feels that the term 'orature' does not overcome the "conceptual separation of verbal, sonic, and rhythmic elements of expression" (1994: 8). Owing to its common usage I retain the use of the term orature.

a balance between conservation of 'tried and trusted' knowledge and methods, and innovative, generative, expansive and creative knowledge and methods.

In an oral culture different media are used to transmit knowledge – sound (music and language), movement (work and dance), vision and touch. Music is a phenomenon that functions primarily in terms of sound. Like language, music is a carrier of culture and history. It contains, in an immediate oral/aural form, a major portion of the Namibian literature, history and traditions.[14] Bjørkvold (1992: 47) describes the oral transmission of music as one which "finds expression in sounds that penetrate directly - physically - into the body and the senses." Rhythm in music and in language is an important instructional medium, animating and shaping the development of consciousness in an oral society. The immediacy of rhythm in music is reflected in the physical movement of dance.

While written language and notation have taken western education into directions emphasising efficiency, control and analysis of the natural world, and preservation of the canon of knowledge, Namibian orature has tended to emphasise pragmatism and holism, along with a very real sense of society and its connection with the spiritual world. The context of indigenous Namibian education was life itself - every action and every object in the environment had possible educational value - work, beliefs, the environment. There were various ways in which this occurred, for example, oral history was transmitted when people were gathered around the evening fire, or while performing certain tasks. This occurred at cattle posts, when collecting wood, when initiates were being prepared for initiation rites, when men prepared for the hunt, and so forth.[15] Another way song and dance were used was to shape "a specific historical consciousness and identity across generations and the urban/rural divide" (Henrichsen, 1997: 27). An example is the dancing of *outjina* and *omuhiva* in the Old Location (Windhoek) in 1959/60 with texts that referred to a "reoccupation of the historical place and space" of the Hereros in Okahandja - the

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14 Williams (1994) and Ohly (1990) who when describing Owambo and Herero oral traditions, both make this point.
15 See Williams (1994) for a more complete description of oral history among the Ovambo people.

gravesites of Maharero and other leaders. Song and dance were also used to instruct the younger generation in general matters, in both formal and informal situations. Formal situations included communal singing with instructive texts, religio-spiritual gatherings and initiation schools. Informal instruction tended to take place without specific plans, time frame, aims or settings, for example a young child could be taught to count by means of stones manipulated inside a closed hand, while chanting a little song.[16]

The impact of oral education through performance such as those mentioned above, was (and is still) reinforced by direct and immediate interactional communication between performer(s) and audience in communal situations. Interruptions, comments and questions provided direct feedback in terms of the quality, content or 'lesson' contained in the performance. Communal support was clearly expressed for the correct or appropriate action.[17]

From the above, it would appear that music and dance were commonly employed in indigenous teaching-learning situations. As oral media, music and dance taught by means of listening, imitation and repetition were valid methods in the past and are also in the present. They rely on attentive listening coupled with memory retention based on extensive repetition. This in turn is coupled with the elimination of 'redundant' knowledge or skills. Oral traditions of education do however imply an abundance of time, and constancy in terms of settlement. An example is the 'master-apprentice' system, commonly used for the teaching of musical instruments at a more advanced level. This requires one-to-one teaching over an extended period of time.

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16 This was observed by me around 1980, when an elderly, illiterate Damara man taught a child, who didn't attend school, in this manner. Farm Silwerstroom, Khomas Hochland, circa 1980.
17 A similar kind of interactive participation in the learning process would be quite feasible in a music and dance class situation, encouraging problem solving and critique.

Given that a major purpose of indigenous education was socialisation, I now turn to the means by which social interaction was effected.

3.1.3 The socialising character of indigenous Namibian educational traditions

Socialisation refers to the processes during which certain behaviours, morals and values considered to be healthy and useful in and to that society, are taught and learnt. Socialisation occurs in diverse ways and contexts. Processes and methods may include reward and punishment, reinforcement, group consensus, compliance or rebellion, social interactions, models and various incentives. Socialising contexts could be informal, such as situations within the family, community or among peers. A formal socialising context refers to any formalised teacher-learner situation, schools and religio-spiritual settings. Social acts function either explicitly, or in a more covert or underlying sense. Hence, as socio-cultural phenomena, the performance of music and dance has certain explicit observable functions while at the same time there are deeper meanings underlying performance.

3.1.3.1 The socialising functions of music/dance

Social function and social context are the frameworks within which social interaction takes place. Social functions are woven into individual, familial and collective existence to such an extent that they are an inseparable and indispensable part of the social and religious life of the community (Arom, 1991: 8).

An important social function of music/dance is firstly the performance framework or context it provides, through which people may relate to one another. In many African societies agreement among people is a factor upon which their wellbeing rests. Communal performances create cohesion which smoothes the way for interpersonal communications. Secondly, and related to the above, through the performance messages are communicated about the structure of the particular society, about the order of relationships

between different genders, generations, and lineages. Thirdly, social structures sustained by music and dance serve to support and sustain certain creative processes. Communality of musical practice allows for new works to be created through negotiation between the initial composer or originator of a musical idea and members of the group, a form of communal effort.[18] A fourth socialising function of performance resides in the encouragement, criticism and support achieved through communal participation. For example, everyone may become involved in a music/dance event such as *ondjongo* (see chapter 5) in a rural north-western settlement. Within this participatory setting, individual performers are encouraged to create their own dance movements within the general constraints of style. The group responds in turn by creating new texts to suit the individual performer. While inappropriate actions are received with disapproval or a studied indifference, a good performance attempt is rewarded by the group's excited response and commentary. Thus personal enjoyment, the power and energy to continue, and social integration are reinforced. The nature of the performed music and dance and the enjoyment generated, dictate a further function, namely that music and dance are used to maintain happiness and vitality in social worlds. Lastly, because music and dance are practised socially they, like language, kinship, and life style, help people to distinguish themselves from one another (Chernoff, 1979: 35, 154, 167), thus providing cultural identity.

Community music-making is still the predominant form of the indigenous practice of music and dance in rural areas of Namibia. Music and dance are not generally performed for audiences, but rather involve members of the community in different ways. Some sing and clap; others play instruments; others dance. In rural parts of this country music-making is often a daily occurrence, and a child cannot help but learn the music through regular and direct contact. This inclusiveness of participation may result partly from

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18 Sloboda (1988: vi) describes composition/improvisation as often being a social process in oral societies. Kubik (1986: 57) on the other hand, states that in Africa a composition begins with an individual, after which potential helpers collaborate either passively or they may develop and modify the original idea.

the isolation of many small communities, so that a good event requires the participation of everybody in the area. It also results from a fundamental philosophy based on sharing.

Because of the communal music-making, the ability to sing, clap rhythmically and move the body rhythmically are skills which many children in the rural areas continue to learn as a matter of course. In all cases that I observed in rural areas, children were treated strictly, but their participation in cultural events was respected and supported. An exception was an occurrence in eastern Caprivi, where a youth played the drum incorrectly and in a disrespectful manner. After first trying (unsuccessfully) to correct and help him, the grandfather chastised and chased the boy away from the drum. It was apparently the disrespect shown for the instrument, and thereby the spirits and values to which it related, which caused the displeasure.

3.1.3.2 Imparting an understanding of values and social structures

Apart from being used as a means of socialising young persons, music and dance has long provided a context within which socialising education could take place. Blacking (1977: 11) says "what one human organism can do, any organism can do; but no human can do anything, or even become human, without fellow humans".

Although groups in Namibia may differ somewhat in the degree of importance they attach to community and the way the individual is constituted in terms of community, educational traditions in all the areas visited, are located in developing desired social behaviours, morals and values. It has been said that "Africans use music and other arts to articulate and objectify their philosophical and moral systems" (Chernoff, 1979: 37). These systems are not abstracted, but built into the music and dance-making itself. Music and dance link with the philosophical and moral systems that lie at the root of social structures, and

are seen as a metaphor of life.[19] Yaméougou captured this idea by saying: "Dance is our best friend accompanying us from the day we are born till we die" (cited in Dagan, 1997: 122). In Namibia, the functions of exposing and transmitting social values, structures and patterns, are peculiar to the specific context or culture.

- Understanding gender roles, kinship and generation links

Songs illustrate social structures and values through references to kinship and family structure, world views, the importance given to marriage and lineage systems, religious systems, value systems, and production systems. In non-formal indigenous education song texts were part of the means through which such structures and values could be transmitted. In chapter 5, where I have transcribed and documented songs and dances, some of the texts illustrate this point. For example in 'Dantagob', the mother and sister's love for the little boy is expressed. In the Ovahimba song 'Okureoko', the dishonesty of a thief is lamented. In 'Serendie', by recommending that the person take better care of her looks, a poor self-image and lack of pride is chastised in a friendly manner. 'Manyeka ela sinuko' describes the warmth and safety a baby feels when carried and cared for by her mother, stressing the mother's role in society. Another Silozi song 'Musala nduna ku lobala mwa limboke' comments disapprovingly on the fact that "the wife of the councillor (headman) is sleeping in the *limboke* grass (she sleeps with anyone)" and 'Siwelela sa bona, mahule' - "their (some young girls') life of prostitution".[20]

Songs like these were used extensively to instruct the younger generation in terms of familial relationships and their taboos, respect for elders, the place of married and unmarried women in society, or

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19 A term used by Dagan (1997).
20 Text translations by D Lunenge, Windhoek, 1997.

the punishments resulting from unacceptable behaviour.[21] Song not only provides a channel for the transmission of societal values and histories, but is in and of itself a way of knowing and reflecting on self and society. Blacking states that

> music is an important way of knowing, and the performing arts are important means of reflection, of sensing order and ordering experience, and relating inner sensations to the life of feeling of one's society (1985 (a): 65).

Let us take kinship, which plays an important role in Namibian cultures,[22] as an example of social structure. Mazrui points out that there are no non-relatives in many indigenous societies, both in Africa and elsewhere (1990: 148). Cultures which love and honour their ancestry also tend to love kinship generally (*ibid.*: 202). The result is that all societal roles and activities are related to broad definitions of kinship. This is particularly clear in the ways that Ovahimba structure their societies (and even their cattle herds) around their clans (Jacobsohn, 1990). Among Herero people clan lineage as well as historical information is transmitted to the younger generation by means of declamatory chants and songs (Ohly 1990), similarly Vakwangali, Hambukushu and Owambo history, lineage and totems.[23] Williams quotes informants saying:

> Yes, we remember the past of our people, although we did not have a tradition of writing it down .... Our children know our past because we told them, and we know because our parents and elders told us; this is how we remember our history (*ondjokonona*). (Williams 1994: 12)

The importance given to songs and stories about kinship indicates the value placed upon knowledge of these ties. In the past it was considered an important aspect of the preparation of the youth for adult life.

Gender roles too, were commonly delineated and affirmed through the practice of music and dance. In some cases generation and gender differences were visibly indicated by dress and hairstyle, and are still

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21 Examples of such songs were recorded by myself in Katima Mulilo 1993, and Opuwo 1994.
22 See Jacobsohn (1990) for a description of kinship and lineage among the -Himba people, and Williams (1994) for a description of that of the Owambo people.
23 In addition to Williams (1994), see Gibson, Larson, & McGurk, C.R. (1981) *The Kavango Peoples* for discussion on clans and kinship among people in the Okavango region.

visible today among Ovahimbas (see chapter 5, Dance-game in the Kunene Region). The social positions of men and women were defined by the importance of the musical instruments they were allowed to play and the roles they were allowed to take in the form of masks, spiritual healers, vocal leaders, or initiators of the dance. Drums and masks, considered powerful and spiritual instruments, were seldom entrusted to women.[24] In most Namibian practices, men are generally the instrumentalists, playing drums, xylophones, keyboards, guitars, et cetera. Women "are the backing singers and dancers".[25] Women and girls are expected to form the vocal response in responsorial singing, generally do the clapping, dance in groups and occasionally perform solo. This is the case particularly in the northern and north-eastern regions. Among Ju/'hoansi in the north-east the healings involve men dancing and curing, while the women sing and clap. Among Damara people however, the singing of 'concert songs' is often led by women, so too the dance.

Among Ovahimba the women take a strong role in *ondjongo,* but tend to perform/play separately from the men. Men and women stand on opposite sides of the circle during performance. This is the case in *shiperu* and *epera* as well, where men and women are placed in lines facing one another. Certain games such as *ongandeka*[26] are meant only for young men, while Herero dances are separated by gender - *outjina* for women and *omuhiva* for men. Close physical contact among men and women in dance in rural areas is rare, except in the southern Namibian regions where *langarm* dance is common.[27] Although young boys and girls were allowed to dance together in the past, physical contact was not part of the dance. Nevertheless such dances provided a medium for social contact. In some societies, for example Ju/'hoan and Owambo, boys' dances and girls' dances became separate categories during adolescence. Through

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24 While taboo in some areas such as the Caprivi, in the central north Owambo and the Kunene region women and girls are known to play drums, but it is unclear since when this has been common practice.
25 In the words of informants W. Sande, J. Gertze, P. Shiyanga (all female), Windhoek, 1995.
26 *Onghandeka* in –Kwanyama.
27 In clubs and discos in urban areas one does see physical contact, and the gender roles have possibly become less clear.

such separate dances, with the different values embedded in the performance, young people were inducted into their demarcated roles.

During the course of my research, very few women were found who played 'traditional' instruments other than simple idiophones. Exceptions are -Zemba women in the Kunene region who play *elumba* and the drums *ongoma* and *ompindjingo*. In the Okavango region this scraped musical bow may also be played by women. Ju/'hoan women may be seen playing a pluriarc, the */kwasi* (or */goasi*). The idiophones women play include: an adze beaten by a Ju/'hoan woman during *n!ang tsísì,* where no men are allowed; wooden concussion plaques (*yikandiso)* used in Hambukushu dances; iron concussion plaques (*omatemo*) used by an old woman in the 'traditional wedding' (*efundula*) in earlier times; and an *omakola*[28] used in the treatment of insanity (the latter two are both -Kwanyama traditions). The three idiophones mentioned were reserved for women (or homosexual males in the last case).

These were some of the ways gender roles, kinship and generation links were maintained through the performance of music and dance, and these lessons were commenced at an early age.

- Developing a healthy sense of self

A significant aspect of social wellbeing rests upon the state of the individuals within that society. Even in a system so communal, the individual is an important factor. A healthy or well-defined sense of self requires clear understanding of one's place in the larger context of family, community and nation. Cultural identity plays a key role in this process. Aside from culture and society however there is an individual need to express and share feelings relating to the self in terms of the particular context. What indigenous

28 See Norborg 1987: 70 for a description of this very interesting instrument. I have recently observed recordings of this made in the central northern region.

education provided was knowledge and skills in terms of socially acceptable modes for the expression of feelings. For a certain range of feelings, music/dance was the optimal channel for expression.[29]

Hanna pointed out that the use of dance as an expressive communication medium is something common to dance everywhere:

> Dance is a physical instrument or symbol for feeling and/or thought and is sometimes a more effective medium than verbal language in revealing needs and desires or masking true intent. (Hanna, 1979:4).

An unambiguous communication of feelings is not always possible, whether through language, or music and dance. The latter however provide different and unique media that allow people to explore and define their spiritual and emotional wellbeing. This feeling is expressed by a student who describes music and dance as "the best thing; it makes them [Namibians] full of happiness".[30]

- Music and dance in traditional settings tends to challenge participants without causing undue anxiety. Small (1984:177, 178) points out that improvisation only really flourishes in communal performances where musicians and their listeners know one another well. When groups sing/play/dance together for any length of time, they develop a group style and an empathy, which controls but also allows for greater freedom to explore new dimensions of sound and movement. The self-confidence that is nurtured in communal performance, where individuals explore, express and create within the secure boundaries of custom and a supportive atmosphere, is seldom seen elsewhere. At the same time, undesirable individual behaviours such as arrogance, 'showing off' to the detriment of others, is frowned upon and discouraged within and through the performance itself.

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29 See Bjørkvold (1992:50) and Blacking (1977) for descriptions of African use of music/dance for the expression of feelings.
30 P. Shiyanga, student assignment, University of Namibia, 1995.

- Music and dance in the teaching of life-skills

Indigenous (or traditional) education is "directed primarily towards imparting the practical skills and specialised knowledge that facilitate group survival" (Epskamp, 1992: 12). I refer to these collectively as life-skills - the knowledge and skills that contribute to the survival of the group through the efforts of the individual. In indigenous Namibian education music and dance played a distinctive role in the transference of knowledge and skills in terms of daily tasks, elements of survival, economic and agricultural practices.

In rural Namibian communities the daily tasks or chores are time-consuming, repetitive, and physically demanding. They include the fetching and carrying of water over great distances, the collecting, chopping and carrying of wood, the pounding of grain, the tilling of the soil, planting and looking after the fields, caring for children, and the daily preparation of food (all women's tasks), caring for livestock, and hunting (men's and boys' tasks). Repetitive musical rhythm patterns are commonly used to ease the burden of physical work. The stamping of *omahango* (millet) in a mortar, accompanied by women's chanting or singing, flows in a compelling rhythmic pattern. The separation of chaff from the grain has its own repertoire, rhythmic motions and steps. There is teamwork for tilling the soil, neighbours helping one another, accompanied by singing. This is called *iikungungu* in -Ndonga. In regions where wood and clay are used, regular tasks include the building of houses and enclosures (palisades). The community spirit of supportiveness is evident in the communal task of building a new home in the eastern Caprivi. Friends and neighbours participate in the work, while the owner is responsible for providing materials, and on completion, enough food and beer for all. In the course of the building task, there is much singing, joking and relating of community incidents and discussion of community problems. On completion, everybody eats, drinks, and celebrates the good fortune of the occupiers of the home by means of drumming, dance and song. The lessons of goodwill, sharing, and community support are potent ones for children.

Songs and dance illustrating and teaching about future economic tasks are common. The responsibilities of cattle and goat herding are usually the task of young boys and youths in Namibia. Thus one finds songs which act as preparation, one example being the songs sung at a boy's birthing ceremony in the Oshana region to remind those gathered of the boy's future herding task. Saan people in turn have many songs and dances that teach about the character and habits of animals and birds - important knowledge for a future hunter. Among Ju/'hoansi there are special songs following the hunt, indicating whether it was a 'good' killing or not.[31] In this event the community is informed and instructed in terms of the inherent meaning of the hunt and ethical standards are reinforced.

The above forms of music and dance not only provide regular work rhythms and a sense of work-sharing, but they also instruct the young in terms of the skills required to perform the task, in terms of life style, work ethics and expectations of the community.

- Children in Namibian music and dance practices

In many Namibian communities children are considered symbols of the inner strength and 'wealth' of a family. Daughters are welcomed as future helpers in the home and fields. They also bring the possibility of future marital ties and kinship extensions. In this way familial wealth may increase. Sons are welcomed as future cattle herders and income generators.[32]

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31 E. Olivier, personal communications, Windhoek, 1996.
32 This is evidenced in the traditional -Kwanyama songs sung to celebrate the births of both boys and girls. One such song is *Kadhi kongelwa omupika omuvalwa gwado ote ya* in -Ndonga, meaning "it is not necessary to search for a slave to tend the cattle, a freeborn shepherd (sic) is coming. They give thanks for the birth of a male child." Student assignment, P. Shiyanga, University of Namibia, 1995.

In rural areas in Namibia young children are fully integrated into almost all social events[33] whether they are carried on their mothers' backs, clinging to their skirts, or moving within their own peer group. Children are not excluded from adult company; thus, music and dance are activities to which they are routinely exposed from a very early age. Indeed, children are traditionally encouraged to participate in musical events without fear of social criticism.

Ottenburg surmises that there are at least three categories of children's dance in most African societies. These are:

> [T]hose that are unique to children, passed down from generation to generation but not danced by adults. A second occurs when children on their own imitate adult dances and dancers if permitted to do so, and the third is found when adults organize children to perform specific dances, as at initiations and other events governed by adults. (Ottenburg, 1997: 12)

Initially children play an observing role at performances. The imitation Ottenburg refers to occurs sometimes when children move to the rear of the circle and imitate the dances of their elders. Their initial attempts at participation are generally treated supportively by their elders. Those who perform well, who have absorbed the prevailing aesthetic standards successfully, are praised for their skill while less successful attempts are usually greeted with smiles and friendly laughter. Dances unique to children are a category requiring further investigation, although the children's *oudano* (described in chapter 5 - Dance-game in the Oshana, Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshikoto regions) appears to be a form that fits this description. Since children now attend formal schools, initiation dance ceremonies such as *simbayoka* have become rare occurrences. Nevertheless, by the time children reach adolescence or adulthood, they know a variety of the songs of their culture, and if they do not themselves play an instrument, they can assess correct and appropriate execution of musical patterns from their area.

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33 I have observed a healing in Katima Mulilo (1994) where the healer's singers were young girls - the leader appeared to be about twelve years old. They were expected to continue their singing throughout the night until the divining (*liyala*) was completed. Considering the crucial role of the singers to the success of the event, this was no light responsibility.

Namibian communities generally respect an individual's ability to create and play an instrument, to sing and dance well, or to conduct and train a choir. Older persons with specific skills choose to spend time on teaching these skills to the younger generation. The teaching of the drums is a skill often passed down formally from one generation to another within a family. The methods used most frequently for this are imitation and repetition, set within an apprenticeship system. With young people now leaving their homes in rural areas to go to schools, the opportunity to learn these skills is disappearing. The older generation complains that young people are not interested in learning these skills, as though these skills are not considered to have value for today's world by 'modern' people, therefore the youth avoid acquiring them.[34]

- Power and political awareness

Becoming aware of and understanding and relating appropriately to various power roles in society are considered important aspects of the socialisation process. In Namibia music and dance appear to be commonly utilised in praise of leaders. In earlier times, chiefs had their own music and musicians. In the Caprivi, and Barotseland in Zambia, -Lozi chiefs used to maintain their personal musicians, and travelled accompanied by a *silimba* player.[35] In all other regions there is evidence of special music and dance performances relating to political structures. Examples are the royal music/dance of -Sambyu, -Gciriku, -Kwangali, and -Mbukushu people, to name but a few. These dances played an important part in instructing and reminding people about royal lineages. The status of those in power was defined and confirmed by these performances.

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34 Personal communications, Sikwalunga Mului *(silimba* player), Bukalo, 1993.
35 The last known Valozi chief's musician playing the 'old music' in Namibia is Mr Sikwalunga Mului, from Bukalo in eastern Caprivi.

Present day politics involve large rallies that provide a true sense of theatre. Colourful banners, umbrellas and clothing in party colours provide the backdrop. Politicians and leaders travel accompanied by 'their' bands, such as Ndilimani of SWAPO. Speeches are interspersed with musical performances while the spectators participate by means of energetic dance. Bands perform not only to praise the politicians, but also to remind people of their past, their struggle for empowerment, and to encourage people to claim their rights. Governments may align themselves with particular 'cultural troupes', and may even exert influence that may reshape dances "to suit its [a government's] own national or regional interests" (Ottenburg, 1997: 14).

Music and dance celebrating political ideology and power are not limited to large rallies. Villagers in Namibia enjoy singing and dancing songs of praise to celebrate a local or national leader in the course of their daily activities. This may take the form of songs created according to older musical traditions, but with texts praising "Tate Sem" (the President) or a minister. During the struggle for independence, music played an important part in carrying the hope of freedom across to the masses.[36] An example was transcribed – see 'Omotwendi-one yaMaalitsa' in chapter 5. A similar *uudhano* text (see chapter 5 for transcription) reads:

Onena hatu hambelele	Today we are greeting
Ominisiteri	the minister
Swapo yetu oya win	SWAPO did win
Tse otwa pandula	We are thankful for that
Ohatu pandula Angola	We do thank Angola
Okwe tu kafela	She helped us
etc.	etc.

36 This was also the case in pre-independent Zimbabwe, where the songs of the Chimurenga were heard nightly on radios (Sherman, 1981).

With political empowerment new forms of praise song and dance have been developing, indicating the vitality of the culture and people's political involvement and underlining the important role of music and dance.

- Aesthetic values

Aesthetic values refer to the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of values regarding quality of performance, as a further aspect of socialisation. Thompson (1974: 1) sees an aesthetic (with relation to dance in Africa) as "a mode of intellectual energy that only exists when in operation, i.e. when standards are applied to actual cases and are reasoned". Implicit in every performance is the notion of standards by which the meaning, the value and the power of the performance will be measured, whether its purpose is communication with ancestral shades or good wishes for a happy married life. These qualitative standards relate to particular contexts and styles. They may include strength, a connection with the earth, timing, precision in relation to others, forcefulness or coolness. The question therefore arises, what constitutes a 'good' performance?

Good drumming in northern Namibia means that the drummers relate well to one another, that they are performing 'correct' patterns for the occasion, and that they are communicating well with the dancers,[37] so as to energise them and be energised in return. Namibian performances vary in terms of focal point for the particular dance or event and this relates directly to the distinctive style of the area. I use the term focal point to indicate the aspect on which dancers and observers focus and thereby appraise the quality of the performance. Dancers may focus their attention on shoulder movements (-Kwangali, -Gciriku, -Mbukushu and -Lozi), hip rotations, pelvic isolations (-Sambyu and -Lozi), or foot and leg movements (Damara, Nama and Ju/'hoansi), for example. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 4 and examples are described in chapter 5.

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37 According to D. Lunenge, personal communications, Windhoek 1995, and P. Kasera, personal communications, Windhoek 1997.

The force (energy and size) of movements often plays a key role in quality judgement. For example in *epera* the foot movements of the female dancers should be neat and small, placed either adjacently or one behind another in the performance of the little steps. -Mbukushu women's shoulder movements and -Lozi women's hip and pelvic movements, likewise, must be subtle. In these dances large movements are considered coarse. By contrast, the quality of *omupembe, ondjongo* and *oudano* lies largely in the energy and intensity of performance, for example elevation or strength of foot stamps. The contrast of power and subtlety as aesthetic values in dances, is described by Thompson (1974: 5 - 43) in terms of ephebism - "the stronger power that comes from youth"; 'looking smart' by using style in a strikingly attractive way; and 'coolness' - "truth and generosity regained" through composure.

There is aesthetic value attached to correct posture and stance in dance. Body attitudes in Namibian dances generally proceed from the basic 'earth' stance[38] (see chapter 4). The upper torso is inclined forward, knees are bent and set a small distance apart, the posterior is slightly extended and eyes are often focused on the ground or the horizon. The knees remain bent in order to free the hips and pelvic girdle for movement, to allow for quick backwards movement, and the possibility of elevation. Because the spine is not hyper-extended, this is a comfortable and healthy position, and all dances either proceed from, remain in, or return to this stance at regular intervals.[39]

There are dancers and musicians in all Namibian communities who are recognised and respected as good performers. Musical aspects of performance are subject to stringent standards of quality, located in the aesthetic knowledge and judgement of the community and musicians. If a drummer does not perform his pattern correctly or well enough, the performance is halted until the problem is sorted out. The same applies to singers. If the leader starts at a pitch that is too high, or low or otherwise incorrect, the others do

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38 Dagan (1997) describes this as "the natural bends", that is bends of knees, elbows, torso, hips, and neck.
39 This stance is seen in much African art, especially sculptures.

participate, certain standards apply not only to the general style and acceptability, but also in terms of excellence.

Aesthetic values are transmitted mostly through immersion and enculturation and are seldom verbalised. Yet knowing and complying with standards of performance are important aspects of being fully integrated into the society.

In the preceding paragraphs I have shown ways in which music and dance, primarily in rural areas, have been utilised for socialisation in the Namibian context. Ritual performance is a part of the socialisation process but because of its more formalised character I discuss this under a separate heading.

3.1.3.3 Ritual performance as education

Rituals are a means of perpetuating prevailing values, powers, and the meaning of life.[40] By participating in rituals, people receive an education in these matters. Namibian rituals include healing ceremonies, the casting out of (evil) spirits, religious rites, initiation rites, wedding rituals, inaugurations and funeral rites among others. I use healings and rites of passage as examples of education.

- Rites of passage

In traditional Namibian societies the ceremonies associated with birth, puberty (or sexual maturity), marriage, and death were of great significance to the individual and to society. The celebration and ritualization of the cycles of life informed and prepared the younger generation in terms of social expectations regarding adult life, kinship and community ethos. The celebration of full initiation rites are

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40 This may be deduced from ancient rock paintings portraying rituals of various kinds. Early statuary, pottery shards, and tomb and temple wall paintings and friezes of ancient civilisations throughout the world abound with examples that portray the use of music and dance in ritual settings. Namibian and other regional rock paintings reflect many music/dance scenes, such as the one appearing as the frontispiece for this thesis.

rare today, but formed an integral part of educational traditions in the past. Again, music and dance were of cardinal importance.

The *efundula leengoma*[41] ceremony in Oukwanyama,[42] *iiyimbo yoohango*[43] and *omapiitho*[44] in Ondonga in northern Namibia, the masquerades of the 'Luvale' in the Kavango area, as well as the *mukanda*[45] schools of Mbwela and Nkongela communities in south-east Angola and south-west Zambia (occasionally involving people from northern Namibia) are examples of ceremonial rites of passage. The following excerpt from a description of *mukanda* illustrates the educational strategy of that event:

> Teaching and learning in the *mukanda* is largely based on the medium of song, reinforced by dance and other action patterns, though the meaning of the didactic songs is not always verbally understood by the initiates. Through the combined experience of mental and physical participation the *tundanda* grow into their new existential mould. By unconsciously absorbing the contents of the songs the initiates gradually identify themselves with the new modes of behaviour towards different members of the community (mother, father, the *chilombola*, younger brothers, etc.) now expected of them by the community. (Kubik, 1974: 51).

Methodologically, Kubik suggests that *mukanda* initiates appear not to understand the complete texts and meanings of the songs when they are taught, but learn through the 'unconscious absorption' of the contents. They are immersed in the totality of the experience. The expectations of the society and the *tundanda* themselves, as well as the contextual isolation, contribute to the immersion and make the method successful.

Kubik stresses that the music and dance education in this school is not there for its own sake, but serves as a vehicle for, and an expression of, the broad educational concept of which it forms an inseparable part. He also believes that the songs and action-response are more effective instructional media in that society

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41 Traditional wedding or transformation ceremony for young girls over the age of fifteen in the Ohangwena region. This ceremony usually lasts for four days under the strict guidance of the master of ceremonies, a healer, called the *namuganga*.
42 A similar ceremony in the Oshana region where -Ndonga is spoken, is called *ohango*.
43 Marriage celebrations in the Oshana region (-Ndonga).
44 Birthing ceremony in the Oshana region (-Ndonga)
45 Initiation school for boys from the age of about 6 to 10 years.

than verbal explanation of codes of conduct (*ibid.*: 57). Although Kubik does not elaborate on this statement, I conclude that the effectiveness of the instruction is due to the immediacy of the musical message, both in terms of the reality of the situation and its direct perception and expression.

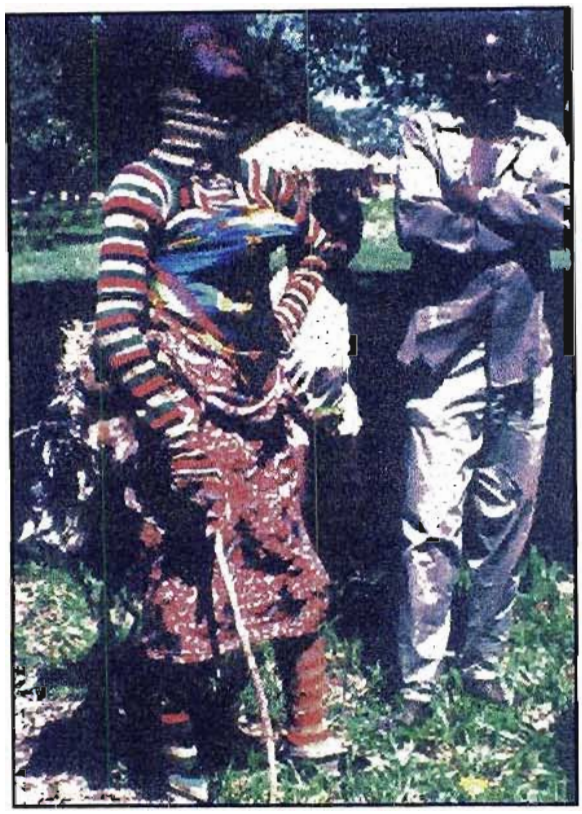

PLATE 3.1 MAKISI DANCER AMONG LUVALE PEOPLE

(Photo: M. Timm)

The meaning and symbolism of the masks chosen by initiates as 'their' mask or identity further indicates their self-perception in relation to ancestors, spirits and community. Traditional masks symbolise certain characters known to the community by local names, (e.g. *'mwana pwo'*). It was through identification with or against these characters that learners developed a sense of self in their society. The serious light in which the community viewed these traditions played a key role in the success of the *mukanda* learning process.

- Healings.

In most rituals there is a belief that music and dance are vital to the creation of an atmosphere of power and of energy. One finds a strong spiritual sense among Namibians, reflected in religious practices, regard for ancestors and for the powers of good and evil spirits. Communication with ancestral shades, in particular, was fundamental to spiritual events prior to the settlement of Christian missionaries. Vocal music is a common medium for the transmission of religio-spiritual values and beliefs to the younger generation. According to Hanna (1979: 126) dance and religion in Africa merge "to permit the articulation into a semantic system of sensory experiences, diffuse and disorganised emotions, and personal and social conflict". Hanna's statement describes not only religious experience, but also a broad sense of personal and social growth.

There are different kinds of spiritual healings. In ancient rock drawings such as those to be found at the Hungoreb ravine in the Dâures (Brandberg) massif, a perspiring healer[46] is shown accompanied by male dancers and clapping women. Among Ju/'hoansi in the Nyae Nyae area spiritual healings take place regularly[47] and include eleven repertoires. "The goal of the healing ritual is to repel any illness and death which is threatening the equilibrium and cohesion of the group" (Olivier, 1994:3). This ceremony relies on the healer[48] going into trance and 'curing' everyone present through his touch. The healer acts as controller of the singers calling for increases in tempo and intensity through his gestures - the music "accelerates with the onset of the trance until the moment when the *n/òm* 'is boiling',[49] a moment which constitutes the climax of the ritual"(*ibid.*). It is particularly clear in the latter 'preventive' healing ritual how important it is to transmit the meaning, value and methods of the ritual to the younger generation.

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46 It is said that the ritually charged perspiration was used to anoint persons as part of the healing process (Kinahan, 1991: 24).
47 In approximately 180 recordings made in 1995, Emmanuelle Olivier found that more than 80 were healings. Personal communications, Windhoek, November 1995.
48 There may be more than one healer.
49 Their embodied supernatural energy.

The mental-spiritual state achieved by means of this ritual contributes to the social well being and stability of the community.

In northern Namibia healers cannot perform their functions without contact with the spiritual world. They achieve contact through the dance and the music, particularly the drumming.[50] While some modern Namibians frown upon the ritual performance of spiritual healing ceremonies, others consider these rituals, which open communication with the spirit world, to be an essential aspect of traditional education. The Thimbukushu term for a performance of music and dance by the healer or one of his/her assistants is *divare*. A similar Valozi ceremony includes *nyakasanga* (the invitation and 'show' performance), *liyala* (the divining) and *kayowe* (a spirited performance by healer only). See chapter 5 – A healing ceremony in the Caprivi - for a full description. The performance is necessitated by the need for energy and power that is freed through singing, drumming and dance, allowing spirits to be identified and possibly dismissed. According to an informant,[51] the drumming initiates the energy build-up and calls the people and spirits. The singers provide the textual reference and social comment, while the dancers energise the drummers, the onlookers and themselves. The mother drum (*sikumwa* in Silozi) holds everything together with a steady underlying rhythmic pattern. In this context poor dancing and drumming equals a poor healing (and poor fee!). Healers therefore try to ensure good performances, even if they have to provide musicians and dancers.[52]

These rituals are a preparation of the younger generation for adulthood in terms of their spiritual awareness and values, and an awareness of the wellbeing of their community. Through ritual music and dance, communities are instructed and educated in terms of prevailing social structures, morals, values

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50 Dominic Lunenge, recorded interview, Windhoek 1995.
51 Dominic Lunenge, recorded interview, Windhoek 1995.
52 In other parts of Africa, among the Yoruba of Nigeria for example, dance and music are also considered crucial in terms of the creation of a dialogue between body and ancestor in their ancestor festivals; the Gogo of Tanzania dance the *cidwanga* for rains and fertility; the Ubakala of Nigeria dance as reincarnated ancestors (Hanna, 1979: 102 - 107).

and spiritual matters. In the light of the fact that these rituals are today being replaced by more 'modern' rituals such as Christian church weddings and funerals, initiations in terms of entrance to school or a city gang, healing in hospitals, and so on, different sets of values are being transmitted. Exploring indigenous music and dance practices may rectify the fact that these musical practices were ignored for so long. It may also bring to light practices that will improve the new arts curriculum.

From the above it can be seen that music and dance have long formed an integral part of Namibian indigenous education. As I have indicated that the situation is undergoing change in some communities, I now briefly sketch the present day music and dance practices.

3.2 THE PRACTICE OF MUSIC/DANCE IN NAMIBIA TODAY - A SOURCE FOR FORMAL EDUCATION

It is to the existing practice that we need to turn as one vital source or way of making formal Namibian education relevant and meaningful. Namibian music/dance traditions provide a source of materials and methods for schools. At the same time, the use of such materials and methods in schools can validate and reaffirm Namibian music/dance practices in the minds of learners. It is with these points in mind that I discuss aspects of rural and urban situations today. This is admittedly a somewhat artificial dichotomy, as there is always contact and flow between rural and urban areas. In Namibia however, the isolation of many rural areas as a result of great distances, the small population and lack of modern communication systems, does mean that there are notable differences between urban and rural areas. Certain musical events such as *ondjongo* or *nyakasanga* do not occur in Windhoek, for example, but are common only in the areas from which they arise.

3.2.1 Music and dance in rural communities

On visits to rural parts[53] of Namibia, certain aspects of music/dance-making become apparent almost immediately. The *ngoma* character described earlier may be seen in the communal practice of music/dance, its holistic character, and the use of music/dance for specific functions. Music/dance have recognisable characteristic designs and structures, although specific works are easily created and discarded. People do not necessarily rely on specialised training or expensive, bought instruments for their performances.

In areas such as the far northern regions of Namibia, the functions of music and dance are expressed in several ways. Music and dance are utilised in nearly all social events, large or small, formal or informal, for example weddings, healings, harvests, plantings, inaugurations, birthings and transformations. These events are of crucial importance to the wellbeing of the society.

Without some contact and reference to these practices in schools, without an effort to understand them, the meanings and values that were transmitted through performance will be lost. Retaining aspects of these cultural practices is important because of the cultural insight they may provide, understanding how people construct and conceptualise their cosmology through performance, the creative processes involved, the aesthetic criteria, structures and forms involved, and the value systems which they embody.

Transformation or initiation events are becoming rare occurrences today. This includes *simbayoka* in the Caprivi, *efundula* in Oukwanyama, *ohango* in Ondonga, and *tcòqmà* in the Nyae Nyae area, among

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53 By rural, I include areas where people are usually settled without electricity, without telephones and televisions in homes, and often without running water.

others. Nasilele cites expense as the main reason why *simbayoka* has not been fully celebrated (as far as he knows) since the 1960s. This celebration of a girl's coming-of-age means that the father has to provide plentiful food and drink for up to two hundred people.[54] Other ceremonies are influenced not only by the fact that young people leave home for schools, but also by changing values. From the songs to send hunters off and celebratory songs to welcome them back *n/om tzísì* and */ho tzí* (Ju/'hoan) are still performed, but for example */geis* (Khoekhoe) has not been used for this purpose probably for at least one generation.[55] Namiseb recalls that his mother, who was a collector of their stories and history, mentioned this kind of */geis*, but that he has never seen it. !Gonteb and Goraseb only know */geis* as a social dance, like *Namastap*.

The functionality of music/dance indicates that people have ways of conceptualising and grouping together certain kinds of music/dance appropriate for use on certain occasions. According to Olivier (1996: 3) Ju/'hoansi organise their music into categories or repertoires[56] according to their functions. This is most probably the case among other cultural groups as well. Valozi people are known to set aside specific rhythmic patterns and movements for their healing dances, social dances and beer-drinking occasions.[57] Understanding of the categories and their inclusions or exclusions is specific to particular societies. Thus, it is difficult for an outsider to understand why some Ju/'hoan songs are placed in a particular category, for example *n/om tzísì,* or why Elephant songs may not be performed with Giraffe songs. Yet to cultural insiders these functions, values and meanings are clearly delineated and purposeful.

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54 Personal communications, Katima Mulilo, 1993.
55 Personal communications with P. Namiseb, Silwerstroom, 1996; B. !Gonteb, Windhoek, 1997; J. Goraseb, Okahandja, 1997.
56 A repertoire in this sense is the collection of musical practices. It refers to the specific categories of music used for specific functions.
57 According to Lunenge (see patterns in Mans, 1997). This was also evidenced during field research, when we were able to trace events at night by following the sounds of drums. My informants were able to recognise the patterns peculiar to healings, which we were then able to attend (Katima Mulilo 1993).

Music is created and recreated regularly by individuals and also by group effort. At the same time, the redundancy level is high. When a song has been sung too often, or when its text is no longer appropriate or up to date, that song is set aside without any regrets. The fact that a particular song may be discarded does not mean, however, that a totally new and original work has to be created every time. Cultural insiders have, over years of enculturation, developed mental templates of the sounds and movements that belong together, the patterns involved, and the context for use. Templates are internalised or memorised musical models (Arom, 1991: xxi) or sound-patterns. Olivier uses the term *la référence mentale* or in English also refers to templates.[58] "La référence mentale renferme les éléments fondant l'identité d'une pièce et n'est rarement, voire jamais, actualisée." (Fürniss and Olivier, 1996: 3). Such a template includes the elements (for example tonal and rhythmic patterns) that identify the particular piece of music or song, and that guide the user in terms of its performance. Thus, the music and dance people have observed and performed over a period of time, has been completely internalised. Hence, when songs are discarded, new songs are basically structured upon or around the template, but allow for small variations to keep the music fresh and interesting. It is because of this shared template that groups do not find it difficult to create new songs or work communally after the input of an initial idea. Over time, given performance by different communities, using different variations, templates can change. But, because of this shared template, redundancy is not a problem. 'Old' songs seldom disappear completely.

Music and dance in rural areas in Namibia exhibit great diversity of style, structure and content. Different tonal systems, different rhythms, time lines and patterns, different forms and meanings, different focal points and designs are to be seen all over the country. While this is described in detail in chapter 4 and chapter 5, let me note merely that the musical styles in the east are immediately recognisable as coming from the east, and north-western music from the north-west. This applies to other areas as well. This

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58 Personal communications, Windhoek 1996, 1997.

diversity has developed over time and has in the past been compounded by the great distances between adjacent communities. As modern development provides roads, communication, radio and television, this diversity is likely to lessen through intercultural exchange in terms of music and dance.

Despite the inroads being made by radio and television, I have come across a wonderful diversity of musical instruments in rural areas, played either for communal performance or for self-delectative purposes (referred to in chapter 1). The instruments of Namibia include various musical bows (braced, unbraced, gourd- or mouth-resonated, scraped and tapped), pluriarcs, drums and friction drums, lamellophones, xylophones, horns and flutes, various concussion and percussion plaques, rattles, shakers, guitars, accordions and keyboards.[59] Self-delectative music is practised by cattle herders who play their mouth bows (*ondendele* or *outa*) and sing as they walk or sit under a shady tree, or by older men who sit outside their home singing and playing a pluriarc (*otjihumba* or other vernacular terms). It is especially among the older generation that a rich diversity of instrumental musical traditions still exists. Among the younger generation electronic instruments such as keyboards and guitars are becoming increasingly popular.

Indigenous musical instruments have long been made by the players themselves. The construction of instruments such as drums still provides an income for skilled craftsmen. Other instrumentalists make instruments only for their own use, as is the case with bows, pluriarcs and the older version of the *silimba*, or gourd-resonated xylophone. It is not necessary to spend large amounts of money to acquire instruments. The construction and decoration of instruments in rural areas is also a way to pass the time in the evenings, and the designs are ways of expressing customary, mythological or personal images. By learning something about these skills, an avenue for future entrepeneurship is provided.

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59 See Mans (1997) for descriptions of Namibian musical instruments and their uses.

There is a holistic experience in music-making in rural areas that involves all the arts and all the people whatever their abilities or status, and relates all of these to the needs of the community, to their beliefs and to their value systems. Previous educational authorities did not take note of these existing practices; thus local contents, methods, styles and structures were never incorporated into formal education systems. Education authorities in the past regarded the more acculturated urban practices as the norm for the whole country.

3.2.2 Music and dance in urban communities

Music and dance in urban areas such as Windhoek, Keetmanshoop, Swakopmund and other larger towns, are somewhat more institutionalised than in the distant rural areas. Towns are the only places where individual tuition in the playing of musical instruments leads to examinations and certification. There are theatre performances by organised groups for paying audiences, often performances of composed and published works. Talented young performers aim for a profession either as concert musician or professional dancer, or towards recording and selling of works. Most musicians in Windhoek make use of expensive, professionally manufactured (western) instruments. I have been unable to trace any regular use of musical bows or other indigenous instruments in Windhoek and its suburbs or townships.

There is a great demand for formal tuition, that is lessons in how to sing, play and dance 'properly' by formally qualified music teachers. Such tuition outside of schools is institutionalised, with a small percentage in the care of private teachers, and generally aims at individual preparation for examinations. Institutionalised music tuition usually involves the use of pianos, violins, guitars, brass and woodwind instruments. This has two very important implications. The first is that the cost of these instruments and the expense of tuition and transport place formal music tuition beyond the reach of most Namibians. Although efforts have been made to alleviate these expenses through subsidised rentals and tuition fees,

most people still cannot afford even the reduced cost. This means that music and dance education outside of schools remains the privilege of a few. Secondly, the time required to learn to play, for example, a piano repertoire 'properly' or perform a ballet, that is, at a level where deep personal and social pleasure may be gained from it, is often too long to maintain the interest of young people. The result is that many learners give up before they have developed lasting skills.

In larger towns the role and place of children in society differs somewhat from that seen in more isolated areas. This is probably a result of socio-cultural changes, mainly westernization, occurring in towns. The communal practice of music and dance as part of daily life is fast disappearing and thus the socialising role of music and dance is being minimised. For example, at a recent church annual picnic of people from Windhoek visiting the Khomas Hochland, my recordings[60] showed less communal participation (small groups sang, the majority of people observed), greater competitiveness among choirs, and a strict adherence to a programme. There was hardly any participation by children. They observed silently from a little distance or left the area to play soccer instead. It therefore appears that the pressure of what the finished product 'looks like' is ousting the earlier social orientation - where participation and community involvement and ritual meaning outweighed exterior 'polish'.

In Windhoek organised music groups perform in theatres, for paying audiences.[61] This includes The National Theatre of Namibia, the Namibia National Symphony Orchestra, the National Youth Choir, Cantare Audire, the Garere group and many other choirs and instrumental ensembles. Many churches also have brass ensembles, and there are a number of accomplished dance and rock bands that perform at clubs and social functions. While choral singing is popular in central and southern Namibia, organised choirs

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60 Farm Silwerstroom, December 1995.
61 See Mans (1994) for a more detailed discussion of music education and institutions in Namibia.

and community choral singing is rarely found in the northern regions, except during some church services. Since Independence, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture has also established a National Cultural Troupe (NANACUT). They perform at theatres, promote indigenous cultural practices by means of educational visits to schools and communities, and train other organised groups in smaller town centres. Young musicians in urban areas tend to follow the global culture of popular bands – playing reggae, ragga, rap, soukous and rock. It is the dream of each band to make and sell commercial recordings, and to 'get rich'.

From the outline of present-day practices in Namibia, it is clear that many of the rural areas practise music and dance in the way I have described as *ngoma*. This is less common in urban areas. While I do not advocate that traditional rituals and ceremonies should become the task of the school, I suggest that there are aspects of indigenous education and the way that people practise their music and dance that can contribute positively to school programmes, where the emphasis is on a broad general education for all through the arts. It is my belief that arts education as *ngoma* can make a contribution. By means of extra-curricular education the more westernised, urban performance values and practices can still be developed. In the following chapters I extend this theme, by looking into the character of Namibian musics and dance, using selected events as examples.

4 NAMIBIAN MUSIC AND DANCE MATERIALS AS CONTENT IN ARTS CURRICULA

In the previous chapter I created a framework, based on arts education as *ngoma,* based on performance emanating from the Namibian context. I have shown that arts education as *ngoma* encourages direct (oral-kinaesthetic) engagement with music and dance. It focuses (1) on the interrelationships among the arts, and the life and value systems; (2) on communal (group) involvement in a supportive, non-threatening performance environment; and (3) on inner experience, power and enjoyment through and of performance. The first step in exploring how *ngoma* may be implemented involves an investigation into the practicalities of using local music and dance in schools. This raises the following questions: What constitutes a context for teaching Namibian music and dance? Are relevant teaching materials readily available? What form should teaching materials for Namibian music/dance take? Can this music and dance be usefully transcribed or notated and retain integrity? What character does Namibian music/dance take? These and other questions will be dealt with in this chapter.

A major problem concerning Namibian music and dance in school programmes is that far too few readily accessible materials exist. Teachers need variety from which to select, and they need relevant materials in a form suited to classroom application. It cannot be expected of teachers to work through various ethnomusicological studies before introducing a theme on Namibian instruments or songs. Nor do ethnomusicological studies generally provide any clear context for the use of such instruments in a school situation. Clearly, songs and dance need to be processed and produced in a clear and simple manner, yet contain all pertinent information. But, before cultural practices can be transferred to schools, they need to undergo a transformation so that they may fit into the new context of the school, into written and audio-visual forms, and comply with the goals and aims of education. By making materials available to teachers

in transformed versions of performance and by developing their ability to interpret and teach these materials, knowledge and understanding of Namibian performance will be promoted.

There are certain requirements for successful transference of cultural practices to schools. Firstly, the transformation should not change the performance beyond recognition. Hence this chapter emphasises contextualisation of the performance, the use of the vernacular, and possibilities and restraints of adaptation. Secondly, the use of Namibian materials in the classroom requires a written or recorded format designed for easy reading and interpretation. For this reason I discuss problems surrounding written notations and attempt to resolve these with an original form of notation combining music and dance. An attempt has been made to structure information to provide a schema on which teachers may construct future materials. Where facilities allow, transcriptions can be used in conjunction with video materials. Skill regarding the ability to read, interpret and apply transcribed materials should be developed in practical workshops and courses for teachers, but discussion of this topic lies outside the scope of this chapter.

Having investigated factors concerning the documentation of Namibian music and dance, it becomes clear that teachers are going to need an understanding not only of the holism of music/dance in cultural context, but also an insight into typical structures and classes or genres. According to Hanna

> [C]lassification allows us to better understand the diversity and complexity of African dances as text (the dance movements themselves), context (the dances in relation to other aspects of life), and the relationship between text and context. (Hanna, 1997: 90).

Hence, the last section of this chapter places the emphasis on the promotion of insight and a thorough understanding of characteristic qualities of Namibian music and the dance, based on available literature and my own research. This analysis of performance is necessitated by the need for detailed information, enabling teachers (and learners) to distinguish qualities and values in particular forms of music and dance. In this way they can learn to apply criteria applicable in different situations and different value systems in

order to evaluate performance – their own and that of others. Those characteristics will also provide insight into the specific music/dance events described in chapter 5.

4.1 CONTEXTUALISING CURRICULUM CONTENT

Ngoma in education implies that the teaching-learning experience should be broader than just learning a song and dance. It means that cognisance should be taken of the complete background from which the performance arises. By means of the many connections which are characteristic of *ngoma*, performance can be generated which, while located in the school context, educates the whole person in terms of self and society. It is generally suggested in ethnomusicological and anthropological studies that the meaning of the music and dance of a culture cannot be fully understood if it is separated from the context of that culture (Blacking, 1985; Chernoff, 1979; Arom, 1991; Stockmann, 1985; Spencer, 1985; Royce, 1977; Hanna, 1979; Merriam, 1964, etc.). If, as Bowman (1994: 19) states, musics (and I include dance) are "sonorous happenings embedded in actions and behaviors ... replete with social significance" then it is these actions and behaviours in their social settings which we ideally should incorporate in schools. We wish to avoid the mistakes of the past, where music and dance were not studied in their cultural context. At the same time, it is clear that one cannot (and need not) fully recreate intricate socio-cultural contexts in a school classroom. Schools themselves, over the approximately twelve years of the learners' attendance, become the context in which learners experience certain cultural practices.

4.1.1 The importance of context

The notion of context refers to everything that precedes and/or follows a passage or event, for example the historical context within which something is understood. Context also refers to the interrelationships between the various elements or factors or components of an occurrence - the total native habitat of an occurrence. It is only within its context that a cultural event finds meaning. According to Palmer, when music is removed from its native habitat, the dynamics of the musical process undergo inevitable change.

"The degree to which several of the parameters change is the degree to which the original is altered." (Palmer, 1992: 32, 33). The native habitat of performance could be almost anywhere - in a church, around a village fire, or in a school classroom. However, when a performance linked to a particular habitat is moved into a new context, for example from a rural village to a classroom, the inevitable alterations must be carefully thought through. A sensitive transformation of aspects of performance is critical to teaching and learning, and the researcher should make this possible in terms of the materials gathered and prepared for schools.

Descriptions of a music/dance event should provide information on the original setting in time and space – the contextual interrelationships of history, location, and society. This requires the researcher to focus not only on the music and the dance, but to take note of the multiple relationships of *ngoma,* such as material culture, social structures and conceptual devices. Keali'inihomoku (1997) refers to Holistic Culture Indices. In a workshop in 1997[1] she described these indices as Artifacts (tangible articles and their uses); Mentifacts (the thinking of a society, for example the cognition, zeitgeist and ideation, making up its world views); Phenomifacts (behaviour and events which are ephemeral but involve participation, context, energy, and which make up specific repertoires); and Socifacts (involving the rules and regulations of a society, their organisation, norms and standards). By taking all or most of these into consideration, Keali'inohomoku maintains that a holistic view of the culture is established. These aspects of culture will be worked into my documentation in differing ways, described below.

Formal education requires more than merely taking a specific dance performance, freezing it in time, and then teaching it as though it were choreographed in a permanent form. A *ngoma* approach would search for principles underpinning a dance form located within its value system, and then use the principles to develop and create fresh, stylistically related forms. Hence, my research attempts to establish existing performance principles arising from the context in which they are formed. They embody the values; the standards of practice, aesthetic criteria, and meanings attached to performance by a community. If one

1 J. Keali'inohomoku workshop at *Confluences* - International Conference on Music and Dance, Cape Town, 1997.

wants to teach something about and through *tcòqmà,* then the music, dance and recreation of atmosphere must contain enough of the original parameters (of the Nyae Nyae area) to make it recognisable as *tcòqmà*. Taking the event out of the context where it has a function (initiation) invalidates it as authentic *tcòqmà*. But recreating it in a classroom, with the necessary understanding and respect for the aesthetic values and meanings residing within a performance, makes it an authentic representation of *tcòqmà* in a new educational context.

Most teachers even in Namibia are unfamiliar with all the different cultural forms of the country. They require books containing songs and dances, audio recordings, video recordings, pictorial aids and electronic networks. But printed or recorded materials do not guarantee successful teaching or learning. A few factors pertaining to the use of printed or audio-visual materials follow.

4.1.2 Considerations in terms of cultural contextualisation in the classroom

Successful transference of Namibian music and dance practices to the classroom are subject to certain considerations regarding the materials used, the terminology used, changes made, and information required in order to contextualise.

4.1.2.1 The use of audio-visual media

Teachers should be aware of the fact that while recordings, films and videos provide invaluable insights into foreign cultural contexts, they seldom capture more than moments of events or glimpses of individuals. Audio recordings are limited in the sense that relevant elements such as the intricacies of voice parts or drumming patterns by individuals are impossible to distinguish unless the recording is made with multiple microphones on a multi-track system, or by means of the re-recording system.[2] The frailties of these media should be clearly understood. Nevertheless, in the absence of being part of the real

2 See Arom (1976) for a description of this method.

life situation and of learning through enculturation, high-quality audio-visual materials on Namibian music and dance are invaluable resources and should be available to teachers and learners.

4.1.2.2 The vernacular of original materials

The vocal musics of a particular culture should be taught, performed, listened to, and learned, in the original language. This is a principle fundamental to contextualized teaching-learning. This is so firstly because when texts are translated and sung in a new language, not only is the original meaning and sense of the song lost, but very often the *raison d'etre* of a particular song and its structure is lost. Songs created in tonal languages in particular, the case with many Namibian languages, are negatively affected by translation. Voice inflections, which establish the meaning of words and phrases, affect pitch and tone in the melodic line. This is completely lost in a translation.

Secondly, he use of the original language is important because the terms used are very inclusive. The term for a particular song/dance reflects and communicates many aspects and connections that may not be obvious to the outsider. Thus *epera* or *simbayoka* or *tcòqmà* imply the singing of a specific repertoire of songs, for a specific occasion and purpose, with specific dance movements and instruments, each involving specific pattern groups. This holism cannot be communicated without the use of the vernacular.

The music of a community only really gains meaning if one is familiar with the subtleties of expression of the language and the ways in which the culture is illuminated by the specific language (Kubik, 1993). The use of a language foreign to teacher and learners may initially create difficulties. It is, therefore, imperative that texts should be provided in the original language and a translation of the text should accompany the song. Such translations should be effected by a member of that language group. Texts should include a succinct comment on the language context, such as colloquial meanings that may be attached to a central term, and a guide to pronunciation.

Audio cassettes should accompany transcriptions wherever possible. This allows teachers and learners to hear and imitate not only the correct pronunciation, but also the articulation and inflection of the language. The use of recordings for imitative learning also corresponds more closely to the traditional oral/aural method of learning.

4.1.2.3 The adaptation of original materials

When teachers are confronted with the musics of foreign cultures, they may attempt to simplify the music and dance (especially with younger learners). A teacher may feel that multipart singing, as it appears on a recording, is too difficult for the particular group of learners. For this reason Jasmine Honoré (1989) in an article on the transcription of Xhosa dances, suggests a form of simplification. She motivates her suggestion for 'diminution' by stating that a "progression from complex rural music and dance to simplified versions is inevitable" when performed by urbanised Xhosas today. She recommends writing down merely the "bones " of the song. This corresponds with what Arom (1991: 174) describes as a modelised score, in which only the relevant aspects of a dance-song, that which makes it recognisable to cultural insiders, appear.[3] Accordingly, teaching materials provided via ethnomusicological research, should preferably be in the form of a model score. Establishing what constitutes the model, through the use of recordings or live performances, requires sensitivity and care so as not to affect the integrity of the music and/or dance. It requires the co-operation of members of the particular culture. For classroom use, the score should provide guidelines as to which aspects are immutable, and which are open to adaptation and diminution. In *oudano*, for example, the basic structure - rhythmic singing, foot and drumming patterns - is fixed. But the individual movements, the melodies and texts, the total length, these constantly change. A model score would, therefore, provide the fixed, recognisable aspects, while giving a general description of other forms which the event may take.

Under the guiding philosophy of *ngoma* teachers may think that holism implies doing everything simultaneously in the same way that everything is simultaneous in a village performance. This is not

3 Arom (1991) discusses modelised scores in detail.

necessarily so. There are occasions where a teacher may have to make didactic adjustments to materials for purposes of classroom organisation. This could involve the temporary separation of performers, for example singers and dancers, in order to facilitate the learning process. Such adjustments are in most cases temporary and necessary for proper instruction and also occur in traditional or indigenous education.

Teachers may effect adaptation by selecting only those aspects which they consider 'suitable'. It is clear that such adjustments would alter the parameters of the cultural context and should only be made after careful consideration of the holism of the event. The teacher should be guided by consultation with a member of the particular culture, in order to identify the values and meanings inherent in particular music and dance behaviours. Only then can certain adaptations be made without damaging the integrity or meaning of an event.

4.1.2.4 Contextual information

Given the constraints of the school setting, a comprehensive attempt should be made to provide learners with relevant contextual information illustrating the original contexts in which musics and dances are/were performed. Attempts should be made to guide performances of musics and dances in such a way as to create a feeling of real life or authenticity, in much the same way as performers of 'classical' works try to recreate the style and spirit of the period of a composer. This underscores the necessity of a holistic approach not only in the classroom, but in field research as well.

Clearly, the musics and dance of a particular culture are best taught and described by knowledgeable members of that culture. As this is not always possible, materials for schools should provide all or most of the following clusters of relevant features, in order to contextualise:

- the historical background to and reasons for the event;
- the geographic situation of the particular community, with some description of vegetation, climate and lifestyle;

- the process through which the particular ritual or event unfolds;
- the socio-cultural background of persons involved, including the age and gender group of original performers, exclusions and social relationships among performers, such as leader, initiate, god-figure, and on;
- material traits associated with the performance, such as masks, dress, paint, musical or other instruments;
- non-material traits associated with the performance, such the season, time of day or night;
- vernacular terms for various aspects of the event, including the name of the event, as this normally denotes the particular music and the dance;
- texts in the original language, with pronunciation notes, and with translations for better understanding.

(Keali'inohomoku in Royce, 1977; Arom, 1991; Kubik, 1993)

Teaching materials for Namibian schools should include transcriptions of indigenous instrumental music, songs and dance. The form of these transcriptions is crucial to the interpretation and effective implementation in terms of performance.

4.2 CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE TRANSCRIPTION OF NAMIBIAN MUSIC/DANCE AS *NGOMA*

Transcriptions can serve several purposes. They can preserve, contribute to an understanding of structure, act as a means of isolating musical factors for in-depth study or comparison, illustrate points in a written argument, and aid teaching (Tracey, 1988: 43). Given the didactic demands of educational materials, it is clear that serious consideration has to be given to the method of transcription of materials gathered. This would need to satisfy the criteria not only of accuracy and comprehensiveness, but also of clarity, 'readability' and interpretation, not forgetting the holistic philosophy of *ngoma*. Underlying the assumptions above are questions regarding the ultimate value of transcriptions.

4.2.1 Transforming an oral medium into a written medium

Much has been written about the desirability of taking an oral-kinaesthetic art form and fixing it permanently on paper. As Senghor said, "[W]riting impoverishes *reality*. It crystallises it into fixed categories and freezes it, when reality is properly *alive*, fluid, and shapeless" (Arom, 1991: 170 - Arom's italics). Notwithstanding empathy with Senghor's statement, I suggest that the dissemination of information to educators across the country is a major purpose of this study. As many Namibian schools do not have access to audio-visual equipment that requires electricity, the written form for communication of information becomes a necessity.

The written form is clearly not the preferred way of sharing musical traditions. Ideally music and dance should be communicated to teachers and learners by members of those cultures concerned, or at least by means of practical workshops for teachers under the guidance of knowledgeable persons. Seeger (1990: 26) identifies three hazards inherent in the practice of writing music. The first is based on the assumption that the full auditory parameter of music can be represented by the partial (two-dimensional) visual parameter. Secondly, he points out that there is a problem resulting from a historical lag in terms of the writing of music compared to the writing of language. Consequently art and speech are traditionally interposed in the matching of auditory and visual signals in music writing. This is the case in dance writing as well. Thirdly, one should not fail to distinguish between prescriptive and descriptive uses of music-writing (a blueprint of how a piece of music should sound and a description of how it did sound), as this determines the value it has for the user.

Compounding the principial problems surrounding the transliteration of orality into a written form is the complexity of combining vocal and instrumental music with movements. Because music and dance form a unified whole in most Namibian cultures, I argue that a transcription is required which is similarly integrated. However, a transcription of polyphonic singing coupled with instruments and a graphic notation of the dance movements, may turn out to be as complex as a symphonic score. This makes it

problematic for classroom use. Hence, while a full and complex score may prove useful for analytical purposes, it may not be ideal for didactic purposes.

Despite this, the principle of combining music and movement within one score remains a primary notational aim and I have considered the following methods for doing this.

4.2.2 Prescriptive and descriptive forms of transcribing

Scholarly arguments about the desirability of either a prescriptive or a descriptive form for the notation of a musical performance have continued for decades. The arguments arise out of the differing aims and purposes for which notations are designed. Western or conventional notation, particularly that of art music, provides scores which try to capture all possible details. They are generally prescriptive, requiring precise notation and execution. Notations clarify musical structures, particularly in terms of rhythm and melody. But, western notation proceeds from a different conceptualisation of music to that of most African societies, which do not, for example, relate western concepts of the passage of time to music (Kubik, 1993). Nor does conventional western notation make provision for the fairly generous margin of pitch tolerance common among instrumentalists in the southern African regions. The tunings on a xylophone may vary quite significantly and still remain musically acceptable within the frame of reference of the instrumentalist. This cannot easily be transmitted in conventional notation. Note values in western notation indicate duration of sound, whereas the space between sounds and the moments of impact are more important in African music than duration. In drumming music it is not only the rhythmic patterns which are of importance, but also the timbral-melodic and the kinemic subtleties.[4] The situation regarding dance notation is even more complex, as some of the existing notations (Benesh and Labanotation) are exceedingly precise and complex. These notations would, in most instances, be incomprehensible to untrained teachers. In a score which demands detailed and precise performance it would become very difficult to distinguish relevant elements of both music and dance.

4 Kinemes refer to the smallest units of intraculturally conceptualised movement.

For the purposes of the school teaching-learning situation, a score based as far as possible on the understandings of cultural insiders appears to be more suitable. It reduces the total complexity of sound and movement possibilities to those which, according to members of the community, could be one of the possible realisations (Arom, 1991: 174). A notation should aim at accounting for the way an oral form of music works. I suggested earlier[5] that a model score is a more realistic form of transcription for the purposes of classroom application, provided that an effort is made to establish what it is that may be considered relevant and characteristic by the people concerned.

Verbal descriptions tell us little about the music and do not make reproduction of the music possible - a major problem in terms of the provision of teaching materials. Yet, I suggest that a verbal description (to accompany notation) may provide deeper insight into the context and meaning of the performance. Where a notation is unable to convey expression, individual movements and deeper experiences such as trance, a description provides a verbal sketch or painting of the event. Even with the use of video, the meaning of an event may only become clear through the verbal description. Cases such as the Rope and Melon games of Ju/'hoansi come to mind. Even though they include rhythmic movements to song, these games are never thought of as dance by the performers. Similarly, dance movements within a culture may not differ very much for very different events such as an initiation or a social get-together. Yet the meanings underlying the event differ greatly. Only the description can convey this.

Hence, local descriptors are central to the conceptualisation of the event, within and outside the community. They provide the frame to the event. This is the reason that the use of vernacular terms to indicate or describe an event is of prime importance. The description of an event should show when the vernacular term is indicative not only of the dance, but also connotes the total vocal repertoire associated with that dance, the specific instrumental patterns, aspects of material traits (such as medicinal roots used) as well as the complete ritual context. Hence, *n!àng tzísì* (or *n'in 'tsi'si)* in Ju/'hoansi, designates the ritual of a girl's initiation, exclusions (no men or boys may participate or observe or even be near the site), the

5 See paragraph 4.1.2.3

repertoire of songs and dance (twenty songs), values relating to a good hunt, and the welfare of the community (Olivier, 1994: 4).[6]

The transcription and notation of dance-songs such as the *n!àng tzísì* repertoire would have to indicate whether such a performance outside of its original context would be allowed or considered appropriate by the community concerned. Secondly, it would be equally important to take note of exclusions, (who may not perform, songs which may not be sung together, times which are not allowed, etc.) so as not to devalue the ritual.

4.2.3 Musical notations and scores

Namibia has no indigenous system for the notation of music or dance. Notational systems from elsewhere therefore have to be scrutinised. Consideration has to be given to the selection of what should appear in the notation, extracting salient features from the myriad of contextual details. Given the nature of Namibian musics and dance, with the relative freedom to change or improvise within certain restrictions of form, and the absence of a single 'correct' form, it would be impossible to provide teachers with a single all-inclusive choreography or musical score. Teachers need relatively simple materials from which to create a performance situation. In this vein, Arom recommends a search for "the limits within which a culture recognizes and sanctions variations in a given mode of behavior." (Arom, 1991: 138). Xulu (1992: 66) supports this, saying that a transcription need not be detailed, but should reflect the central characteristics of the music being transcribed. This means that one should try to establish which elements practitioners of the culture consider basic to the performance, elements that undergo relatively minor changes as they are passed from one generation to another. The score should reduce relevant elements to a point where only elements common to all realisations of that particular music are notated. For example, a modelised score for *nyakasanga* must indicate the role of the three drums and their specific patterns for this ritual, and any one of a number of melodies and texts (repertoire), as well as a modelised notation of

6 Olivier provides more detailed descriptions of these repertoires and ceremonies. See also England (1995).

fundamental dance movements. Transcribers should avoid becoming caught up in an attempt to write up all the variations (e.g. of melodic pattern) which appear in a particular performance, but which may never again appear in a repeat performance of the same repertoire. Variations, their integral role in the music, and the forms that they may take should nevertheless be described.

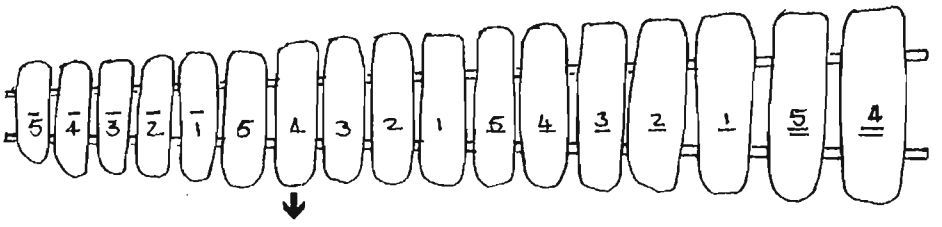
Specifics were considered in terms of notations:

- Because conventional western notation presents difficulties in terms of meter and rhythm, duration and tonal systems, I decided against the general use of it in terms of my work. Certain musics do, however, function well when written in this notation. I therefore use it as an alternative.
- Whilst the sol-fah notation system is common in many parts of South Africa and Zimbabwe, it is relatively unknown in Namibia, except among some Khoekhoe-speakers. The disadvantage of this system is its inadequacy in indicating complex rhythmic patterns and tonal systems other than the diatonic scale. I discarded sol-fah as a notating system for this study as this would result in major transcription problems in northern Namibia.
- Regarding alternative symbols or systems to notate sounds, various possibilities present themselves. Among these is the use of an oscillographic curve through the electronic reduction of the music. This in turn is translated into a graph. Seeger (1990) maintains that, with a little practice, such a graph would become as easy to read and interpret as conventional notations are to trained musicians today. Even the slightest tonal variations are visible in such a score. It has the disadvantage, however, of producing a score which reflects the peculiarities of a particular performance, but which may not be a standard for all performances of that music. Furthermore, this system has far-reaching implications in terms of the equipment required and for teacher training, rendering it unfeasible in the present Namibian situation.
- Sue Carole de Vale proposes a graphic notation which demonstrates timbre and dynamics (of harp music in Uganda) (De Vale, 1990). Again, this form of notation has certain advantages, in that it attempts to convey particularities of tone quality and the dynamics of a particular performance in a

written form of notation. But, it fails as a teaching and reproductive tool in that it omits melodic lines, form, and an easily readable rhythm, even though the passage of time is indicated.

- The above reflect western attempts at notating African musics. In East Africa however, musicians themselves have used cipher systems to notate their *amadinda, akadinda* and *embaire* xylophone compositions (Kubik, 1993: 117). This involves each xylophone stave or key being numbered for quick assembly, according to cultural conventions, often from highest to lowest in pitch. The music is then notated in order of the key(s) being struck. See figure 4.1 below.

The abanazi, sitting on one side of the akadinda, are players who strike a tone row of equal spaced strokes, while the abawuzi, sitting opposite them, are the players who divide or differentiate.



2 Abanazi 4 . . 4 . . 4 . . 4 . . 1 . . 1 . . 3 . . 3 . . 2 . . 2 . . 1 . . 1 . .

36*

3 Abawuzi . 2 4 . 1 3 . 4 2. 24 . 1 3. 5 2. 24 .1 3 . 5 2. 24 .14 . 5 2

↓ *Entry point for the abawuzi*
5 numerals are used because the tonal system of the kiganda xylophone is pentatonic (equipentatonic)
* *Indicates number of pulses per cycle*

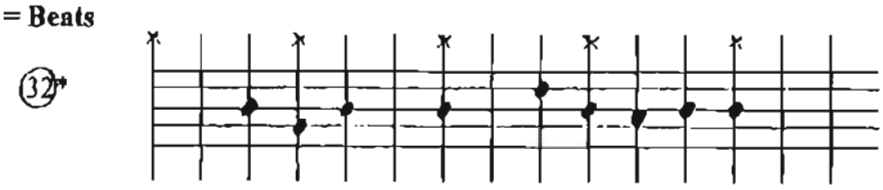
FIGURE 4.1 CIPHER NOTATION

This East-African linear system indicates melodic sequence, as well as polyphonic integration (different parts being written one beneath the other, indicating the way they interlock). It does not, however, indicate exact, or even relative tonal structures, nor are rhythmic patterns clear. In fig.4.1 for example, if one does not know the pitch or tuning of the instrument, it is impossible to replicate the music. This system is useful for practitioners within the particular culture group, but fails to work unless pitch or the

position of slats in the tonal system is indicated. Yet, this system could be useful for the classroom, as a method to promote memorisation of playing patterns on xylophones and lamellophones.

The system required for my purposes should allow for a comfortable marriage between symbols used for sound and those used for movement. It should allow me to draw up a music and movement notation that clearly conveys the sense, form, style and structure of the music/dance without cluttering the page with non-essential details. This is particularly important given the situation in Namibia where few teachers are able to read western notation. The system which comes closest to answering the above criteria is the one recommended by Kubik (1988: 130) and Tracey (1990). This is a system of relative pitch notation (using a five line staff where accidentals and clefs are dispensed with) and a rhythmic notation based on the number of elementary pulses, rather than metric time signatures and bar lines. An example of this notation, commonly called pulse notation by those who use it, follows:[7]

X = Beats



Vertical lines = Pulses **Pitch is relative**

** Indicates number of pulses in cycle*

FIGURE 4.2 PULSE NOTATION

Tracey (1990: 1) suggests that a transcription should reveal the shape of the song, "so it *looks* on the page as much as possible like the song *sounds*" (Tracey's italics). To do this, identical or equivalent bars should be written so that they fall exactly below each other on the page. This allows one to see the order and structure of the song - whether it has short cycles, or long. Correspondences and irregularities will also reveal themselves in this way.

7 Guidelines on the reading of this pulse notation appear in chapter 5.

Kubik (1990, 1993 (b)) goes further to recommend that, where appropriate, the actions used to play an instrument, e.g. a drum, also be notated (as kinemes) in the musical notation. A drum beat could be notated as ▬ for a full right hand beat and ▬ for a half right hand beat. To the above some form of symbol should be added for vocal sounds which, while forming an integral and characteristic part of the musical performance, are at the same time neither sung nor spoken.[8]

Having fixed upon a pulse-line notation system for transcribing the music, I was faced with a similar decision in terms of the dance.

4.2.4 Transcription and description of dance

The relative paucity of research on dance has been further hampered by lack of agreement among researchers as to the method of research, the need for analysis, and a means of notation or description. Clearly some form of text and/or notation is required if one is to distinguish characteristics, styles and structures of dance or in order to begin to interpret the dance.[9] Because all dances exist within a social and cultural setting which is directly related to the beliefs and values of that time and place, an interpretation of the dance must be situated within the context. As with the music, I distinguish between notated transcriptions and verbal descriptions.

4.2.4.1 Existing dance notations

In an attempt to find a scientific way of notating dance, Laban's theory of dance eventually led to the development of Labanotation. Various symbols are used to indicate time value, the direction of a movement, the part of the body performing the movement, and the level of the execution. While the system is very precise in terms of the movements, and has been used by Tuburu[10] to notate Nigerian

8 Examples of such sounds are found in the vocal music of Ovahimba and Ovazemba people in north-western Namibia.
9 I use the term characteristics as that which defines the specific dance, its distinctive attributes. Style refers to characteristics that are common to the area or group of people in all or most of their dances.
10 In Tuburu's doctoral dissertation notating the dances of the Igbo in Nigeria, 1987.

dance, it functions best as a historical-analytical tool. It does not adequately describe the character or the subject matter of the dance. Moreover, the notation is too complex to use in the field, and interpretation requires high level skills and training in this field - something at present lacking among Namibian teachers.

Similarly, Benesh notation, developed in England, records static positions and the movements preceding them, thus noting only the changes in movements and static positions (Royce, 1977: 48). This is done on a five-line staff similar to western musical notation. The matrix of the body is seen from the rear, with each line indicating (from the top) the top of the head, shoulders, waist, knees, and floor. In a Namibian conception of dance, however, the relevancy of exact recording of changes of position is questionable, as the artistry of the performer is highly individualised. The view from the rear would not adequately illustrate movements such as forward pelvic thrusts, or even the basic body stance from which almost all Namibian dances proceed. The connection between instruments, singers, and movements - the holism of *ngoma*, in other words - are vital factors that are difficult to indicate via Benesh notation. This notational system therefore has limited value in the transcription of Namibian dances for schools. Honoré (1989) has adapted the idea of Benesh notation for Xhosa dance-songs. She writes the music in conventional western notation, along with sol-fah symbols and rhythm syllables. Above this she gives a pictorial indication of claps and dance motions, along with verbal descriptions for different movement areas of the body. Her pictures are transcribed from film and give an excellent idea of what the dance looks like. The little drawings of clapping hands do not appear to coincide with the music. This detailed system could work very well for the classroom, but has the disadvantage of taking up a lot of space (two bars fill a page) and not giving an overall impression of how music and dance go together. However, despite having every appearance of an etic score, it can be considered for those dances with fixed patterns or choreography.

4.2.4.2 Descriptive systems

In his book on the didactics of African music and dance in schools, Schütz (1992) makes use of precise, metric, verbal descriptions accompanied by excellent computer-generated images of dancers. He

describes the music in terms of counts and "takt" or beats relating to every movement (his descriptions resemble those of Honoré, *op cit.*). For example, he may state: On count 1, beats 1 and 2 - step to the right, contract pelvis, etc. From this it is quite simple to recreate the dance basics, but there is no real sense of the music, although the book is accompanied by two compact discs indicating several musical possibilities for a dance. Moments of impact and the connections between instrumentalists and dancers are lost. It is also questionable whether everybody perceives the same beats in the same way.

Bartinieff devised a verbal system of movement analysis based on Laban's Effort-Shape notation, for a scientific description of performance. She calls this a 'choreometric' system. For use in the field she recommends the use of an "Effort-Shape Table" which describes 'core' movement qualities with a fair amount of detail, referring to style features such as stance, body attitude, relation of foot to ground, the use of space and effort, the intensity of involvement, and the organisation of effort into sequences (Royce 1977: 57 - 63). This system makes it possible to isolate cultural preferences in terms of certain body attitudes and postures. The table is also easy to use while observing dance in the field situation. See Figure 4.3 below.

STYLE FEATURE:	(example of description)
BODY ATTITUDE	Torso inclined forward from hips. Knees slightly bent. When arms are thrown backwards, the back arches.
STANCE	Predominantly narrow, elbows close to sides, movements directed forwards and backwards within narrow range
RELATION OF FOOT TO GROUND	Strong, energetic stamps of foot to ground
USE OF SPACE	Group arrangement circular or semi-circular, individual dancers moving within circle or crossing over to opposite side of circle
USE OF EFFORT	Movement quality strong and energetic, based on short bursts of effort by individuals. Group hand-clapping increases in intensity and tempo as someone performs
ORGANIZATION OF EFFORT IN SEQUENCES	Nature of dance is short solos within group context. First the clapping and singing starts. This is followed by ..... (etc.)
INTENSITY OF INVOLVEMENT	Varies, depending on energy quality of individual performers, and also duration of performance. During 'good' solos there is great intensity of involvement from all.

FIGURE 4.3 BARTINIEFF'S EFFORT-SHAPE TABLE

With regard to the above table, Adshead (1988) argues that it is inadequate in terms of interpretation of the character, subject matter, and qualities that might be ascribed to the dance. According to Adshead the four main components to be described must include not only the movement, but also the dancers, the visual setting, and aural elements. Hanna (1979) in turn suggests a categorisation in terms of characteristic body posture; locomotion and gesture space; design (direction, level, size, focus, shape, grouping rhythm); time and flow (tempo, duration accent, meter dynamics); and force. Accordingly, Keali'inohomoku's field guide for dance consists of three parts, the contents of which correspond broadly with the ideas of Hanna and Adshead. Keali'inohomoku's field guide includes a *Dance Data Guide* - which includes identification of the background to the dance and its purpose; identification of the dancers, the dance structure and its accompaniment; choreographic analysis; and movement analysis of discrete body parts. The second section is a *Material Traits Associated with Dance Check List* which describes costumes, props, dance conditions, musical accompaniment, and so forth. The final part is a *Dance Compendium of Questions* supplying further data for record purposes (Royce, 1977:56). When combining the music and dance Keali'inohomoku's Holistic Culture Indices (mentioned earlier) can also act as a guide for organisation of information.

I conclude that a table similar to that proposed by Bartinieff, expanded to contain information proposed by Hanna, Adshead and Keali'inohomoku, will provide a succinct summary pertaining to the dance. It would also be a useful comparative tool. This should be accompanied by a verbal description for which the following can be extracted as salient features:

- the context, that is the background and purpose of the dance
- the movements, in terms of characteristic use of the body, components, design, elements, and group relations;
- the dancers themselves - age, gender, personality, artistry;
- the music or sound accompaniment and the relation of the dance to the aural aspects including time and flow;
- all the additional material and non-material traits associated with the dance.

I now take a closer look at these features as components of a dance description.

1) Background to the dance and its purpose

I suggest that a particular dance/music event should firstly be denoted by the vernacular term. This should then be explained or described in more detail in order to contextualise the background socially, functionally, historically, geographically. The purpose of the dance may be healing or divination, it may be an integral part of an initiation rite, it may be a purely social event, a game, or entertainment, and so on. The meaning of the dance becomes clearer if the historical background is sketched, particularly if the dance is seldom encountered in present times, or if it is very recent, or if the dance is in present times undergoing significant change.

2) Movement

Descriptions of movements should include characteristic use of the body (posture, movements, positions, gestures); characteristic components of the dance (movement 'motifs' which are repeated or varied); actions such as gestures, bends, extensions, contractions, twists, shakes and turns, combined with steps, runs, leaps, stops, and falls; and other relevant aspects of style. The preferred actions of a particular culture or a performance genre is selected from the total possible range of body movements. In terms of styles, Adshead (1988: 22) suggests that the selection of particular movements is closely related to the motor behaviour of the particular group of people. This may relate to the environment and daily occupations of people. Moreover, it is as important to describe the characteristic stance or body attitude of dancers as it is the organisation of their actions into specific sequences or modalities (linear or circular structures, solo or group performance, etc.). I suggest that body stance may be illustrated by photographs or drawn illustrations and video.

What is usually referred to as the constituting elements of the dance are significant and should form part of the verbal description. The spatial element refers to the size or range of steps, direction and location. Dynamic elements refer to strength, force, and speed, while the level tells us whether the movement take

place high (on toes or stretched), middle (normal standing level) or low (knees flexed, body bent, or lying on ground).

Descriptions of modalities and ground design (moving alone or in groups, moving in circles or in lines, etc.) may be accompanied, where appropriate by an 'aerial view' of dancers, illustrations, or sketch plans such as figure 4. 4 below (derived from the illustrations by Burnett-Van Tonder, 1986). The figures are seen from above. Their movement directions are indicated by arrows, numbered in terms of action sequence: (1) the first dancer moves from the end of one line towards the other line; (2) two dancers from the opposite end of the opposite line move to join the first dancer; (3) all three of these dancers then move across to the end of the first line, where (1) started.

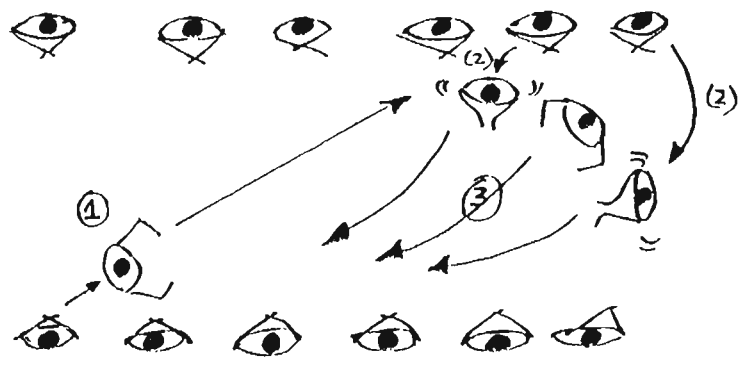


FIGURE 4.4 ILLUSTRATING MODALITY AND DESIGN OF DANCE

Kubik (1977: 270) suggests that there are two important movement aspects of the dance which should be notated as well as described. The first is an analysis of the total motion into movement areas, such as shoulders, feet, etc. to establish basic kinemes, those most significant to the members of the culture. According to Kaeppler, kinemes are the smallest units of movement conceptualised intra-culturally (Royce, 1977: 68 - 75) and an inventory of culturally important movements should be drawn up (Adshead, 1988: 25). Among Thimbukushu-speakers for example, head, neck and shoulder movements

are generally strong focal points, while male Ju/'hoan dancers focus on rapid, small leg vibrations. Kubik (1990) suggests notating these kinemes in the form of self-created symbols, for example:[11]

●	o	∪	((⬭))	<
Left foot forward	*Right foot forward*	*Contraction of shoulder blades*	*Pelvis/hips*	*Pelvis shake to the left*

FIGURE 4.5 EXAMPLES OF KINEMIC SYMBOLS

The second important aspect of transcription identified by Kubik is the notation of the corner-points or points of inflexion.

> Corner-points are those extreme positions in the evolution of a motor pattern at which a phase of movement is aimed. Corner points are something like marks at the end of a section of movement. ... [T]hose moments in a movement pattern where kinetic energy reaches zero intensity and where new energy has to be injected by the dancer to keep the movement going. The employment of new energy often results in a change of direction (Kubik 1977: 270).

A straight line can be used to indicate the duration of a movement before a corner-point is reached, for example, how long the foot remains on the ground. Alternatively, the corner position itself may be the one to notate, for example, a leg extension.

3) Dancers

Taking note of how many and who the dancers are, their ages, genders, and their roles within the dance is important to the description of the dance. Given the close link between society and music and dance in Namibia, the role and meaning which dancers have in relation to the dance is likely to be highly significant in certain cases, for example spiritual healings. Other dance styles may be limited to a specific gender or age group, for example *ongandeka* which is performed by young men only, or Melon games which are performed only by young Ju/'hoan women. Such exclusions or particularities should be clearly indicated in all descriptions of the dance.

11 Kubik also notates movements by slowing down 8-mm film frame by frame at sixteenths of a second. He then uses graph paper with a vertical line for each frame (Kubik, 1977: 263 - 269).

4) Aural elements

Although this aspect has received attention in the discussion of musical notations, the importance of sound accompaniment (or its possible absence) needs to be stressed, given the interrelationship between music and dance. Music may be created especially for a particular dance, or in collaboration with the dancers, or the music may have an existence prior to the creation of the dance, such as composed music used for ballet. Aural elements include the sounds created by and in the dance. In *oudano*, it is the sound of the foot stamping patterns which characterises the dance. In *nyakasanga*, it is the drumming patterns that characterise the dance and its function. When describing or notating the aural elements, it is also of importance to notate the exact musical moment on which the kineme, or significant movement, takes place. For this reason the music and movements need to be integrated into one notational system.

5) Material and non-material traits associated with the dance

Material traits would include a description of the performance area, the costume, ornamentation or dress worn by the participants, other material properties utilised, such as brooms, pastes or unguents, masks, paint, ornaments, and so forth. Non-material properties would include a description of the time of day or season, lighting, atmosphere, and other possible significant factors.

Having considered systems and ideas for transcribing the dance, the following conclusions are drawn. To notate the dance, I have settled upon a combination of a musical pulse-line notation and self-created kinemic symbols of basic dance movements. This will be accompanied by an illustration of stance and the dance modalities, as well as a verbal description of context (background and purpose), movement, dancers and material and non-material traits associated witb the dance. Where the sequential or form modality of the dance is one of the essential characteristics of the dance, the description will be illustrated by an overhead view.

I now move to a discussion of characteristics of music and dance in Namibia, as I found them in my fieldwork and in archival data. This is done in order to provide teachers with a cognitive structure or framework through which to filter understanding of the context and performance of Namibian

music/dance, which may be foreign to them. This is more characteristic of an analytical, classificatory approach than the holistic approach I suggested earlier. It nevertheless serves a purpose in terms of formal education. As was pointed out earlier, schools and the ways in which teaching and learning are expected to take place in schools, are western systems. Into these western systems of formal schooling we want to bring Namibian musical practice. This, I suggest, requires a certain 'cross-over' approach. Insight into characteristics of Namibian music and dance can help teachers and learners to understand, compare and evaluate performances and the value systems by which they are sustained. That which follows will be applied in chapter 5 by discussion, transcription, explanation and suggestions in terms of selected representations of Namibian music/dance.

4.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF NAMIBIAN MUSIC AND DANCE

While there is no single characteristic Namibian music, there are certain structures and forms that have come to characterise music and dance in certain areas or cultures. It is these characteristics which sustain particular cultural identities in terms of music and dance. In view of the lack of literature on Namibian music, I draw on ethnomusicological studies referring to other parts of Africa in order to identify characteristics of Namibian music and dance. The scope of this study does not allow for an in-depth study of all the musics and dance in Namibia, thus I refer mainly to those found in the areas delineated in chapter 1.

4.3.1 The influence of orality on music and dance structures in Namibia

Firstly, orality is a fundamental factor that contributes to the music being predominantly vocal. Although purely instrumental music such as bow and pluriarc music exists in Namibia, it is vocal music that forms a fundamental part of everyday life in most Namibian communities.

Secondly, a very close relationship exists between spoken language and music. This is documented in a number of instances (Arom, 1991; Kubik, 1985; Olivier, 1994; Mans, 1990, etc.). Kubik (*ibid.*) states that tone systems ('scales', chordal patterns, melodic patterns) are in some cases even pre-formed by the tonal patterns which occur in those languages. The predominance of tonal languages in Namibia has influenced melodic construction particularly in the music of Khoekhoe-speakers, Saan, and certain Bantu-language speakers. According to Olivier the vocal music of Ju/'hoan people is structured by tonality.

> [I]n order that the words of a song be intelligible, the contour of the melody must be the same, no matter how many voices sing it. The result can only be singing in parallel movement, respecting the tones of the language. (Olivier, 1994: 8)

Not only the melody is affected by language. In the Khoekhoe language with its plosive sounds and clicks, the rhythmic effect is an essential part of the song structure, especially in secular music. The connection between the spoken language and musical structure (melodic as well as rhythmic) is, therefore, fundamental.

Because of the oral, communal nature of performance, people enter into the creation and performance of music and dance with a freedom seldom seen in western societies. Children create and perform their own music. An outstanding example of this is the Isandi Rwandan children's choir at the Kibumba refugee camp, described in a popular magazine article entitled "Choir of angels". These children have created their own music/dance describing the suffering of the refugees (Pech, 1995: 48-51). In Namibia children performing *oudano* also create their own texts and dance steps within the conventions of this practice (see description of *oudano* in chapter 5). In this way meaningful occurrences in their lives find a way into music, and into the orature of the society. Thus one can say that Namibian musics would not display existing characters had the traditional mode of socialisation, artistic expression and communication not been oral.

4.3.2 Characteristics of musical structure

Under discussion here is the shape, structure, organisation and coherence of pieces or works of music. Firstly, the most prevalent song structure in Africa is a cyclical structure in which the use of repetition and variation is a fundamental principle (Arom, 1991: 17). Cyclic songs are common in Namibia. To the ears of westerners accustomed to music with a strong emphasis on the development of musical ideas, music in Namibia may at first appear 'simple' and 'repetitive'. From an insider's point of view, the repetition in the first place contains many small variants and is not felt to be 'repetitive'. Secondly, the cyclic structure, usually having no single point of entry or fixed ending, creates a musical stability around which improvisation within certain bounds of convention is stimulated. The repetition allows participants to 'feel' and hear all the levels within the music, and allows for the build up of energy in the dance. Improvisations are, to an extent, culturally determined. Those who improvise are bound within the structure of the music, the text, speech tones of the text, and learned patterns of variations. Within these bounds, however, freedom exists for experimentation. In the case of tonal languages, where meanings may change if tonal sequence changes, improvisational possibilities are limited by the language. In these cases, however, complex polyphony may provide more than enough scope for variation within the cycle.[12]

The internal organisation of many Namibian songs reveals a 'call and response' structure. Even in the many areas where the homophonic music of Christian churches in the form of baroque-style hymns has been creatively assimilated, one finds that the characteristic of antiphonal or responsorial song is incorporated. This may be seen in the *konsertliedjies* of the Damara people in central Namibia, which, while secular and homophonic, incorporates a leader or leading group. Examples are "Dantagoba" and "Serendie" (see transcriptions in chapter 5). Ju/'hoansi music is an exception. Although a song may be initiated by one singer, the structure thereafter does not reveal typical call and response.

12 Polyphony is the norm in Ju/'hoansi vocal music.

The call and response structure takes two forms - antiphonal and responsorial. In Namibia one finds both antiphonal song (where a lead singer states a call or text 'phrase' which is repeated by the group) and responsorial song (where the leader's part is similar to a solo, supported by a shorter repeated response from the chorus). This leader/chorus structure is an indication of the close relationship between composer and community in the creation of a new song. Small (1984: 42) refers to the relative simplicity of individual parts in Balinese gamelan playing and the interaction among parts from which the complexity arises. Similarly, Namibian vocal music, being a communal activity, must be based on simple individual parts, but complex togetherness. It is a musical practicality, but also a metaphor of life in complex societies. The stability of the group or chorus part allows the leader to make changes such as lengthening a call, changing the melodic pattern slightly, altering the words, or changing the rhythmic pattern - thereby keeping the music always fresh and interesting, even humorous, to the other participants. It also has a very practical function in an oral/aural system. The group learns and memorises (or is reminded of) the song and text by repeating either what the lead-singer calls out, or by repeating a short, interjected phrase.[13]

Modern Namibian 'composed' music (choral, instrumental, pop or jazz) corresponds more closely with western forms and is dependent on genre for particularities of structure. Thus a modern pop song is likely to be strophic, and consist of an A section linked by a bridge to the chorus section B. Yet the call and response pattern of traditional music appears in much of today's more commercial music and is particularly noticeable in 'gospel' music.

4.3.2.1 Multipart music

Multipart singing or plurivocality is the predominant style of vocal music in so many parts of Africa that it may be considered one of the typical characteristics of the musics of Africa. The forms of plurivocality - both horizontal ('contrapuntal') and vertical ('harmonic') polyphony - and the resultant textures, are

13 Note that the term 'phrase' is not used in the western musical sense. A western musical phrase refers to short melodic units or sections, often appearing in pairs, which lead to a cadence or point of arrival.

varied. They include homophony (which may at the same time be homorhythmic); parallelism; melodic and rhythmic counterpoint; heterophony; and what Kubik[14] terms multi-part monophony or poly-melody. Both polyphonic and homophonic textures are common in Namibian songs, with monophony and heterophony less so.[15]

Homophonic vocal music is prevalent in many areas, particularly those where the Christian church had a strong influence. Among the Khoekhoe-speaking peoples of Namibia homophonic music (although not necessarily homorhythmic) has become the dominant musical practice. This is evidenced in their hymns as well as their secular *konsertliedjies*, which display a homophonic texture based in general terms on the primary harmonic chord structure of European practice. Often however, the seventh of the tonic key is flattened, creating an effect that to many people has come to be associated with southern African musics.

Little documentation on multi-part monophony, poly-melody or heterophony exists in Namibia. Among Ju/'hoan people, however, Olivier (1996) has established that a 'song' is conceptualised as a single melodic line, but that it may be broken up into small sections, each performed in counterpoint with the other sections. This could be described as multi-part monophony. Similarly, portions of Himba songs contain short little melodic patterns sung by different people in an interlocking and sustained pattern, creating an effect of slightly unfocussed, buzzing sound characteristic to the particular musical style.
Parallelism refers to the singing at the same time of the same musical material at different pitches (mainly in intervals of a third, fourth or fifth). This may produce a series of parallel chords. In Ju/'hoansi, the contour of the melody is crucial to the understanding of the words. Thus, when words are used, singing must be done in parallel movement in order that the text remains intelligible. Their counterpoint (where

14 Personal communication, 1994.
15 It should be noted that instrumental textures in this country tend to be less complex than vocal textures. For example in the playing of a mouth bow only single tones are sounded at any one moment. This is due to the nature of the instrument and the limited number of tones and partials available. It leads to an absence of harmonic sense. In Namibia musical bows are not played in ensemble, only solo. On the *elumba* or *kaholoholo* (scraped, notched, mouth-resonated bow) and the *outa* (braced mouth-resonated) two single tones are usually produced and played in varying rhythmic patterns. This texture is in distinct contrast to the more complex textures created by combinations of drums and other instruments with voices and dancing.

vocal parts move in semi-independent patterns) therefore only occurs on meaningless syllables (Olivier, 1994: 8).

Common melodic techniques in multipart music are overlapping, drones, ostinati, imitation, and hocket technique. These are outlined very briefly below.

- Overlapping "occurs when a second soloist (or group) enters before the first has wholly completed its intervention" (Arom, 1991: 36) and is found in much responsorial music. To my knowledge, while not very common in Namibia, this occurs in the polyphony of Ju/'hoansi and that of Ovahimbas.
- Ostinati are commonly found in vocal as well as instrumental musics. *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (1970: 20) describes the African ostinato as usually being "quite small in length and pitch range" and being either continuous or intermittent, appearing either above or below the main line. "Frequently there is a multi-ostinato, two or more ostinatos moving contrapuntally, with or without a longer melodic line". Ostinati in Namibia are found mostly in instrumental musics, particularly *silimba* (xylophone), *otjihumba* (pluriarc), *otjisandji* (lamellophone) and various bows.
- Drones or drone-ostinati underlie other voice parts, generally in the lower registers. A drone was found in a solo song accompanied by a gourd-resonated bow (*omburumbumba*) in the north-west. In this case the aspirated drone was enhanced by the gourd resonator placed on the singer's chest. He sang while playing an ostinato on the bow. This was interspersed at regular intervals with his drone (reaching the C two octaves below middle C) while playing a more demanding bow part using extended tones. In *ondjongo* men often sing a drone (see transcription in chapter 5).
- Imitation occurs in both vocal and instrumental musics, with antiphonal singing being a typical imitative form. This is commonly found in northern Namibian areas, with the songs "Manyeka ela..." and "Taliyowoya momema Kina" being examples (see chapter 5). The leader sings a call which is then imitated directly by one of the voice parts of the group, while other parts may imitate indirectly by singing a parallel part.

- The hocket technique occurs when different instruments of the same group each only produce one tone, or one tone and its closest partial, in a contrapuntal melodic sequence. In the past this was found in the reed pipe ensembles of the Namas in southern Namibia but has not been heard for many years now. A small three-person Damara reed-pipe ensemble is also known to have performed using hocket in the north-western part of Namibia in 1991.[16]

4.3.2.2 Tonal structures

- Tone systems and pitch

In his article "African Tone-systems - A Reassessment" (1985), Kubik describes, from African musicians' viewpoints, the ways in which they conceptualise their tone systems. As this article is one of very few which takes this viewpoint, I use it in the following paragraphs to identify means by which Namibian tonal systems can be understood.

Kubik (1985:32) cites Djenda who describes the most basic of tone concepts - pitch – in terms of hand-to-ground distance. When the hand is closest to the ground it indicates the highest tone ("smallest") and the distance furthest from the ground indicates the lowest tone ("biggest"). This concept of high as small and low as big is apparently widespread in Africa and is reflected in the musical terminology of numerous African languages. Because this is in direct opposition to the western concept of pitch, it is important to note for Namibian educators to note the difference.

In western music the variety of tones within a culture's store, and the way in which the tones interrelate, are described in terms of scales or modes. The *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (1970: 20) points out that there is no one African scale more idiomatic than the others. Moreover, scale structures are not necessarily the means by which African musicians order or conceptualise their tonal materials. Kubik cites Wachsmann who already pointed this out in 1957, saying:

16 Haacke, personal communications, Windhoek, 1996. Haacke has a video recording of this performance in his collection.

> Strictly speaking there is no scale which one could describe in unambiguous terms of physical definition, but there are tuning processes in the course of which corrections are made. Their trend can be described, and in favourable circumstances one can form a realistic picture of the pattern in the mind of the tuner. (Kubik, 1985: 31).

Tonal organisation or scales may be based on equidistant or isotonic steps. Equidistant heptatonic (seven-step) scales were found in older musical traditions of Owambo people in northern Namibia.[17] Tetratonic and occasional pentatonic scales are found among the !Kung and Ju/'hoan people (Olivier, 1994: 8; Kubik, 1985) and according to Andrew Tracey,[18] also in older forms of Khoekhoe music. Songs I have recorded in Thimbukushu and Rukwangali were mostly pentatonic and from observation it appears that most local Setswana songs are pentatonic as well, except for modern Setswana *konsertliedjies* which use the diatonic major scale. Different instruments organise their tones in different ways, for example the *otjihumba* in the north-west is tuned pentatonically, while the modern eighteen stave *silimba* in the north-east is tuned diatonically.

In present times the influence of the western diatonic major scale is strongly felt. The music of the Khoekhoe-speakers of western, central and southern Namibia demonstrates an assimilation of the major diatonic scale, as may be seen in the transcribed examples of songs recorded among these people.

- Tuning patterns

From the tunings of various instruments in various parts of Africa, certain common characteristics emerge: musicians tend to have a tuning pattern imprinted upon their memories; the use of verbal mnemonic patterns for tuning is not uncommon; these inner tuning models are musically enculturated; and tonal patterns may be conceived either in ascending or descending order, although those used in a descending pattern are more common (Kubik 1985: 33 - 35). An exception to this practice is the tuning of the *silimba* (xylophone) of the –Lozi people in the Caprivi region in Namibia. Here the tuning is done in reverse order, from the 'biggest' to the 'smallest' tone. This is evidenced by my recordings of an elderly

17 According to the work of Hugh Tracey (personal communications, Andrew Tracey, Windhoek 1990).
18 Workshop on transcriptions, Windhoek, 1990.

master *silimba* player, Mr Sikwalunga Mului, who tunes his instrument by playing simultaneous intervals, starting from 'big' to 'small' tones.[19]

Pitches are approximate, tuning of *silimba* not diatonic

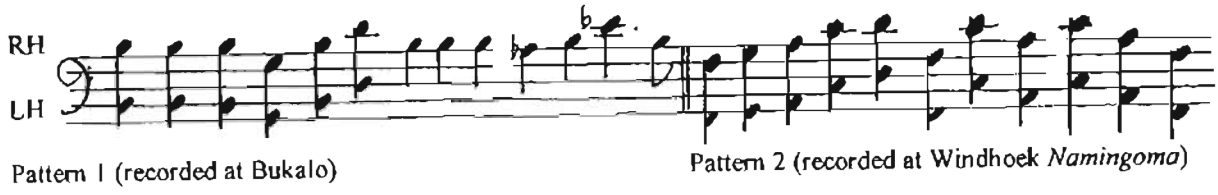


FIGURE 4.6 MR MULUI'S TUNING PATTERNS

Without knowledge of the tuning pattern for an instrument, an outsider would be unable to make, maintain or play the instrument.

- **Melodic arrangement within tonal systems**

As may be surmised from the typical cyclic form, vocal and instrumental melodies tend to be short, with many repetitions. Melodic contours are varied, although often moving from smaller to larger (higher to lower) tones. The tonal range of melodies depends on the instruments used, on enculturated scale patterns, and on vocal ranges.

Within the melodic structure, the interval sizes vary according to the way in which the 'scales' are conceived and structured. Olivier (1996: 8) states that the intervals used in Ju/'hoansi singing and yodelling are mostly fourths, fifths, and sevenths. Both Kubik (1985) and Kirby (1936 (a): 389) assert that chordal patterns may derive from musical bow harmonies, in particular those based upon partials over two fundamentals, such as the !Kung, /Auni and ≠Khomani tetratonic and Bantu-language hexatonic system. The particular range of partials used, i.e. their position within in the series of partials, determines the tonal-harmonic system, contributing to the distinctive sound of a particular musical culture. Hence the tetratonic system of !Kung of Namibia makes use of the partials 1, 2, 3 and 4 over two fundamentals

19 Recorded in Bukalo in 1993 and Windhoek 1995 during Namingoma performances.

being either a tone, a 'minor third' or a 'major third' apart. This creates their distinctive four-tone pattern - partials 3 and 4 over two fundamentals - partials 1 and 2 being octaves. These patterns result in three different phenotypes with different intervals. Kubik (1985: 44) gives the following examples:

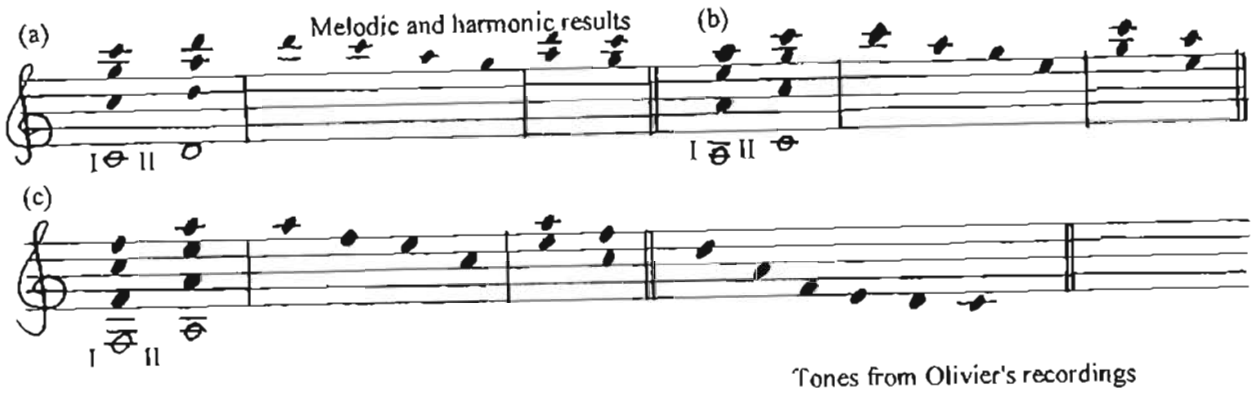


FIGURE 4.7 !KUNG AND JU/'HOAN TONE SYSTEMS

Kubik (*ibid.*: 45) mentions a "theoretical possibility of simultaneous application leading to an 'anchoring' between the three, a kind of merger which is hexatonic". In a musical culture thought to be related, this extension of tone system appears to be born out by Olivier's (1994: 94 - 150) Ju/'hoan transcriptions, none of which fit exactly into Kubik's patterns (a), (b), or (c).[20]

- **Margin of tolerance**

A typical characteristic of tone systems in Africa is that they function within certain margins of tolerance to tonal deviations (Kubik, 1985, Arom, 1991).[21] Despite fixed aural patterns for tuning systems, instrumentalists allow for a margin of tonal deviancy or approximation (either higher or lower pitch) within the instrument's tuning. In Namibia the margin of tolerance is culture-dependent and relies upon the nature of the particular tonal-harmonic system. This results in an instrument not always being tuned in the same way, nor is music always performed in (what westerners perceive as) the same key, even to the

20 I have discussed the tone systems of Saan people at greater length because there is more information available on the music of this group than any other Namibian culture.
21 This is not exclusive to Africa. Western brass ensembles are an example of a fairly wide margin of tolerance.

extent where a song may sound 'major' in one performance and 'minor' in another performance of the same song. The perception of scale patterns or pitch is also influenced by the timbre structure of individual notes on an instrument. Timbre on a wooden xylophone like the Caprivian *silimba* for example, is not uniform. In my recordings the *silimba* tunings on different instruments (but the same type, built by the same man) appear to vary by as much as a semitone. Indeed, the attachment of mirlitons[22] to the *silimba*'s resonators add a certain fuzziness to the timbre of the instrument which is much-prized, but which affects pitch perception. The secondary sistra[23] on lamellophones have a similar effect. A researcher may establish the margin of tolerance in a particular musical culture by means of many repeated recordings of the same or similar material and discussions with musicians of that culture.

4.3.2.3 Rhythmic characteristics

The rhythmic vibrancy and complexity of music in Africa is perhaps the musical parameter that has made the strongest impression on musicians and musicologists outside of Africa. I set out to give a brief overview of rhythmic structures relative to Namibian music/dance.

- Pulses

The rhythmic structure of most African musics is set over a system of regular pulses (often fast)[24] which form a realised or implied framework or reference for the musician. In various articles pulses are described as a small, equispaced, regularly recurring unit of time upon which patterns consisting of binary or triple units are superimposed or arranged (Kubik 1993 and Tracey 1988, 1990).[25] It is the combination or juxtaposition of twos, threes and fours within a single pattern that creates a characteristically complex rhythmic sound.[26]

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22 Tiny membranes of spider web or plastic covering a hole on a resonator. The edges are left slightly loose so as to vibrate and create a buzzing sound.
23 Small metal rings or 'buttons' attached to a metal staple on a lamellophone in such a way as to rattle and buzz when the instrument is played.
24 South African Zulu music of the older tradition is an exception in that the primary pulses tend to be slow.
25 This should not be confused with the way Arom (1991: 92) and Olivier (1996) use the term pulse, that is as a unit which may be split into smaller parts of two, three or four.
26 The juxtaposition of two against three is usually referred to as hemiola in musicological studies.

- Reference Beats

Meter, as it is understood in western music, is not a characteristic of traditional musics in Namibia. In this regard Kubik states:

> Metric patterns as a basis for motional form are usually not a feature of African music or are of subordinate importance. Accordingly, when learning to play African musical instruments, unlike the custom in Western music schools, one does not beat time. (Kubik, in Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979: 225).

While the coincidence of pulses in different vocal or instrumental parts may create a sense of stressed and unstressed beats, individual musicians do not appear to conceptualise their parts according to these beats. Beats are most likely to be articulated in accompanying dance movements. Time units are therefore all of equal value in terms of metric sense. Beat (or emphasis) is created not by division into bars or measures, but through the junction of concurrent patterns. This common junction reveals the rhythmic structure to the listener. Chernoff's (1979: 44 - 56) descriptions of polyrhythms (which he calls polymeter) in Ghanaian drumming patterns are most helpful in this regard. He confirms that it is the ways in which patterns combine, and the practice of staggered entrances (called 'interlocking' by Kubik) which make the rhythms sound complex to untrained ears. Hand-clapping, dancers' feet, combined with the drumming and singing all contribute to the rhythmic ('metric') base of the music. The example below illustrates junctions between drumming patterns in *nyakasanga*, the first part of a spiritual divining and healing.[27]

X = reference beats (the dance is structured on the 4 slow beats)

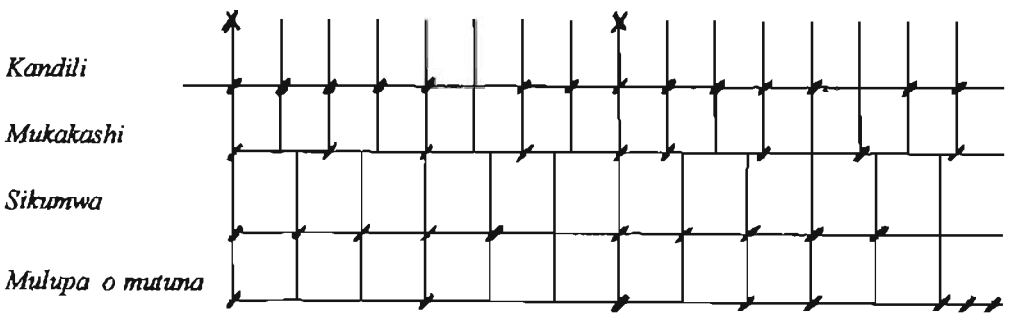


FIGURE 4.8 *NYAKASANGA* DRUMMING PATTERNS

27 See also chapter 5, the first event transcribed.

In the Ju/'hoansi music of eastern Namibia both isochronous (regular meter or common beat) and nonisochronous structures are found (Olivier, 1994: 8). The 2:3 and 3:4 ratio is fairly common in longer units. By having different patterns occurring at the same time, for example 3 and 5 pulses set against 4 and 4 or 2 and 6, a vertical 'polyrhythm' is created (see Fig. 4.9).

FIGURE 4.9 'VERTICAL' POLYRHYTHM

The interplay of different rhythmic patterns in Namibian music is very often found in the clapping patterns which may range from relatively 'simple' to complex, e.g. the Ju/'hoan patterns below (Fürniss & Olivier 1996: schema 46):

n≠aìgò or Mamba songs

Beats	1			2		
pulses	1	2	3	4	5	6
Claps group 1			/			/
Claps group 2	//			//		

≠oah or Giraffe songs

Beats	1			2			3		
pulses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Claps group 1		/				/		/	
Claps group 2	//			//			//		

g!ò'é or Oryx songs

Beats	1			2			3			4			5		
Pulses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Claps group 1	/			/					/			/			
Claps group 2	//			//			//			//			//		

tamah or Melon songs

Pulses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Claps group1	/		/		/		/		/		/		
Claps group 2	//		//		//		//		//			//	
Claps group 3	/		/			/		/		/		/	
Claps group 4	//		//		//			//			//		

FIGURE 4.10 JU/'HOAN CLAPPING PATTERNS

In rhythmic structure, as in the tonal structure of vocal music, language plays a significant role. The language provides naturally stressed points. Other phonetic and semantic factors may also create rhythmic accentuation in the music, for example when a singer emphasises a syllable or word. These may be referred to as syllabic rhythms.

- Time lines or periods

In musical traditions of Africa, time structures are based upon the recurrence of time-lines or periods, that is, a temporal section of music which recurs at similar intervals (Kubik, 1993; Arom, 1989). These short patterns are based on a "division of time into cyclical units of equal duration" (Arom, 1991: 20). Kubik (1993: 73) describes time-line patterns as "structured cycles of strokes mostly at one pitch level of penetrating quality .... used...as a complex 'time-keeper'". Such time-line patterns appear to relate to mnemonic patterns in the minds of musicians, rather than to 'beats'. Periods or time-lines commonly range from four to twenty-four 'beats' (junctions of pulses or stressed pulses) sub-divided into twos, threes or fours. Entry points into a time-line may differ. Below is an example of a time-line.

(Vertical lines are Pulses)

(16) 

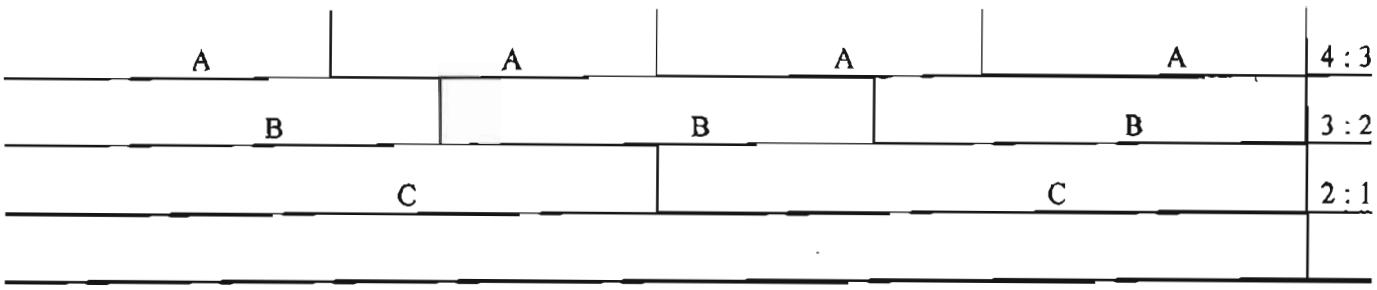
mukakashi stick pattern in *nyakasanga*

FIGURE 4.11 TIME LINE

A combination of more than one kind of time-line or period results in what Arom refers to as a macro-period:

> [T]he cycle resulting from the superposition of periods of different dimensions, all of which are smaller than the dimension of the macro-period. Such is the case with two or more periods in a 2:3 and/or 3:4 ratio. The macro-period then provides the sole point of junction that is common to all the superposed periods. (Arom 1989: 92)

Arom's example is cited below.



* The lowest line is the macro-period

FIGURE 4.12 MACRO-PERIOD

- **Cycles**[28]

A cycle is the unit created by the combination of the elementary pulsation, beats, and the basic musical 'theme' (Kubik 1993: 69). This usually includes the statement of the leader and the reply of the chorus, both set against the common frame of the pulsation. The cycle may be repeated any number of times in the course of a song. Songs may contain more than one cycle of different lengths. Notations usually state the number of pulses covered in the basic cycle at the start of the notation as an encircled figure, e.g. (48)

- **Rhythmic patterns**

The importance of patterns in the structure and perception of rhythm should not be underestimated. The transcriptions that follow are all discussed in terms of patterns. A pattern may be defined as the longest consecutively repeating sequence (Kubik, in Blacking & Kealiinohomoku, 1979: 223). Patterns are further defined by a starting point, an insertion point (where others join in), length and internal structure (pulses), and relation to other patterns (*ibid.*: 225). Musicians learn and remember their parts in the form of mnemonic patterns. A Caprivian drummer, therefore, learns to play the pattern for a particular dance (*nyakasanga*) on a particular drum (*sikumwa*) as 'kitiki ndinki'. For the same dance the *kandili* pattern would be 'kilindingili kindi', but this drummer is allowed a certain scope for improvisation. There is a distinct relationship among the different patterns which may be sounding at the same time. A single drum pattern, therefore, makes no 'sense' by itself, but is experienced as part of the unified complex. Common

28 Not to be confused with the term cyclical, which refers to the structure of the song, i.e. the song is repeated in its entirety.

rhythmic patterns include the *dochmiac* in its different versions. Combinations of the dochmiac are commonly found in -Himba and -Zemba clapping patterns in north-western Namibia (see figure 4.13 below).

a) An *ondjongo* clapping pattern

dochmiac

b) An *omutjopa* clapping pattern

dochmiac

FIGURE 4.13 OVAHIMBA CLAPPING PATTERNS

Patterns often interlock. Interlocking refers to a relative (internalised) pulsation that does not coincide with that of other instrumentalists in the group. This may occur in both vocal and instrumental parts - that is, some players or singers have patterns that fall in between the pulses of others. Drummers may stagger their entrances so that their rhythmic patterns interlock - each one is referring to a relative beat and not a common beat. Examples of interlocking patterns are found in Ovahimba singing. Members of the culture, through long familiarity, know exactly which aspects of the total sound picture to listen for in order to execute their roles.

Kubik suggests that "patterns are understood as 'themselves' and in conjunction with one another" (in Blacking & Keali'nohomoku, 1979: 225). He goes further to suggest that much of what has been described in terms of rhythm patterns, are in fact movement, or motional patterns. The difference between the two is that while rhythm patterns imply sound, movement patterns also include phenomena without sound. This once again underscores the point that Namibian music is not sound alone. In drumming, for example, the striking action is as important as the rhythm. In the Caprivi a drummer[29] describes

29 Dominic Lunenge, personal communication, Windhoek, 1995.

drumming firstly in terms of hand action and shape, position, and striking distance and only then in terms of rhythmic pattern to be played. He also describes the 'lead' drum part purely in terms of the dance movements. The sounds made by the movements of the dancers interact with other musical sounds to create the complete picture. The close relationship of music to dance, therefore, often dictates the rhythmic structure, particularly in terms of drumming patterns.

- Tempo

One result of the rhythm-movement interrelationship is the constancy of tempo in most Namibian music. As music is meant to be danced, there are only very slight variations in tempo in the course of a performance or between one performance of a specific music/dance and another. Furthermore, constancy of tempo is essential for interlocking to take place. Built into the older traditions is a strong 'metronome' sense, although certain dances may take place at a faster tempo than others. For example, in my recordings *kayowe* (the last section of a -Lozi healing) functions on significantly faster pulses than *nyakasanga* (the first section). It is only in certain forms, such as syncretised church music and other acculturated forms, that one finds tempo variations such as a slowing down (ritardando) at the end of a piece of music.

4.3.2.4 Qualities of sound

The distinctive qualities and colours of music in Namibia differ from one region to another. One of the most distinctive qualities is vocal timbre. Vocal techniques include a relaxed open-throated sound (common amongst male singers, but also found amongst female Ovahimba singers); a tight, constricted sound (commonly found among women); shouting, crying, humming, yodelling, ululation, grunting, whooping, and imitating animal sounds. Yodelling (interspersing normal voice with falsetto tones) is unique to Ju/'hoansi singing in Namibia. Ululation is common in our northern music, while shouting and whooping is heard in the *tcòqmà* dance of Ju/'hoan men, and the *Namastap* of Khoekhoegowab. Whooping, imitating animal sounds, sustained notes and a 'shivery' humming is common in songs of Himba and Herero people. The emphasis on bass resonance is not as strong in Namibian music as in the

isicathamiya tradition of South Africa.[30] In Damara *konsertliedjies* a high ringing (falsetto) voice-tone amongst male singers is valued.

In terms of the qualities of Namibian instrumental sounds, I use the well-known Hornbostel-Sachs system of classification,[31] although it may well be that the system does not truly coincide with the classification system of members of particular cultures, as Djenda suggests (1996: 18).[32] The Hornbostel-Sachs system classifies instruments in terms of the method by which sound is produced. It includes chordophones, where sound is produced through the vibration of a taut string (guitars, bows, pluriarcs, etc.); membranophones, where sound is produced by the striking or vibrating of a taut membrane (drums and mirlitons); idiophones, where sound is produced through the manipulation of an object which consists of a resonant material (sticks, shakers, xylophones, lamellophones, etc.); and aerophones, where the sound is produced by bringing air into motion (flutes, horns, bull-roarers, etc.).

In Namibia idiophones and membranophones are the most common traditional instruments still found today, although one finds chordophones, such as the plucked and scraped bows in the more isolated rural areas. Iron hoe blades, adzes, shakers, sticks, rattles, woodblocks, bells, lamellophones and a single form of xylophone are the most common idiophones in Namibia.[33] Drums are only common in the northern wooded areas. They are usually conical single-headed pegged drums, played in groups of different sized drums for timbre variation. The generic term for drum in the northern areas is *ongoma*. Friction drums are also used in the north. In present times aerophones are rarely seen, although reed-pipe ensembles were documented among the Nama people of the south earlier this century, and seen in one Damara ensemble this past decade. Horns and flutes are still occasionally found in the north-west. Young -Himba men wear *ohiva* (small stopped flute without finger-holes) around their necks. Different kinds of horns were used not only in curing and initiation ceremonies, but also in ceremonial cattle gatherings and war. Bullroarers

30 See Erlmann's (1990) description of the loading of bass voice parts in *isicathamiya*.
31 See Sachs, 1942.
32 Namibian classification systems may be a matter to be followed up in future research.
33 See Mans (1997), Norborg (1987), Kirby (1968)

(*odila*) were also used by -Kwaludhi in a lovely symbolism in which a group of men (*ekandjo*) would whirl bullroarers, representing the sound of huge birds flying over the country, for good luck and rain. The characteristic timbre of each of these instruments has contributed to the meanings and symbolisms which have become attached to them. Some instruments have secondary sistra and mirlitons added to create the required buzzing effect.

Good instrumentalists are often those who are able to coax a variety of tone colours from their instruments. This is the case with the playing of the *mulupa o mutuna* in the Caprivi region as well as *omburumbumba* in Kunene region. Large instrumental ensembles are not common in Namibian musics. The larger groups include three drums and a friction drum, a set of shakers or hoe blades, a whistle, and possibly a xylophone. Yet, combined with song, clapping and dance, the ensemble becomes large.

One seldom finds strong variation and shading of tone intensity, except that created by the addition or absence of participants. Some performances however, are required to generate power (e.g. spiritual ceremonies) through strong music. Intensity levels increase with the build-up of excitement and energy. In contrast, self-delectative music played on bows and lamellophones, is quiet and of low intensity. Similarly a lullabye is sung quietly while a spiritual invocation or patriotic jubilation would require more intensity (or 'loudness').Thus the purpose and meaning of the music dictates the strength of tone.

4.3.3 Characteristics of dance structure

Despite the fact that there is such an integral link between music and dance in Africa, the latter has received little attention from scholars. I shall attempt to extract certain characteristics of Namibian dances from areas with which I have had contact, either by means of personal visits and recordings, or through the use of secondary sources. I shall approach the topic on two levels. I shall firstly use general dance literature to arrive at a basis for structural analysis. I then apply these principles to Namibian dance, thereby providing teachers with a tool for understanding local styles. I do not lay claim to

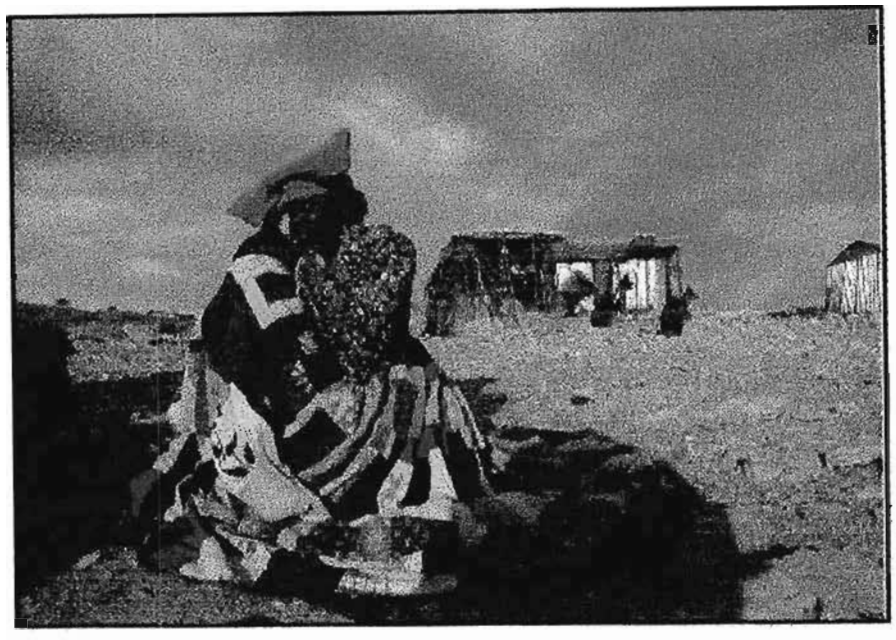
comprehensiveness or detailed analysis, but merely to an attempt to provide a vehicle for conceptualisation.

4.3.3.1 Meaning and function

Visual artists like to speak of 'form and function'. In a sense, this is applicable to dance as well. Dance consists of meaningful, culturally patterned movement sequences. It is given form by the function from which it arises, and the meanings that it encapsulates. As a socio-cultural phenomenon, dance uses the body-in-action in distinctive patterns of performance. It is a "system of ordering movement, a cumulative set of rules or range of permissible movement patterns.. [and it]... is a vehicle through which culture is learned." (Hanna, 1979: 30). The result is an infinite number of possible movement combinations from which a particular culture chooses only a few. Social values find expression in dance, thereby giving dance deeper meaning than merely rhythmic movement. Meaning is derived from the total cultural environment and dance is given important functions relating to cultural value systems. In many societies dance "metaphorically presents (sic) the divine world, the physical world and humanity in all its guises as told and re-told in local mythologies" (De Aguilar, 1997: 130).

Dance is influenced by the natural world. Cultures are formed and informed by the physical environment in which they function. As a physical expression of life, dance is a reflection of the environment. Tiérou (1992: 23 - 26) claims that even basic stances and dancing positions are an adaptation to a life lived in the forest, the plains, the coast, or the mountains. In rural areas of Namibia, dance traditions illustrate this more visibly than do urban dances. For example, the water scarcity of the arid regions of Namibia affects energy expenditure, and thereby contributes to the modest range (size) of movements, and the appeal of dust lifted by foot movements. Where nature does not provide enough wood for drums, alternatives are derived from available sources. For example, instead of a drum, Herero women performing *outjina* make use of a large plank (*otjipirangi*) strapped to one foot. This is thumped on the ground and approximates a deep, slow drum beat and forms an integral part of a dancer's movement actions.[34]

34 Nama people in the south used to manufacture clay pots covered with skin (*//x'ay//'e*) for use as drums to accompany dance.



(Photo: T. Pupkewitz)

PLATE 4.1 A TRADITIONAL HEHERO DRESS (INFORMAL)

The typical occupations of people in the area are also commonly stylised into dance forms. The hunting practised by !Kung-speaking men is not only stylised in dance movements, but is also taken up in the names of music-dance repertoires, for example Eland, Giraffe or Elephant songs. Ju/'hoansi make use of objects from the environment in dance-games like the Melon dance. The occupation of cattle-herder is widely spread across the country. The motion of the animal is concretised in the head and arm movements of Herero women in *outjina*. To properly perform *ondjongo* one should be an owner of cattle. Sometimes a man may crouch on hands and knees, while his wife, hand on his head, moves around him indicating cattle ownership and care. In urban communities the meaning of dance is less apparent,[35] yet urban dance retains many of the social functions apparent in rural communities.

Values relating to power and youthfulness, what Thomson (1974: 5) terms ephebism, are expressed through dance. Dancers, regardless of age, find ways to express this power within the "streams of energy

35 See Lange's discussion on the changes in dance which occur between rural and urban practices (1977).

which flow from drums or other sources of percussion" (*ibid.*). This is achieved by skilfully maintaining the equilibrium between musical relationships, by using the percussive strength of the body (section by section), and by moving with a suppleness which resides in characteristic postures such as bent knees and 'oscillations' of the body to the music. Therefore an older, heavier person may be as able as a young person to express ephebism or youthful power in dance.

(Photo: T. Pupkewitz)

PLATE 4.2 EPHEBISM IN CAPRIVIAN DANCE

Related to, yet contrasting with ephebism, is the meaning of 'coolness' in dance. This calls for dancers not giving in to wildness, or loss of control, in their dance. For dance to be cool, there must be composure, unity with other dancers and participants, smoothness, and usually, an unsmiling face. Therefore the body performs 'hot', young dancing with a 'cool' unsmiling face, avoiding eye contact with onlookers. This is apparent in almost all Namibian dance, from Hambukushu dance where eyes are fixed upon the ground and face is 'expressionless' while shoulders and neck are rapidly, 'hotly' vibrated, to Orlam *wals* where partners look fixedly past one another's shoulders without smiles, yet their feet may be executing fancy steps and onlookers may be shouting humorous comments. The young men in some Namibian Tswana dances use movements with a small range, as they need to look 'cool'. The girls, on the other hand, use movements like stamps and hip sways with a greater range, as they need to look energetic

and show ephebism. In N*amastap* the opposite occurs. Women dance with smaller movements, taking smallish quick steps to move across the ground, while men use bigger movements, clicking heels and hopping.

The meanings inherent in Namibian dance relate to the event and function with which it is associated. Events include various rituals such as spiritual ceremonies and transformative or initiatory events, seasonal celebrations, social events, and political events. Dance traditions are considered to be given by ancestors and are thus an important way of communicating with kin of the past as well as the future. Thompson (1974: xii), Dagan (1997: 122-127) and Tiérou (personal communications, Windhoek, 1996) see dance as a blending of arts - movement, sculpture, colour, sound, communication. It is a way to span time and space. Dagan says: "Dance in Africa is the domain where body, mind, and soul are united, where past and present, vision and reality, the sacred and the profane are intertwined." (Dagan 1997: 122). Each performance situation is laden with meaning for the participants - musicians, dancers and onlookers. The meanings attached to dance(s) are influenced by historical relationships among communities - in terms of events, individuals, and communities. Because of the historical relationship and kinship ties between, for example, Ovahimba and Ovaherero (see chapter 5 – Dance-game in the Kunene region) the values and meanings attached to their dances and music reflect traces of these ties, even if the dances themselves seem superficially different.

Group relations among participants is an important aspect of Namibian dance. Group participation does not imply that there are no special roles for certain performers, or exclusions, or that participation is a requirement. Participation in the dance is voluntary and is usually dancer-initiated. But, a fundamental value of Namibian dance lies in the communal expression and sharing. When certain performers dance alone, the implication is not that of a solo like in western theatre dance. In theatre dance, a solo emphasises the individuality of the performer and bestows a certain elite status upon that performer. In Namibian dance the person dancing alone (a healer, a volunteer, a drunk, someone in turn) remains part of the group. There is a unity between singers, musicians and other onlookers. They are 'with' the dancer,

who in fact has no dance without them. This does not mean to imply that the qualities of an excellent dancer are not noticed or valued. On the contrary, the ability to dance and play a musical instrument(s) well is an important requirement for a healer, for example. Hence, when he performs, he praises his own speed, agility, and prowess without undue modesty. But throughout such a performance there remains a cohesion, a unity among all participants.

There are certain participant exclusions to dance, such as dances that are meant for only one gender (e.g. *omupembe*) and dances that are secret. *Tcòqmà* is an initiation/transformative dance for young men, and no women are meant to observe this dance. Thus the character of a dance may be defined by participant exclusions. All participants may relate to one another as equals, or there may be gender divisions activated by means of lines, such as the gender-separate lines in *epera* and *shiperu*.

4.3.3.2 Structure

Dance consists of relationships between movements as they occur in space and through time. Thus dances have a spatial (visual) design as well as a time design (Adshead, 1988: 42). The time design relates to the aural aspects of music, to performance time, to relationships (in time) between dancers. Spatial design includes the ground plan, the shapes and modalities of the dance.

With reference to the time design of Namibian dances, a structure exists in terms of the entrances and exits of dancers. It is vital for a dancer to enter the dancing space at the correct moment. In the case of *oudano*, this moment cannot be later than pattern (b) in my transcription (see chapter 5), although an earlier entrance at pattern (a), the introduction, is possible. The aural patterns are structured in such a way that members of the culture know exactly when to enter. Similarly, the dancers exit when one song-cycle is complete. In *ondjongo*, the entrance (and the identity of the entrant) is not as specific. Participants wait until somebody seizes the right moment for him/her. The exit point, however, is determined by the *ondjongo*-song structure. It is important for all participants that these points of entry and exit are known and adhered to, otherwise the dance would be spoiled.

The rhythmic and temporal elements are crucial to most Namibian dance. This refers both to the speed at which actions take place (tempo) and the rhythmic structure of the dance. The rhythmic structure of the music is reflected in the dance, thus the complexities of a particular musical rhythmic structure may also be danced. This may include interlocking and movement in a multiplicity of pulses. In *oudano* the tempo of movements is very fast (X = 176), although the older version takes place at a more moderate tempo. In the Melon game of the Ju/'hoansi, fast actions are crucial to the aesthetics of the dance-game. In this game a girl enters the circle of singing and clapping women (girls). While executing a two step motion, a melon (*tsamma*) is tossed to her. She catches it and in the course of her dance actions, she tosses the melon into the air with a flick of the wrist. The next person in line has to catch it and toss it up in turn. In recordings[36] I have observed, I was not able to spot the exchange of the melon until the third person took over. The tossing and catching of the melon takes place according to a fixed rhythmic and movement structure.

In terms of spatial design, the characteristics in Namibian dance are as varied as the particular styles. Most dance takes place within a space surrounded by a circle or semi-circle of people. In general there is a prevalence of curves and spirals. This is so in other parts of Africa as well.

> Curved lines, circles, cylinders - which to Africans are characterised by many circles of the same diameter piled on top of one another - spirals, figures which have a helical or ellipsoid form are all integral parts of African culture. (Tiérou 1992: 33).

Circular shapes in dance echo the traditional circles of the village or compound enclosure (although modern enclosures in the Okavango and Kunene regions are sometimes rectangular), and the circle of people around the fire, clapping and singing. The exceptions are the festive dances of the Okavango region, such as the *epera* and *dipera,* where the design involves two lines facing one another, with individuals dancing to and fro in the central space. Even here however, a dancer tends to draw spatial circles either in combination with others or around herself (see analysis of *epera* in chapter 5). *Konsertliedjies* are also initially constituted in formal lines, usually four, with two lines of women in front

36 Recorded by E. Olivier in the Nyae Nyae area, 1995, 1996.

and two lines of men at the rear. As the song-dance progresses, they leave this formation and initiate a linear movement circling those who remain standing, until all take up their initial positions once again. Modern performances on stage tend to restructure dance shapes into lines and semi-circles so as to face the audience.

The modality of Namibian dances may involve a solo dance (e.g. *nyakasanga, kayowe, ondjongo*), twos or threes (*oudano, ongandeka, omupembe*), small groups (older type of *oudano* for example in Ombalantu uses three to nine dancers), couples holding on to one another (Orlam *wals* or *langarm*, also in *Namastap*) or larger groups (*konsertliedjies, Namastap, /geis*).

4.3.3.3 Characteristic use of the body

Located in culture, occupations and aesthetics, dances reflect characteristic ways in which bodies are used. These include typical postures, gestures and locomotions.

Most Namibian dances have what Thompson (1974: 10) calls "a get-down" quality. This refers to the downwards direction and quality of many dance motions, moving closer to the earth. This characteristic use of the body is reflected in many of the basic positions, the bent knees, the strong stamps, the downwards focus of the eyes. It also echoes the often descending melodic patterns. Dagan describes the basic use of the body as "the natural bends" (Dagan, 1997: 103). By this she means the bent knees, widely spread feet, bent elbows, bent torso, pelvic motions and head bends. The combinations of these 'bends' are endlessly variable. Some of the possibilities seen in Namibian dance are discussed later.

Force, or effort-flow, is characteristic to a particular dance or dancer. This refers to the amount of energy expended, as well as the changes that occur in energy expenditure. In very different ways, Namibian cultures tend to value a forceful performance, but at the same time value control and 'coolness'. Dances such as *ondjongo* (in the north-west) and *oudano* (north) and *omupembe* (north) emphasise force in terms of the energetic stamping of feet, strong arm movements, high lifting of knees, and elevations. In *tcòqmà*

in the Nyae Nyae area stamps are forceful but the amplitude is small. The result is that movements appear more conservative. In Herero women's dances the stamp of the *otjipirangi* (plank) is strong, but other movements are almost tentative. The force of *Namastap* actions would fall somewhere in between the extremes of, for example, *ondjongo* and *outjina*.

The importance of using the body in such a way that one is 'looking good' or smart when dancing or playing musical instruments is typical. This has to do with the intensity, skill and style with which a characteristic movement component may be executed. In this sense a dancer projects those qualities which the event requires, for example a 'smart' dancer can project sexual attractiveness, or mystical power, or social status. The way this occurs relates to the dance style. 'Smart' dancing may involve cutting off a movement sharply (*Namastap* involves stretch and contract), or holding a particular posture until it calls for comment (for example in *ongandeka*), moving with rapidity and dexterity (*omupembe* and *oudano*), or moving with flow and swing (*shiperu*).

For a discussion of specific ways the body is used in dances, I draw on the work of Alphonse Tiérou (1992)[37] to identify ways characteristic to Namibian dances.

1) Basic body movements or stances

Tiérou (1992) defines ten basic movements in African dance. I discuss those I have observed in Namibian dance.

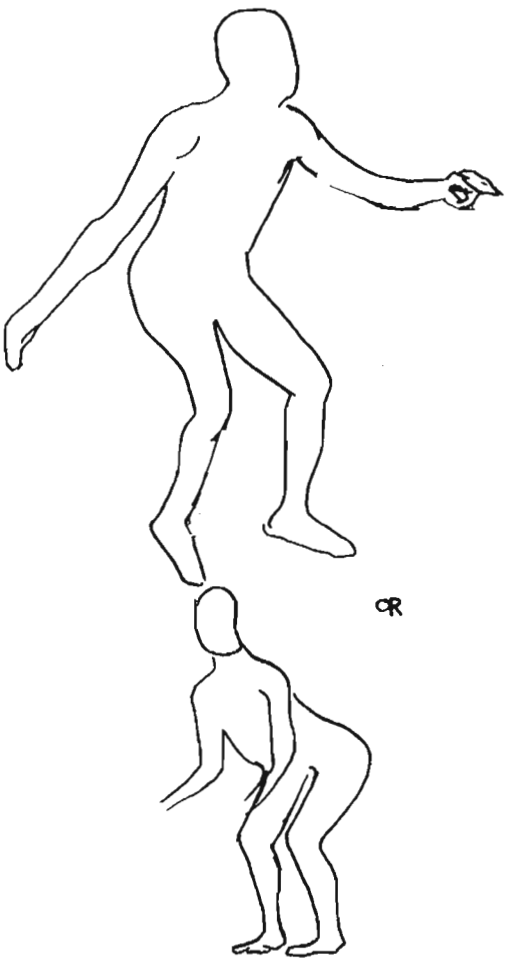
37 *Dooplé. The Eternal Law of African Dance*. As a citizen of Cote d'Ivoire Tiérou was instructed by the Masques de Sagesse (Masks of Wisdom) and therefore has insight into the conceptualisation of dance in that part of Africa. His study describes the central place of dance in African societies in terms of social structures and spiritual beliefs. He goes on to identify important performance genres, ten basic movements, and basic techniques. He supports his arguments and observations with photographs from many rituals, as well as examples of African sculpture and rock paintings which illustrate the basic movements and techniques.

- Basic 'earth' position (*Dooplé*[38])

This is the mother-position, according to Tiérou, around which the other movements gravitate. Because of its connectedness and rootedness in the earth, I have called it basic earth position. The dancer stands with knees bent, thighs slightly apart. Feet are parallel, flat and about a hip-width apart. The torso is bent forwards from the hip joint. Buttocks and pelvis are relaxed and arms are either next to or slightly in front of the body, or raised. This attitude is claimed to be healthful, natural, stable, balanced, bracing and economic. It facilitates recovery, elevations and backward movements as well as the 'normal' range of movements.

> This position, which is peculiar to African dance, is very aesthetic and does not require any superfluous contractions; on the contrary it produces an extraordinary quality of relaxation which is a guarantee of the dancer's symbiotic state with his environment (*ibid.*: 53)

All the Namibian dances I describe commence from and work through this position, although there are periods when it is relinquished for a different one. Generally speaking, the basic earth position is fundamental to Namibian dance.



Basic earth position

- Secondary 'earth' position (*Soumplé*)

In this position the knees are also bent with feet flat and parallel on the ground, but feet, legs and thighs are closer together. This allows the dancer, according to Tiérou, to accumulate or dispense energy during the course of the

38 Tiérou's term in the Ouelou language. In time appropriate terms should be identified in all the Namibian languages.

dance. In male dances among Ju/'hoan people, one finds this used with a small, rapid vibration movement of the legs and hardly any locomotion. While performing this rapid leg movement, a slow track is made through the sand. Dancers focus their eyes on their feet or the sand in front of their feet. Arms hang alongside the body - all energy is focussed on the legs. There are also points in other dances where the movement passes through this position.

Secondary earth position

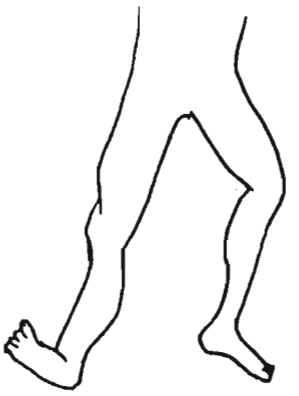
- One foot flat, one on toe (*Kagnioulé)*

In this movement the knees are bent, with feet flat and parallel on the ground, slightly less than a hip-width apart. Thighs are close together, but weight placement is on one foot only, so that the other foot may lift the heel and rest on the toe portion (demi-plié). In Tiérou's description the flexion of the knee is accentuated, with the knee of the supporting leg fitting snugly into the curve created by the other leg. In Namibian dances, such as Tswana dances and certain Ju/'hoan dances (*tcòqmà*) as well as *Namastap*, the accentuation is in the foot flexion, as forward locomotion does not allow for the knees to connect. The heel-up movement and simultaneous weight shift onto supporting leg is inclined to be a fairly sharp snap. This creates a rhythmic thump on the ground by both the toe section of the lifting foot and the heel section of the supporting foot. This is sometimes emphasised by knocking a walking stick on the ground to coincide with the movement.

One flat, one on toe

- Extended leg *(Djiétéba)*

This movement is, according to Tiérou, an invitation to the dance (*ibid.*: 61). It is dependent on *dooplé*, drawing from there its "strength, suppleness, fluidity and personality". From a position with bent knees and spaced flat feet, one leg takes the weight while the other extends to the side with a flexed foot. This position allows the hips more flexibility and accentuates an undulation of the torso from top to bottom. This movement is seen in Caprivian dance, illustrated in my recordings of *nyakasanga* (see video track 13).[39]



Extended leg

- Edge position *(Tchinkoui)*

From a starting basic earth position, the body weight is shifted onto the outside edge of for example, the right foot, while the left rolls onto its inner edge and the right hip is directed outwards. This rolling onto the sides of the feet may be seen in some individual performances of *Namastap*, where both feet may roll onto their outsides, or only one. I have also observed this in a performance of *konsertliedjies* by an older woman.

Edge position

- Turned-in position

. The feet are turned inwards, knees are bent. Big toes face one another, the legs may appear bow-shaped. Men dancing *Namastap* tend to favour a turned-in movement, both feet are placed on the toe portion, or ball of the foot. The weight is

39 Katima Mulilo, 1993.

on one foot, while the other is lightly tapped to the ground in this turn-in mode. Tiérou refers to a similar turned-in position, but on flat feet. He calls this *kouitchin*. This is a resting position, often taken in by pregnant women.

Individual Namibian dancers may be seen to rest or dance with turned in feet, yet I have not found the flat version to be common practice.

Turned-in position

- Knee-lift position

The dancer is balanced on one flat foot with knee bent, while the other leg is bent and lifted high. This position/movement, while common in Namibia, is not identified by Tiérou. The lifted foot is usually at knee height or higher. The torso is inclined forwards. While the knee is lifted, the lifted lower leg may remain static, or it may be swung in and out, for example. The lifting (up movement) of the leg is emphasised in some dances e.g. *oudano*, while the downwards motion is emphasised in others, e.g. *ondjongo*.

Knee-lift position

- Standing *(Neo)*

The last position does not really function as a movement but is a return to the position taken when not dancing - upright with arms dangling. This is the normal, universal standing and walking position of all human beings.

Standing

1) Feet

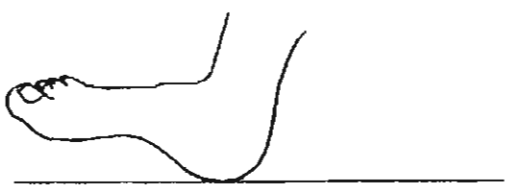
A variety of different placements of the feet are possible in conjunction with the body and legs described above. These include:

a) a flat placement of the foot on the ground:

This is common to most Namibian dance. It also appears extensively as stamps in Owambo dances such as *oudano* and in -Himba *ondjongo*. The flat foot may also be swept along the ground, either with a kind of swish, or as a small shift with body weight on that foot.

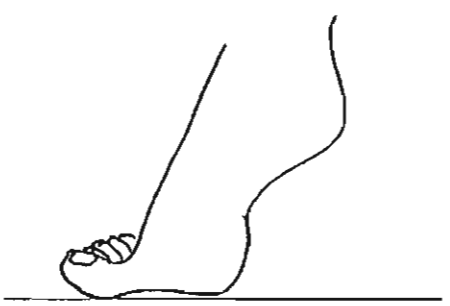
b) the pounding of the ground with the heel or with the outside edge of the foot:

This may be seen in *Nama-stap*, -Tswana dances, and *oudano*, among others.



c) the pounding of the ground with the underside of the toes:

This is also described as tapping in front of the other foot. In Namibian dances this is sometimes a strong, audible movement, seen in *oudano*. On other occasions, the toe placement is merely used to facilitate turns, as in -Gciriku *shiperu*.



d) heels slightly lifted:

Either one foot has the heel lifted with a pause (as in *Namastap*), or both feet perform on the ball of the foot for a sequence of movements (as in women's *epera* movements).

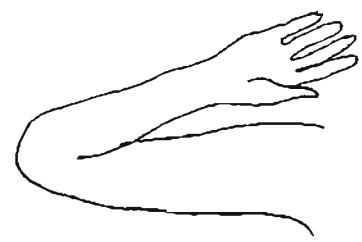
In general, feet have an almost intimate connection with the ground or the earth. For this reason, much Namibian dance seems to lose its impact when dancers perform on a cement or other indoor floor. The Saan dance mentioned earlier, in which a boy pushes a track or trail in the sand with his feet, would become completely meaningless when performed upon an ungiving floor. Although dances were traditionally performed with bare feet, indoor performers today (e.g. those playing *oudano)* wear shoes in order to create a good sound on hard floors.

3) **The head**

In most Namibian dance the head is carried in a position held fairly still and facing slightly downwards towards the ground. Exceptions to this practice are -Mbukushu dances where a slight forward head or chin movement accompanies the prominent shoulder movements. Herero women perform a similar but slower and more sustained head/chin movement that mirrors the movement of cattle heads when they are walking. In *epera* the dancing men turn their heads to face women on either side in turn, but continue to maintain a forward inclination (towards the ground). While dancing as the partner, the woman looks at the man over her shoulder. In *nyakasanga* and *kayowe* these movements involve tossing the head forward or sideways, or maintaining an inclined position for a short period. The healer's head movements, using *singalangala*, are central to the power of his performance, due to the potions residing in the head dress. The master drummer in northeastern areas also has a characteristic head position when 'getting into' the music. His head usually inclines towards the left shoulder, but with a lifted chin. The drummers I have observed, take this position when the dance is generating real energy, or when they move into the dancing circle while continuing their drumming.

4) **Hand and arm gestures**

Those I have observed include the following:



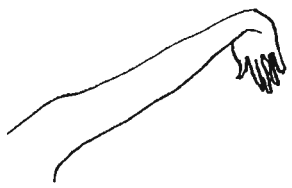
a) an open stretching of hand with palm facing outwards, both arms raised and bent:

   This may be seen in the arm movement of men in *epera* and *ongandeka*.

b) a close-fingered extension of the arm, hand in line with the arm, arm may be raised or hanging, seen in *oudano*.

c) an extended arm with close-fingered hand curving downwards at a right angle:

To be seen in *ongandeka*, when both hands may curve downwards, but arms are raised at different angles.



d) an extended arm with hand flexed upwards (outwards) at a right angle:

Typical in women's *epera* arms, where the base of hands touch or are held close, on extended lowered arms, with hands at almost right angles 'upwards', palms facing outwards. Also seen in *ongandeka.*

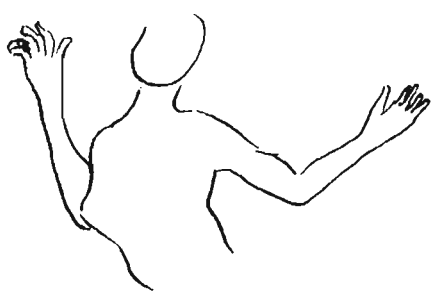
e) arms raised in a 'horn' pattern:

Arms are curved, elbows outwards, palms face down or outwards or inwards, depending on custom. The important commonality is the symbolisation of cattle horns. Seen in *epera, ongandeka, omuhiva, outjina.*

f) bent arms swing loosely and relaxed from side to side, crossing in front of and behind the body, hands relaxed:

This can be seen in *konsertliedjies, Nama-stap, shiperu, simbayoka.*

g) arms are bent at the elbow, with the hands and lower arm raised:



Seen in almost all Namibian dances at some point – *oudano, Namastap, ondjongo, omupembe,* and others.

h) a palm is placed flat on the ground:

This may be seen when a dancer is crouched on hands and knees (some *ondjongo* performances), also in urban 'street-dancing'.

Many dancers make use of musical instruments while dancing, for example hoe blades, adzes, shakers, rattles, and so forth. Thus in dances which are most likely to be laden with meaningful gestures, for example spiritual healings in the Kavango and Caprivi regions, healers make almost continuous use of shakers in both hands while dancing. This naturally dictates the movements of the arms. When using shakers in a dance, the arm movements tend to alternate, for example shake right, left, pause, repeat. In other dances the actual arm motions are of lesser importance, and function largely to facilitate balance or natural body rhythm, for example a sway where the arms move in opposite direction to the sway of the body. In *langarm* dancing the hand of the partner is held lightly, while the other hand either rests on the partner's back or shoulders in a relaxed manner, or the free arm is extended outwards while the partner performs a turn.

In *ongandeka*

In *ondjongo*

In *epera*

FIGURE 4.14 ARM POSITIONS IN RELATION TO THE BODY

5) Shoulders

In -Mbukushu and -Kwangali dances the shoulder movements are aesthetically very important. In -Mbukushu dance a woman raises and lowers her shoulders (shrugs) in rapid small movements, while her eyes remain almost hypnotically focussed on the ground. In a -Kwangali *epera* a girl's body is performing the steps in basic earth position, but her shoulders are either rapidly shaken alternately from side to side with a small motion, or lifted in a way similar to that of the -Mbukushu dancer. In *nyakasanga, liyala* and *kayowe*, shoulder movements (*makumbi*) are a central component of the dance. In other dances, however, shoulders may be of lesser importance or are not isolated as a characteristic.

6) Pelvis and hips

In many Namibian dances the lower torso is an important aesthetic focus. In *nyakasanga* and even more so in *kayowe* (see chapter 5) the skirt and the pelvis and hip movements that cause the skirt to move (*mashamba*) are vital to a good performance. In these dances it generally involves a pelvic contraction to throw the skirt up forwards, but may also involve sideways shakes of the hips. The term *mayimbwe* (Sisambyu) appears to be synonymous for both a type of healing dance and the graceful hip sways a dancer may make. Saan, Batswana, Nama and Damara female dancers like to perform a small step-together foot movement followed by a pelvic contraction. In *langarm* dances, on the other hand, enjoyment may be visible in the extension of the buttocks backwards with accompanying hip sways. The articulation of the lower torso may be isolated, or it may be balanced with the movement of the upper torso.

4.3.3.4 Characteristic movement components

The repeated use of a movement, for example, a jump, a stamp, or a turn, may qualify it as a characteristic component of a specific dance. This component may be repeated by the same or different dancers. Tracing such a component can help one to trace the structure and character of the dance via repetition and possible variation of that component. One may find a set relationship between two different components, the ways in which they are juxtaposed. In *omupembe*, the leap (over a standing man's head) is a characteristic component of that dance. Its combination or juxtaposition with the prefacing turn and

(small) elevation of the facing man is a variation and an addition to the basic leaping component. In *epera* the small, quick combination of three steps is a characteristic component, while the rapid vibration movements (created by alternate flexion of the knees) is a characteristic component of !Kung trance dances. In *ondjongo* the rapid forward rotation of bent arms (see (g) above) from both shoulder and elbow sockets is an important characteristic. These components do not stand in isolation, but are related to a multitude of other components, not all of which may be considered characteristic of that specific dance.

1) **Patterns**

Dances everywhere contain patterns. These patterns may become characteristic components of the dance. The dance patterns in Namibia rely on an aural-temporal structure. A dance pattern consists of a movement sequence, comparable with a time-line, or it may even be as long as a cycle in music. One can distinguish between patterns that are performed on the spot and patterns that travel. I illustrate my point by describing certain aspects of *oudano*, a -Kwanyama dance, which is analysed in more detail in chapter 5 (see video track10). In the modern *oudano* the first dance pattern is relatively unstructured in terms of actions, but the rhythm of the movement is fixed, as indicated on the extract below (Fig. 4.15). The second dance pattern or 'stanza' has fixed actions and is the one that characterises *oudano*. It is considered the real start to the dance, while the first may be treated as a kind of introduction, sometimes without any dance actions. The dance consists of three to five such patterns, depending on circumstance, performers and music.

Kinemes:

○ right foot full stamp

● left foot full stamp

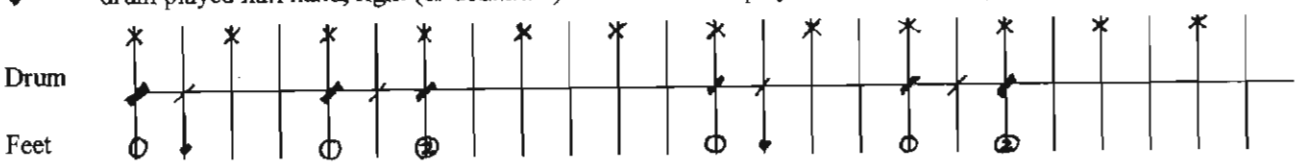
② hop strongly on both feet, hip-width apart

lift right foot with energy to knee height, weight on left

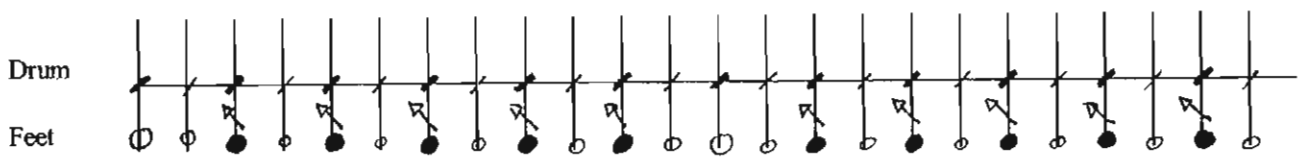
lift left foot with energy to knee height, weight on right

drum played half hand, right (or dominant)

drum played half hand, left (or non-dominant)



***Oudano* dance pattern 1**



***Oudano* dance pattern 2**

FIGURE 4.15 DANCE PATTERNS

2) Repetition, variation and improvisation of patterns

Patterns in dance are created by means of repetition and variations, such as elaboration of an idea, inversion, addition, subtraction or 'free' improvisation. In fig. 4.15, pattern 2 consists of repetitions of the stamp-lift component, and is the characteristic pattern of the dance. The movement in pattern 1 is a rhythmic variation on the stamping component of pattern 2. Structural repetition and variation appear on a larger scale as well. The repeated entrances of two dancers, each performing a 'verse' of the song containing the set of patterns is an example. While certain patterns are standardised (for example pattern 2), ample scope for variations and improvisations exist within the rhythmic structure of the other patterns.

Tiérou (1992: 19) considers improvisation to be a law of African dance repetition - "the new must be born from the old". Improvisation arises from repetition, and is not based on spontaneity, he says, but "the creative imagination of the improviser who applies himself to a given subject known to everybody. The

spectators judge it as connoisseurs." (*ibid.*) The nature of improvisation in the *oudano* shown above, is to explore given components characteristic to the dance (here the use of stamps) and then to exploit this movement to its fullest within the pattern. According to Tiérou elders and connoisseurs consider collective improvisation to be the most refined and enjoyable form of improvisation. In this form there is an awareness of partners, so that dancers do not move without any constraints, but take account of the basic patterns and the actions of partners. In this way a dancer almost reflexively executes a gesture, posture or movement which complements that of the partner. In the *omutjopa* and *ondjongo* dances of the northwest, one is able to see this collective improvisation function in a delightful fashion (see video track 11 and 12). A young man enters the circle and performs his actions. Towards the end of his pattern (it appears usually to be 8 beats before the end) a second man enters the circle, and even though they perform without facing one another, they execute improvised but complementary or even matched movements to complete the cycle.

3) Corner points

This refers to changes in the spatial ground pattern through locomotion, or changes in body space or state (Hanna, 1979). Certain popular modern dances such as *kwasa kwasa* take this notion almost to an extreme by creating moments at which it almost appears as though the dancer is falling, at which point he quickly recovers with a weight transfer. In *nyakasanga* there are numerous corner points, for example, the extensions and return of a leg, the sudden changes of direction and changes of level, from an upright stance to movements on the knees. In *ondjongo* the player moves energetically in a direction for one or two sets of the game rhythmic pattern, reaches a corner point, turns and returns to her/his original position. This change of direction is a characteristic of the dance. Similar corner points are also characteristic components of the *kayowe* dance, for example starting from a pattern of pelvic thrusts with forward moving steps, suddenly falling to the ground on his back and after two or three spasmic body contractions, hopping back onto his feet. This is a transformation of level - from medium to low and back to medium. Other dances make use of less radical but regular changes of direction or flow.

With the above discussion of some of the characteristics of Namibian music and dance, we can now proceed to more detailed accounts and transcriptions of events. The framework and terminology given above serves as a means for naming and describing aspects of the music and dance under discussion in the next chapter.

5 DOCUMENTATION, TRANSCRIPTION AND TEACHING OF SELECTED NAMIBIAN EVENTS

In this section I provide descriptions and transcriptions of specific materials gathered. These are described as events, and range from children's songs and games to celebrations and a spiritual healing. In all cases except the *konsertliedjies*, I have selected only one song from often extended repertoires relating to the event. The songs given are, therefore, not the only ones sung for the occasion, but represent one song template of the genre. Within the context of the event with its particular musical repertoire, different songs with different texts and melodies, could serve the same purpose as that described in this chapter. The dance would, however, remain essentially the same.

The first genre described is that of *konsertliedjies* or *aksieliedjies*. This is notated in western conventional notation. The other music/dance events are preceded by an explanation or guidelines for the reading of the pulse notation I have used. These guidelines can serve as a brief theoretical lay-out for the teaching and learning of pulse notation in schools. Examples pertaining to specific songs precede each song.

The organization and lay-out of the material is undertaken keeping teachers and the classroom situation in mind. The information provided refers to the Namibian situation in particular, but should be of value in schools outside of this country as well. Because many teachers and learners, even in Namibia, will not have an insider's knowledge of the different practices included in this section, a full description is given of the context and situation from which the music/dance event arises. This includes a short socio-georaphical description, notes on the language, the historical background and purpose of the dance, and performance procedures (where applicable).

The contextualisation is followed by a transcription of a song and dance. This is done in pulse notation and/or conventional western notation, as is deemed appropriate to the musical structures. Pulses have been

numbered for easy location of rhythmic position, in other words the number of pulses preceding a sound or between sounds can be counted out if wished. The transcription indicates all the points of impact on which movements and tones are produced and show how they coincide. Movements are notated by means of kinemes,[1] thus indicating only a specific body area such as shoulders or feet on one line. Because this analysis of a total body movement into constituent components complicates the simultaneous reading of kinemes, the transcription is followed by a step-by-step description of movement sequences. By combining these two techniques, that is the transcription plus a description, a teacher is enabled to reproduce a cultural music/dance event in the classroom.

An effort is made to provide all possible relevant information: the song heading followed by information on the place of recording; the names of the transcriber and the translator and date of transcription; the type of event; and the language of the song. The text of each song is provided in the vernacular, with a translation into English. A 'note store' is given which summarises the tones which appear in the song in a scale form. The 'tonal centre' or tone around which the song appears to be organised is given with the note store. The transcription is followed by a brief description of characteristic musical and movement structures, with reference to the specific song, but explaining other performance possibilities for the event. Finally, each event is followed by suggestions for the application of these materials in the classroom. These suggestions can act as a guide outlining a possible procedure, with reference to the competencies which learner should develop.

The table which follows on p. 311 provides a comparative summary of style features as well as material and non-material traits associated with the music and the dance for each event. This provides teachers with an easy reference, and they may compare the different styles of dance and the musical characteristics of the different regions. Suggestions for application of this material in the classroom are included.

1 See chapter 4 for discussion on kinemes.

As this dissertation is accompanied by a field-recording video of the events I have described, there are references to the relevant recording tracks. It is suggested that the reader view each track once before reading the material on the event. The reader can view the track again as necessary during or after reading the material.

The first area covered, and songs transcribed, are those most similar to a western tradition, and have therefore been transcribed in conventional notation. This will be followed by transcriptions in pulse notation, preceded by guidelines for the reading of the notation.

5.1 PERFORMANCE MUSIC - KONSERTLIEDJIES

[Video track 7 - aksieliedjie, and 8 - konsertliedjie]

The term performance music is used here in the sense of music/dance performed for others acting as an audience, rather than music/dance in which all are participants. The specific form or genre described is known as *konsertliedjies* or *aksieliedjies* in the central regions of Khomas, Erongo and Khorixas.

5.1.1 Description of context, background and purpose

The performance of *konsertliedjies* (also referred to as *aksieliedjies*) is very popular in the areas surrounding Windhoek, and also further afield. Because these songs are also performed by students at sports meetings, the genre has spread all over Namibia, and I have observed songs known to me in Khoekhoe, sung by Kwangalí students in the north. The origin of *konsertliedjies* is something which could be fruitfully explored by historians or ethnomusicologists, as the genre, known by different names, is popular also in South Africa and Botswana. The version I discuss here refers to that performed by Damara people in the Khomas Hochland west of the capital Windhoek. Quite a number of songs which I recorded were sung by Damara people in a language which resembles Xhosa, but which has undergone some changes. In these cases the performers themselves say they do not understand the text, but like the sound of the words.[2] Examples of such sounds are "*sërendie*" and "*siamba*". Namiseb says that 'serendie' is so 'nice' a word that they use it to construct a number of different song.[3] An example of words which have become unrecognizable because of changes they have undergone is "*numba flu*", which may derive from "number two".

2 P. Namiseb, A. Uirab, M. Namises, J. Naris, personal communications, Silwerstroom, 1993 - 1996.
3 This was corroborrated by L. Namaseb, a lecturer in Khoekhoegowab at the University of Namibia.

5.1.1.1 Socio-geographical context

The Khomas Hochland is a commercial farming area in which mainly cattle are produced. Game - antelope, zebra, cheetah, leopard and smaller animals - is plentiful, and the area has developed as a tourist and hunting destination. It is a highland area with arid savannah vegetation - grass and acacia trees. It has a short summer rainfall season lasting about six to eight weeks, hot summers and cold, dry winters.

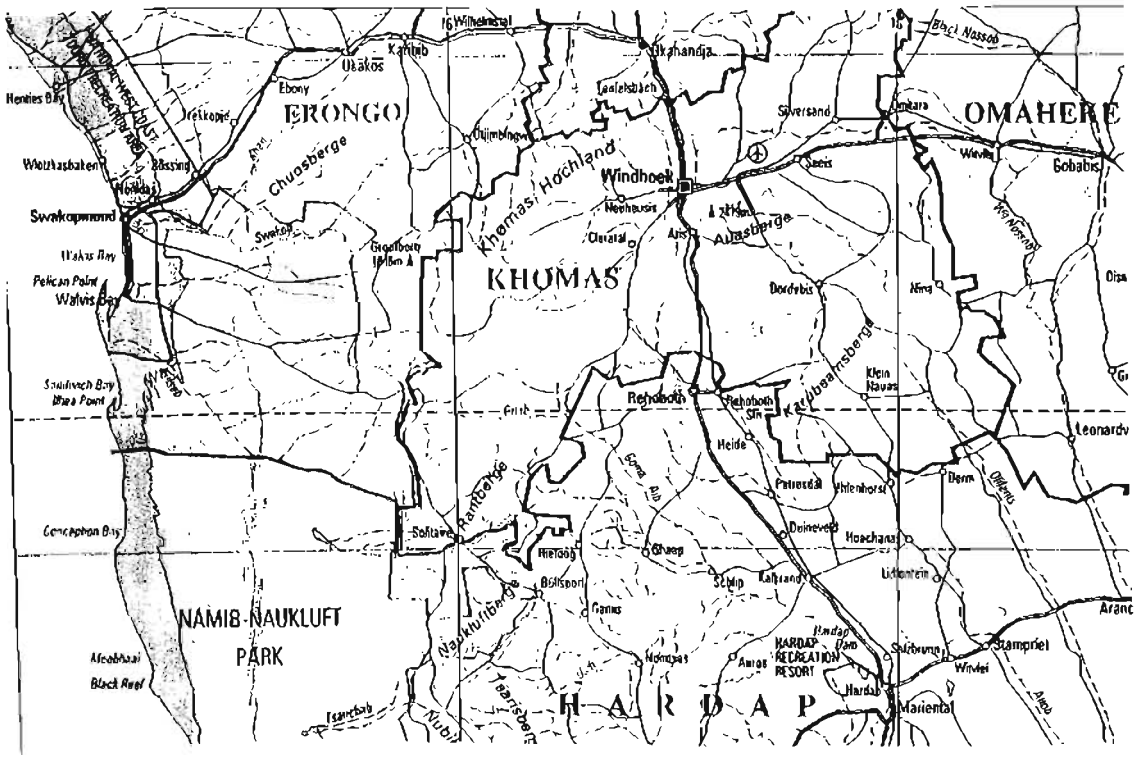


FIGURE 5.1 KHOMAS HOCHLAND - WEST OF WINDHOEK

The central and southern areas of Namibia were not directly involved in the border war ending in 1989,[4] although, of course, everybody was affected by the political climate of the time. People of the area have become fairly urbanised in terms of lifestyle. This is a result of proximity to the city, and probably also the living-working relations with (white) commercial farmers. This context has contributed to the syncretization of the church music of the area (mostly Apostolic, Lutheran and Roman Catholic denominations), as well as the musical acculturation of white western and black southern African musical

4 Although numerous people of the central and southern areas joined the resistance movement, no battles were fought in these areas.

structures. In this way a significant amount of cultural exchange takes place among people who come from different areas and speak different languages.

5.1.1.2 Language

A large proportion of the workers on the farms of this area speak Khoekhoe and describe themselves as Damara. Owing to historic connections with Nama people, the Khoekhoe (or Khoekhoegowab) language is shared with the Nama people of the south. It is a tonal language, in addition to which it includes many clicks, plosives and fricatives, making it one of the most 'difficult' Namibian languages for an outsider to learn. Because of regional tonal variations, some Damara Khoekhoe-speakers maintain that they find the Khoekhoe of Namas difficult to follow. Some elderly persons such as Naftalien Kainkop[5] claim that the language relates closely to Hai//om, a language spoken in the area south of the Etosha Game Reserve.

The tonal inflections of the language has an influence on the melodic structure of older songs, as the meaning of a word is determined by the inflection of the voice. Yet this does not appear to have quite the same influence in *konsertliedjies*, which are usually structured according to diatonic major scales. It is interesting that the vernacular term for *konsertliedjies* is in the Afrikaans language, not Khoekhoe. It is a term used not only by Damara people, but also Herero, Tswana, and local Xhosa people. This is possibly due to the fact that many people are employed by Afrikaans-speaking farmers, resulting in the Afrikaans language being the lingua franca in most of the central and southern areas. The local mother tongue is Khoekhoe. The assimilation of aspects of the culture of Afrikaners is also evidenced in the *langarm dans* (long arm or couples dance) and the dance music which sounds similar to Afrikaans 'Boeremusiek', although local changes have been wrought, giving the music a Namibian character.

5 Personal communications, Silwerstroom.

5.1.1.3 Background and purpose of the song/dance

In common with most other Namibian practices, *konsertliedjies* and *aksieliedjies* are performed at social occasions, in this case mainly for personal enjoyment and for entertainment. This may happen at a party or picnic, after a church service, at a celebration or school function. Songs may be performed by groups of adults, men and women, or by groups of children, or by groups of mixed ages. More often, groups are organised around either adults or children, because of their differing vocal qualities and abilities. In the area where recordings were made, workers' church groups meet and perform with city church groups four to six times a year. Towards the end of each year a big picnic is held on the farm Silwerstroom. Approximately two hundred and fifty people gather to pray, play games, eat, talk and sing. These days, these performances take an organised form, with a typed programme stating the name of the group or church district (*wyk*) and time of performance. Although some churches frown upon dancing, the rhythmic steps performed in *konsertliedjies* are considered acceptable, so that this becomes the only dance form with which some people remain comfortable.

Performance is generally preceded by 'rehearsals' when workers gather at somebody's home in the evenings.[6] This is a time when new songs and movements are created or passed on from one person to others. The movement sequences are planned and choreographed. The same song can have different choreographies, which change quite frequently, thus maintaining interest in the performance. Within the convention of this genre, songs are frequently composed by individuals, with harmonies being filled in by singers according to local convention. Older songs are passed on from one generation to another and undergo changes into the current format. On some occasions these songs are conducted by a man in the style of western choral conductors. Texts may be 'made up' by small communities or by their musical leaders to suit particular occasions. An example of local text composition is a song by Silwerstroom workers praising their community 'priester' or religious leader, Hosea Narib (now deceased). According to Milka Narises, the song's text reads: "*O nanajo* (meaningless syllables), *Ō /Nariroba* (a play on his

6 In present times many workers have televisions in their homes and report greater difficulty in getting a group together to sing and perform. This is especially the case with the younger generation, according to Petrus Namiseb, personal communications, Silwerstroom, 1996.

surname), *O Priester /Nariroba, O Silwerstroom, O nanajo*". She says that it gives the Silwersteroom people pride and status to be able to praise their spiritual leader publicly through this song.[7] Her ex-husband, Petrus Nariseb, a very social character who is involved in arranging most events for local workers, and who likes to 'train' the children's singing groups, says that some songs express either "blues" (not in the American musical sense, but meaning sad matters), or they are truly *konsertliedjies*, expressing happy or joyous things, like love for a child.[8] "Dantagoba" is an example of such a happy song.

As far as I could establish, the word *aksieliedjie* describes any song performed with actions which illustrate, act out, or enhance the text of the song. These actions are not necessarily considered dance, and although rhythmic movements are performed, the action refers to gestures, facial expressions, or little scenes acted out by individuals while the song continues. The term *konsertliedjie* seems to refer to all songs which include actions, or those which involve dance or are performed - like dance - for personal entertainment. An *aksieliedjie,* therefore, often appears to fall within the genre of *konsertliedjies*, although children may 'play' *aksieliedjies* as a game.[9] Typical performances of *konsertliedjies* I have observed and recorded are described below.

At an evening's get-together or at a more organised party, a decision may be taken to perform a song. The song is often preceded by heated discussion as to who will sing, who will lead, what will be sung, and so on, taking anything from five to fifteen minutes! When the performance is pre-arranged however, such discussion is part of the planning and does not take place in public. In pre-arranged performances details like the walk-on as people take their places is planned and has its own song and choreography. Milka Narises describes the importance of a text "*Ada dâ netse khai !gaia ha ≠aob ikha*" prepared by the Silwerstroom farm people "to approach the altar singing".[10] In a smaller space, it would be unnecessary to 'walk-on'.

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7 Running comment given by Milka Narises during my recordings at farm Kariam, 1993.
8 P. Namiseb, personal communications, Silwerstroom, 1996.
9 This calls to mind the street games of African-American children, for example "Zudio".
10 M. Namises, personal communications, Silwerstroom, 1994, observed but unfortunately not recorded.

To sing, people usually take their places in four rows, depending on the number of people singing. Women are placed in the front rows and men at the back. A similar gender separation applies to children. When everybody is ready, one woman starts a rhythmic step which sets the tempo and others join her. At a proper moment, when everybody has caught the beat and have found the appropriate pitch to sing, the lead singer (male or female) initiates the song. Other voices enter as required in three- or four-part harmony, depending on numbers and voice representation. Very often, only the women perform the rhythmic forwards and backwards steps, while men just change weight from one foot to another with arm movements. About halfway through the song, the woman on the far right in the front row steps forwards and proceeds to walk-dance past the front row, who follow her in single file. The second row follows the first in a long line until everybody takes their places again. Now the men do the same. While filing past those still in place, dancers adapt the basic step to their own individual style. This is an occasion for showing off dancing skill and style. When the group is set up in their rows the movements of individuals are subordinate to the motions of the group. Although the basic constitution of the performance appears formal, participants are free to join in halfway if the mood takes them, or (more rarely) leave if they do not wish to continue. Small children often weave in and out of the performance and mimic the movements of their elders.

In all the performances of *konsertliedjies* recorded and observed in the Khomas Hochland, no musical instruments were used for accompaniment, neither was there clapping of hands. Instead, the swishing sound of feet sweeping the floor and stamping provide a rhythmic accompaniment.[11] This is in keeping with the practices of people from the arid areas who do not have access to the wood for drums. In other Damara and Nama dances, such as *Nama-stap* and */geis*, ankle rattles made from dried coccoons or from beads (*n//amen*) and wooden concussion plaques (*///'am-yi*) would provide an additional percussion. There are no other particular material traits associated with the performance. However, when church meetings are held in the Khomas Hochland, on special occasions, each group (*wyk*) may wear clothing of a particular colour, thereby providing a group cohesion and identity. On one such occasion, the Silwerstroom women wore

11 Notable exceptions in Windhoek are the semi-professional choir groups, e.g. Cantare Audire and the National Youth Choir who have been seen to use drums with these songs. The use of accordion, guitar and/or keyboard is common among Damara and Nama people when performing Nama-stap or langarm dancing.

bright pink skirts, blouses of different shades and black church hats, while the men wore the cummerbands of the same pink, smart long trousers, white shirts and suit jackets. The Kariam group wore similar outfits with yellow as a theme, while the Katutura group used turquoise and white as their colours (see photograph, Plate 5.2). Such formal performances take place in church halls or community centres. Informal performances at picnics, parties, people's homes and elsewhere, are equally possible outside on a cleared piece of ground.

PLATE 5.1 CHILDREN PERFORMING AN AKSIEIEDJIE

5.1.2 Transcriptions of *konsertliedjies*, including an *aksieliedjie*

The transcriptions were taken partially from a micro-cassette tape recording, unfortunately of very poor quality, and partially from memory, having learnt the songs from the people. The first song, "Dantagoba" (on video track 7), is a well known song passed on from the older generation. It is described by Namiseb as both an *aksieliedjie* and a *konsertliedjie*.[12] Namiseb suggested that the proper performance modality for

12 P. Namiseb, personal communications, Silwerstroom, 1996.

this song is a circle, and it is his suggestions for actions which I have used in my transcription. Although it may also be performed by adults, this is described as a children's song by P. Namiseb, M. Namises, and B. !Gonteb.[13] Although the song recording is incomplete, it serves to form a general impression.

The second song, "Serendie" is more representative of modern *konsertliedjies,* according to Namiseb. Whereas the performances from the Okavango (*epera*) and Caprivi (*nyakasanga*) which I describe further on, can last for many hours, each *konsertliedjie* is a separate or discrete performance. Several songs may be performed one after another. Every song lasts for about three or four minutes, and every song has its own choreography. As I do not have a video recording of this song, I have included another song, "U Manga Lisa" sung in Xhosa,[14] from the same occasion, to create a visual impression of the movement structure.

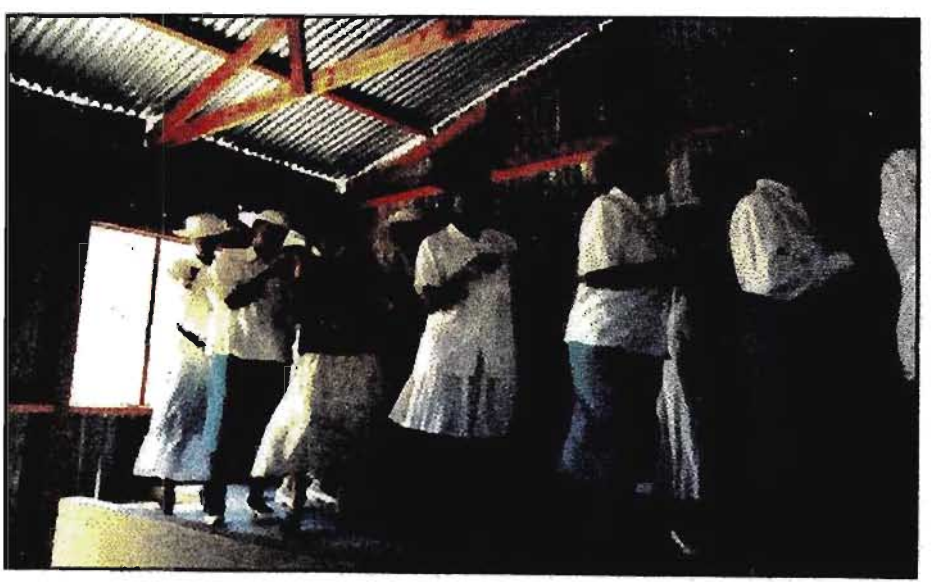


PLATE 5.2 ***KONSERTLIEDJE***

13 Personal communications between 1995 and 1997. I have observed a brother and sister team, 7 and 4 years of age, perform this song. Silwerstroom, Christmas, 1994.
14 The language may be a Xhosa derivative, as a Xhosa-speaking student, Gcobani Mhlabeni, was unable to translate the text, Windhoek, 1994.

DANTAGOBA MA BAB KHA HA

Video track 7
Language: Khoekhoe
Performed by Kariam youth group

Farm Kariam, Khomas Hochland.
Text by M. Namises

Dantagob is a boy's name. He is called by his mother to be sent on an errand. His sister calls telling him to go to his mother because she (his mother) as well as her younger sister and his sister love him (M. Narises).

Tempo: ♪ = 138

(Solo)

(All) (sung slightly flat)

Dan -ta --- go - ba ma - bab kha ha ti mas --- ge - ra, si - bi ≠gao

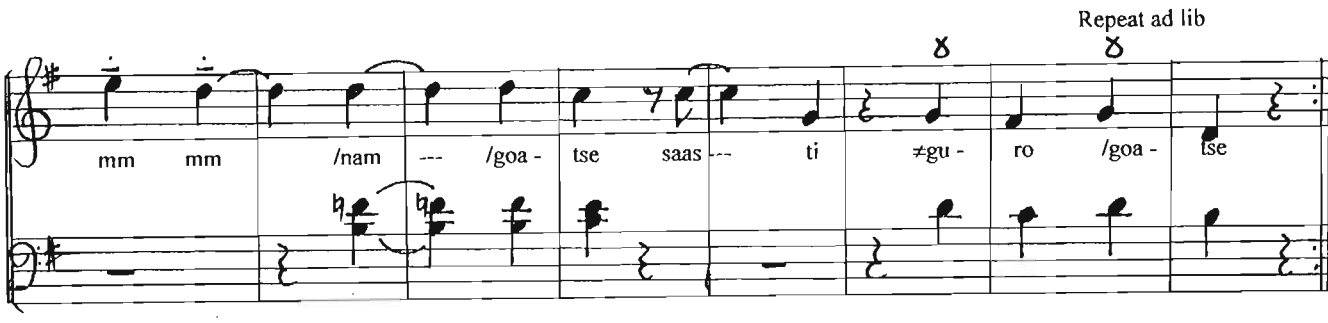
Feet: ○ ■ ● □ ○ ■ ● □ *etc.*

Dan -ta --- go - ba ma - bab kha ha ti mas --- ge - ra, si - bi ≠gao

Gestures:

khai- ma khai- ma a --- xa - tse mm mm di/nam /goa - tse
(Ou- sus)

mm mm /nam --- /goa - tse saas --- ti --- ≠gu - ro /goa - tse
(Ou - sus-ti)

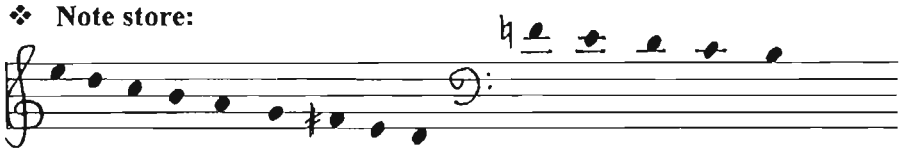


NOTE: On the third repeat the song is hummed by all.
Words in brackets are sung the second time.

Text in the vernacular:	*Translation:*
First time:	
Dantagoba, mabab kha ha ti masgera	Dantagob, where is he? My mother wants to
sibi ≠gao	send him (on an errand)
khaima khaima axatse	get up, get up little boy
mm mm di/nam /goatse	mm mm darling boy ("liefseun")
mm mm /nam /goatse saas ti ≠guro /goatse	mother's first son
Second time:	
Dantagoba, mabab kha ha ti masgera	Dantagob, where is he? My mother wants to
sibi ≠gao	send him (on an errand)
khaima khaima axatse	get up, get up little boy
Ousus di/nam /goatse	Sister's darling boy
Oususti /nam /goatse saas ti ≠guro /goatse	Aunt's darling boy

Translation by P. Namiseb.

❖ **Note store:**



❖ **Kinemes for actions:**

Foot movements:

- ○ Right foot step to right with slight knee bend, and straighten
- ● Left foot step to left with slight knee bend, and straighten
- □ Right foot place next to Left, with slight knee bend, and straighten
- ■ Left foot place next to Right with slight knee bend, and straighten

Gestures:

- shake hand with pointed index finger
- cross flat open hands over chest (hug) and swing upper torso gently from side to side

SERENDIE

Language: Khoekhoe

Performed by Kariam Singers.

Farm Silwerstroom, Khomas Hochland
Text by M. Narises

This song concerns people who don't care about their personal appearance. They are told to wash and rub 'Ambi' (complexion lightener) into their skins. It is meant as a teasing song, not to be taken too seriously.

Tempo: ♩ = 84

Feel: • ♪ ○ • ○ • ○ ♪ • ○ • ○ *etc.*

(Solo)
Se - ren- die ti - ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ------ Se- ren- die ti-ma- ma --

(All)

Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma

Se- ren- die ------ ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ---

Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti-ma- ma

Se- ren- die Se- ren- die --- Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ---

Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die mm- mm- mm m-mm mm

Se- ren- die Se- ren- die -Ser- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Kai sets //o hâ Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma

mm mm mm-- mm mm mm m mm mm mm mm mm m mm mm

Se- ren- die so- bo(n) ai- re Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die ai-ba kho- se Se- ren- die ti- ma-ma

mm mm mm mm mm mm m mm mm mm mm mmm mm mm mm m mm mm

Se- ren- die ai ai sa- go Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Am- bi Ina- re Se- ren- die ti- ma-ma

mm mm mm

Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma

Se- ren- die mm mm mm m Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma-ma

Se- ren- die Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma- ma Se- ren- die Se- ren- die ti- ma-ma

Se- ren- die ai so- bo- ne

Se- ren- die

etc. repeat from 𝄋 as many times as wished, ritardando at end the last time.

Se- ren- die kai sets //o hâ,

Text in the vernacular:

Serendie, ti mama, Serendie
Serendie kai sets //o hâ
Serendie sobo(n) aire
Serendie aiba khose
Serendie ai ai sago

Serendie Ambi !na re
Serendie ai sobone

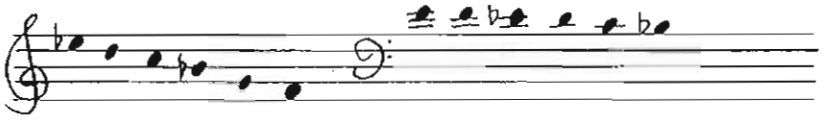
Alternative words filled in on repeats could be:
kai sets a ≠nu
or *kai sets a //gaisi*

Translation:

Serendie [15] mother (or woman)
You are so ugly
rub your face
look at your face
ai ai people! (the Afrikaans exclamation 'julle!' comes closer in meaning)
apply some Ambi to your face (to 'beautify' the skin)
your face needs rubbing

Translation by P. Namiseb.

❖ **Note store:**



❖ **Kinemes for dance:**

○ Right foot place/stamp
● Left foot place/stamp
○ Right foot lighter place/stamp
• Left foot lighter place/stamp
Right foot brush forwards across the floor
Left foot brush forwards across the floor

15 Serendie is probably a Xhosa- derived word - used because performers like the way it sounds.

U MANGA LISA

Video track 8
Language: Xhosa-derived
Action song performed by Kariam Youth

© Recorded and transcribed by M. E. Mans (1993)
Farm Kariam, Khomas Hochland
Text by M. Narises

Tempo: ♩ = 88

Man- ga Li - sa, Man- ga Li - sa Man- ga Li - sa, Man- ga Li -

U

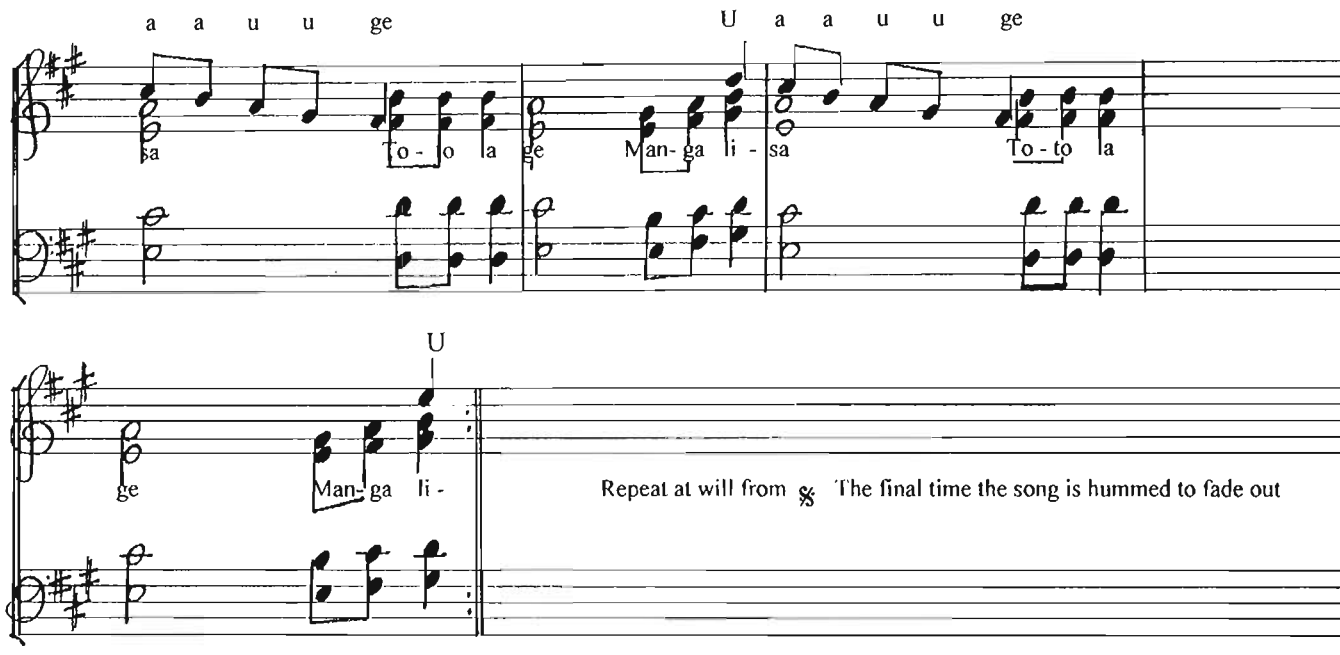
sa, To - to la ge Man- ga Li - sa To - to la ge, Man- ga Li -

Man- ga li – sa U Man- ga li – sa U

sa Man- ga li - sa Man- ga li -

Man- ga li -- sa U Man- ga li – sa U

sa Man- ga li - sa Man- ga li -


a a u u ge
U a a u u ge
sa To - o la ge Man- ga li - sa To - to la
U
ge Man- ga li -
Repeat at will from 𝄋 The final time the song is hummed to fade out

5.1.3 Explanation of characteristics

5.1.3.1 Musical characteristics

The songs above have been transcribed in conventional western notation, as their melodic, rhythmic and harmonic structures in many ways resemble those found in western styles.

The **first song** "***Dantagoba ma bab kha ha***" consists of two brief melodic sections each eight bars in length. In the video recording, the song commences with the opening phrase sung by the leader, in this case female. The opening statement serves to establish pitch, key and tempo, and reminds one of a call and response structure. One voice part (a group of sopranos or *eerste stem* according to local terminology) sings alone, followed by the full chorus in answer. Although joined by other female singers, the leader tends to be a strong singer whose voice continues to stand out against the vocal fabric of the choir.

The song has a mainly **homophonic texture**, based on the three primary chords. The song is repeated until the group tires of singing, or until all participants have explored the movement possibilities accompanying the song. In the version transcribed, there are only three parts - one female and two male voice parts. The higher male voice part may be sung by altos as well, while the men singing this part often make use of a falsetto tone. This may be an indication of the part really being meant for altos. According to Petrus Namiseb the actual details of who sings what is not so important, as long as there are a number of voices, they will know how and at which pitch to sing their parts!

The **tone quality** of female singers is usually sharp, placed in the front of the mouth cavity, but produced as a throat tone and not bel canto. Notes indicated as staccato, sung while humming, are produced in the throat with the tongue pressed flat against the upper palate. At the ends of phrases the voice is frequently allowed to drop in pitch (slurred downwards), creating a sound which is characteristic to most Namibian singing. Similarly, the voice may be slurred upwards on certain words, for example the first part of "*saas ti*" (making it sound like an exclamation) or the first of the two "*mm*" sounds. The pitch transcribed is

therefore not performed as strictly as it would be in a European art song. Instead, more importance is given to the 'swing' and fluidity of the melodic line.

The **harmonic and tonal structure** of the song arises from western common practice, but the assimilation is typically southern African. A typical characteristic of the style can be found in the flattened seventh of the G major diatonic scale, in a descending sequence (using the F natural).

Rhythmically the song is very simple, with none of the polyrhythmic structures of northern Namibian musics with their complex drumming and clapping patterns. The very regularity of what would be described as syncopations in western music (emphasising the last beat of a bar instead of the first, e.g. bar 1, 5, 9, 13) keeps the song alive and swinging, even though rhythmically simple.

The **second song "*Serendie*"** is in many ways very similar to the first, both being typical examples of the genre. The second song is led in by a male singer who states the complete melodic material (four bars) of the song. This is followed by the entry of the high female voices (sopranos) and then the altos. The lead singer is joined by other tenors as soon as the female voices enter. The first statement by sopranos differs from each subsequent statement. Small variations appear in the phrases which the tenors sing alone. By replacing text with humming, a further form of variation takes place. Apart from this there is little scope for improvisation, except in the dance. Again the emphasis, indicated by the start of a text phrase, falls not on the first beat of a bar, but on the second half of the first beat, and on the second half of the third beat. As in the previous song, this relates to the dance where foot movements occur on the first half of the beat.

In both these song-texts the accurate pronunciation of clicks and aspirations are integral to the characteristic sound quality of the song. These are indicated by the following symbols: / , // , ≠ , ' , and !. (See Notes on Orthography Used). These clicks, aspirations and guttural throat sounds create an articulation which is unique to the music of Khoekhoe-speakers and therefore an essential aspect of good performance.

The **third song,** ***"U Manga Lisa"***, is similar to the previous one in its homophonic texture. It has an introduction by a female leader. In the middle section the high female singers add a part that sounds like a descant, while the rest of the group continue with the main song material. Thus the song actually has five voice parts, four for the main choir and one for the 'descant'. Rhythmically the song is simple, although the 'descant' part add rhythmic interest with its 'syncopated' pattern.

5.1.3.2 Characteristics of movements

Three songs have been provided here, representing typical but different forms in terms of the movements. The songs may be performed by men and women, or boys and girls, or adults and children. All movements commence from the 'basic earth' position, that is standing with feet slightly apart, knees bent, torso tilted slightly forwards from hips.

- ***Dantagoba ma bab kha ha***

Participants form a circle to sing this song. They face inwards towards the centre of the circle. On the first beat of each bar participants take a step to one side. They may move to the right, with a slight knee bend, and place the other foot next to the first, again with slight knee bend and straighten. This should look like a slight bounce on each step and place. The upper body is relaxed and follows the motion of the steps with a complimentary motion and slight swing from side to side. Arms are bent at the elbows and held fairly close to the body at the sides. Gestures are added which match the text. These include a finger pointed at the imaginary Dantagob, warning him to do the errand for his mother. The other main gesture is a hugging of the self, with arms crossed over the chest while swinging the upper body from side to side, to indicate how much Dantagob is loved by his mother and female relatives. Different gestures may replace these ones, and movements may be expanded.

- ***Serendie and U Manga Lisa***

For the chorus movement the participants form three or four lines all facing in the same direction (like a chorus). Usually women or girls are placed in the front lines, with men or boys in the back rows. One of the girls in the front row begins with the rhythmic motion which starts off the song. The pattern notated in this

song is not the only possibility. Different groups experiment and design different rhythmic patterns for a song. The pattern given here involves a forwards and backwards motion, creating the sound pattern

 with the feet. Because shoes are usually worn, a clear sound can be produced. It is, however, considered to be important that the group move as one, so that the sound is not muffled or indistinct.

The **basic movement sequence** is: a *light stamp* on the spot e.g. left foot, followed by a *brush forwards* with the other foot (e.g. right), place foot back in original position; *step* (left), *step* (right) slightly backwards; *two slower steps* on the spot; repeat the sequence.

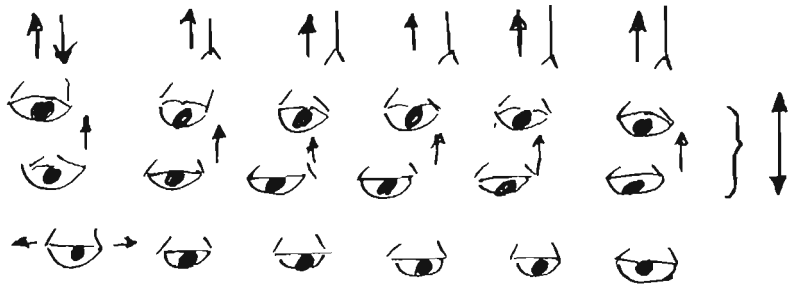
This simple sequence is either repeated exactly for at least one full rendition of the song, or it is embellished with additional steps or brush movements. A typical variation would be to do the step to the sides instead of forwards or backwards, or to increase the body bend or forward inclination for one bar, and straighten up, even incline backwards for one bar, and repeat. Arms are bent at right angles at the elbow and move forwards and backwards in a natural rhythmic motion in opposition to the feet. The upper body moves in a relaxed motion complimentary to the feet, with a looseness of articulation between hips and upper torso. The neck is extended in line with the spine, but women especially look downwards at the floor, although the head may be inclined slightly to one side. Men more often lift their faces to the audience, so that their heads are placed at an angle to their spines. Although the rhythmic foot movements for both these songs may be identical, they may also be quite different. For example, in "U Manga Lisa", the group may decide to step forward heavily on the right foot with a forward bend of the torso, followed by a step on the left to come upright, a singing step backwards on the right, and a step on the left to regain the original position. Different rhythmic sequences are devised by different groups.

When the singer at the far right end of the front row (facing the audience) is ready, she initiates the **second movement sequence** - a linear movement to the left past the front row. The other girls follow her, unfolding in a 'conga' line. The first girl passes behind the back row of girls and in front of the front row of

boys, until she reaches her starting position. One by one, the others go back to their original positions. Then the boys do the same linear sequence, passing in front of the rows of girls, around the back until they return to their original positions (see Fig. 5.2 below for ground pattern or design). When everybody is back in their chorus positions, the original forwards-backwards motions are repeated, or possibly they may be replaced by new ones.

CHORUS MOVEMENTS

(Audience)



SINGLE LINE

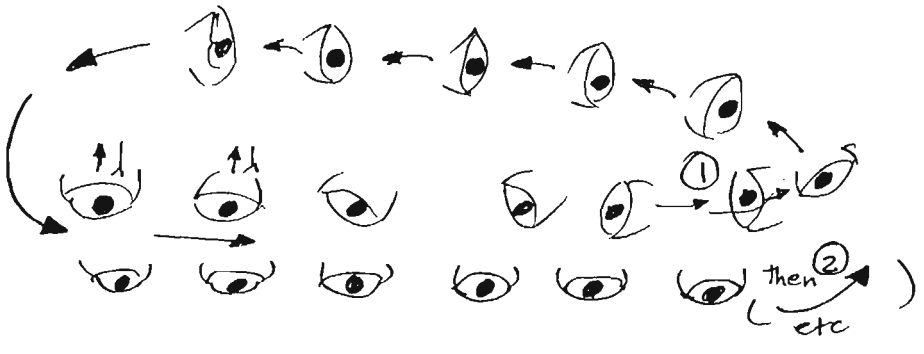


FIGURE 5.2 FLOOR DESIGN FOR A *KONSERTLIEDJIE*

While dancing around in line, the rhythmic pattern changes to a two-step movement, (♪ ♩.) by doing a step, place the other foot and pause, repeat on other side. Each dancer may, however, use her/his imagination and initiative to create an individual style. Some possibilities are outlined below. The chorus (those not yet in the line) continue with the original motions. The 'feel' of this part of the dance, according

to !Goraseb, a teacher in the Mariental area, is like "stretching out.... and pulling back". He pronounces the words "stretching out" in a 'stretched' way, and shows the pulling back as quite sudden. !Goraseb emphasises his description with a catlike movement of his body , stretching the words, and a sudden, wide-eyed retraction on "pulling back".[16]

- Some dancers keep their knees well bent, but hold their torsos upright, with posteriors extended outwards to the back (that is with a pronounced arch of the back), heads upright. Their arms may be bent at a sharp angle, elbows close to the body. With each placing of the foot the shoulders and hips may be gently shaken.

- Alternatively, another dancer may incline her torso quite far forwards, and make more of the sideways movements of her hips and buttocks on each pause. Still another may take a few short (quaver note) steps balancing on the outer edges of her feet. Forward and upright motions of the torso may alternate.

- A man may do steps similar to those of Nama-stap, dancing on the ball of the foot (demi-point), with bent knees turned inwards. His bent arms would be raised to the sides with elbows high. His head would face downwards and he may click his heels together on the fourth or the second half of the fourth beat of a bar. He should look as though he is walking on eggs.

Seen as a whole therefore, the *konsertliedjie* dance has a kind of ternary form, consisting of

[redacted] the chorus-line movements, followed by

Section B the single line movements, with a return to

[redacted] the chorus line movements.

16 Discussion and demonstration at a teachers training workshop presented by myself for NIED, Okahandja, 17 - 19 March 1997.

However, the whole sequence may be repeated for as long as the participants are enjoying the song-dance.

5.1.4 Suggestions for the classroom:

Depending on the lyics, an action song like Dantagoba is suitable for young learners, who are naturally inclined to want to move or dramatize the songs they sing. *Konsertliedjies* are equally suitable for all levels of school, although schools where the local people are not used to singing in three or four parts may wish to do this kind of song when learners are a little older. For most Namibian learners, the homophonic harmonic structure is very familiar, and as soon as there are enough learners with a vocal quality suited to the lower parts, the songs can be learnt.

- With younger learners at primary level, it is best to **start with the songs**.
- At secondary level one may begin by **contextualizing choral music** in southern African contexts, the history of musical assimilation and the role of missionaries in the development of this musical style. Such background should preferably be broken up into smaller discussions, so that learners become directly involved with the music.
- The songs should be **learnt in sections, and in parts**, and when different learners' groups are able to sing all the voice parts correctly, the parts may be put together in different combinations until well known.
- Even while learning the song, learners should be encouraged to **move rhythmically** to the music.
- In the case of young learners playing "Dantagoba", **explore the emotional content of the text**, for example, the story of this little boy is told. This may be related to other similar stories, or experiences the learners may have had. Learners are then asked to demonstrate how they would express, through gestures, the love the mother and sister feel for him. What gestures would they use if they wanted to express anger instead? How would that change the song's sound quality?
- **Explore different rhythmic foot patterns**. Listen to their different sound qualities, for example a swish, a stamp, a thump of the ball of the foot, or moving on full foot from side to side by twisting the feet.

- **Create sound patterns** for four beats, using foot movements. Settle on one pattern created in class, or use the given pattern. Encourage learners to take note and be aware of what the other learners are doing while performing, so as to coordinate the range and sequence of movements and timing. Combine foot patterns with with the song, remembering to maintain the rhythmic swing of the music.
- After explaining and demonstrating the structure of the complete dance, **make a game out of the linear section of dance**. This may be done by playing a game of 'follow-the-leader', where the teacher leads in the correct rhythmic pattern, gradually adding variations of style and movement. When learners are becoming more comfortable with the situation, appoint or take turns for different leaders. Finally do a linear sequence in which learners are encouraged each to improvise their own style and sequence, always maintaining the basic rhythm.
- **Combine the linear pattern with the synchronized pattern**, with learners positioned in three or four lines, leading into the linear progression, and returning to the original pattern.
- **'Modernise' the song** by adding a rap beat and adapting the song and movements appropriately. Rap texts may be improvised between repetitions. Vocalise 'beat' sounds.
- While the dance movements may initially be performed to recorded music or the video, this should be replaced with singing by the learners as soon as possible.
- **Create new texts** to fit the same music. Add to this new movements for actions which illustrate the new text.
- **Experiment with different melodies**, but the same harmonies, and vice versa.
- Use the opportunity (especially with secondary level learners) to **discuss and learn about melodic and harmonic structures**. Learners can be requested to **aurally identify changes of harmony**, and to predict the next change, for example.
- Identify a suitable song from a western culture, or another southern African culture. Give it the *konsertliedjie* treatment by **developing a rhythmic foot pattern** and body movements as well as suitable harmonies for it.
- If wished, encourage learners to **conduct the choral performance**.

It is important that the actions enhance the performance of the song and that they are enjoyed by the learners. Therefore, learners should be encouraged to praise good performances of their classmates, and to watch one another, co-ordinating their movements in such a way that all members of the group contribute to the quality of the whole.

As the events which follow are all transcribed in pulse notation, I precede this with an explanation.

5.2 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE READING OF THE PULSE NOTATION

5.2.1 Pulses

- In the song transcriptions that follow, every vertical line represents a pulse, all equally spaced in time (see p. 221). The vertical lines clearly indicate all moments of impact (sound and movement) and their simultaneity. By following a pulse line downwards, one can see all conjunctions, where drum, stamps, claps fall together.
- Each pulse is numbered (top and bottom) so that one can follow or count more easily if necessary. Namibian musicians would rarely count, but westerners may find that counting helps them to work out rhythmic patterns.

X = 120 ⟶ *Tempo indication*

Ø → *Start*

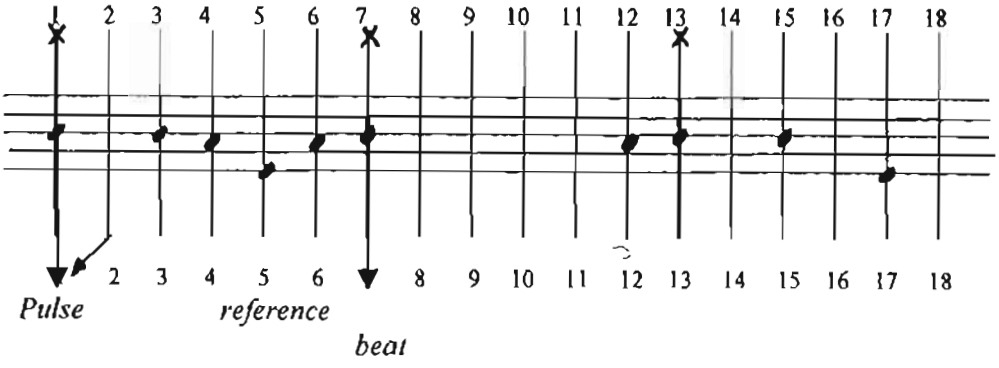


FIGURE 5.3 READING PULSE NOTATION

- Bold vertical lines indicate reference beats - on which different pulses and movements coincide (see pp. 221 and 295). These bold lines have only been used where such reference beats are a clear structural characteristic. In the song "*Manyeka ela sinuko sa bome ima*" these bold lines are the lines of the claps and the steps of feet, making them an important aid to reading and understanding the song-dance structure.

- To follow the pattern or structure of the song, it should be read in terms of its time-line,[17] which is usually 8 or 12 or 16 pulses in length. The clapping patterns often give an indication of emphases or 'beats'. The songs on pp. 270 and 295 both have time-lines of 12 pulses. The example in figure 5.3 has 18 pulses.
- The song may not necessarily start on the first written pulse. The music has been notated according to the culturally conceived time-lines and cycles. Singing may start at the 'end' of a cycle and from there go to the 'beginning'. The understanding that many of the songs are cyclical (therefore not really having separate a beginning or end) makes this quite possible. The points of initiation of the songs (where applicable) have been clearly indicated, with the symbol ∅.

5.2.2 Tempo

- Tempo is indicated at the start of the song. For this I have used standard metronome tempi indications. This is indicated as X = 176 (times per minute) for example on p. 239. This means that singers clap a very fast two-pulse beat, about three claps per second! The tempo indication of X = 72 (see p. 295) on the other hand, indicates a slow beat although the pulses are still fast, as there are six pulses to the beat.
- This form of notation does not make use of bar-lines.

5.2.3 Different note symbols

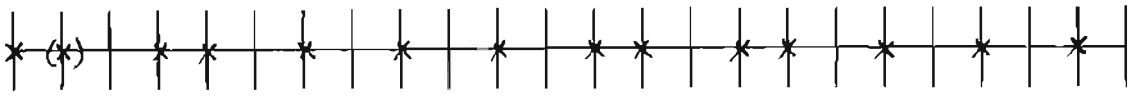
- Notes placed on a pulse line indicate impact only, not duration. Where a sound or movement should be maintained for a longer duration, this is indicated by a line following the kineme or note, for example the women's part on p. 270 where a sustained tone is indicated as •—.

17 See chapter 4, page 149 for discussion on time-lines.

- Where necessary, for example on pp. 270 - 273, different symbols have been used to indicate different tonal qualities or different singers from the same group. For example indicates a trembling tone, ● indicates one group of singers while ⊙ indicates a different group of singers notated on the same stave. These are explained before the transcription in each case.
- Symbols in brackets mean that that sound or movement is performed sometimes but not every time (p.239)

pattern (b)

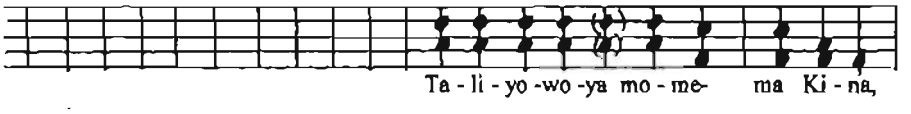
Clapping



5.2.4 Melodic notation

- A five line stave is used to indicate the relative pitch of tones. Generally this is interpreted similarly to the western stave, although it must be kept in mind that the pitch indicated is relative. Generally I write all parts as though using treble clef. Men's parts must be read an octave lower, as appropriate.

Chorus



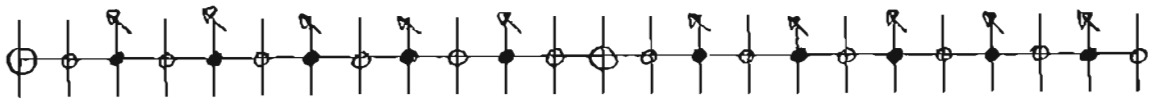
- Although the use of accidentals (which imply a western scale system) has been avoided as far as possible by choosing an appropriate relative pitch, there are cases where the use of such accidentals have been unavoidable. Refer for example to the song from the Kunene region on p. 270.
- For melodic structure the transcription should be read in terms of cycle, the length of which is indicated in a circle at the beginning of the transcription, e.g. (24) (see on p. 221). This involves the call and answer.
- The tonal centre refers to the home tone around which the song appears to be structured, or to which it appears to return. As the tonal centre refers to both male and female voices, an indication of D for example, means a D as an organisational point, rather than a specific D. On p. 221 men double up the chorus part an octave lower than written. The tonal centre of F therefore refers to F above middle C as well as F below middle C.

- The note store is a summary of all the tones which appear in the song. This allows one to get an idea of the tonal system (or scale) in use. It is arranged in descending order of pitch .

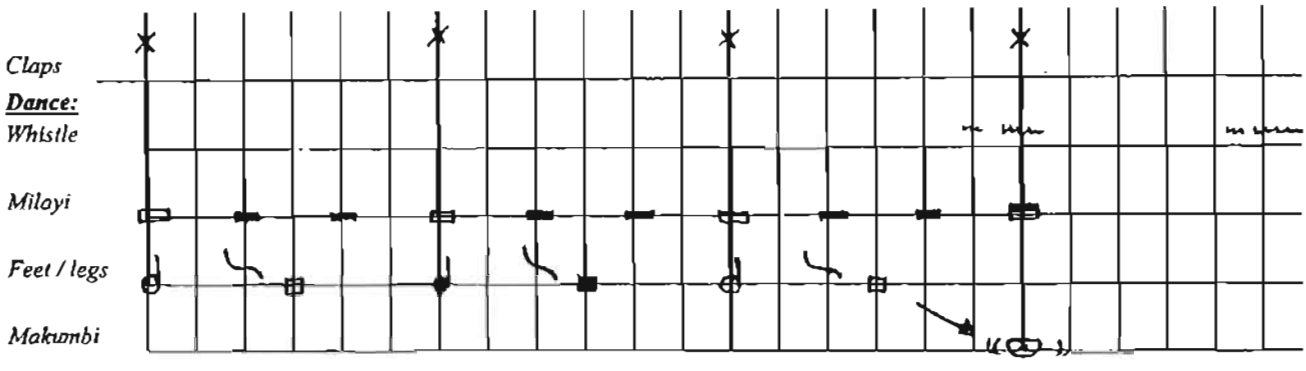
5.2.4 Kinemes

- Drumming and dance actions have been notated in the form of kinemes. These indicate actions which are most typical, or which characterise the dance. Kinemes refer to specific sections of the body of the dancer, for example actions of the feet and legs, the arms, pelvis, head and neck, and so forth - whichever are relevant to the particular dance. Where possible, I have tried to use kinemic symbols which approximate the movement itself, e.g. «⬭» refers to a shake of the shoulders (*makumbi* on p. 295), while ⟍ indicates an extended leg; ⌣ indicates a shoulder contraction (p. 221); ☝ indicates a hand shaken with finger pointing (see p. 192), and so on.
- In some cases only the feet have been notated, as the rest of the body's movements appear to be highly individualised, and largely used to provide natural balance (see *oudano* on p. 239). The body as a whole is described in the sections following the song.
- Where possible, I have used the same kinemic signs for similar, although not necessarily identical movements. For example, I use white symbols for right, and black for left. However, a right foot step may be indicated as O (p. 192) but the same symbol is used for a right foot stamp in *oudano* (p. 239). The reasoning is that this sign represents the basic right foot movement for the particular dance. The number of symbols would become too complicated if different symbols were used for each movement. Studying the kinemic legend before each song is therefore vital.
- The relative size of kinemic symbols help to indicate intensity, thus O is a strong foot movement, while o is a less intense movement (see for example the kinemes for movements of the feet for *oudano* on pp. 239, 240).

Feet



- The notation for the dance movements should be read vertically as well as horizontally. In this way, one can see in *nyakasanga* for example (p. 295), that three forward foot movements are followed by one *makumbi*. Body actions should therefore be read as a whole, not merely in discrete parts.



5.2.5 General

- Where only one line of notation appears for a voice part or instrument, the same pattern is repeated without change, unless the performer improvises or creates some individual variation.
- Ululations have not been notated, but their use apppears in the description where applicable. This is because ululations tend to occur when intensity of performance builds up. This cannot be fixed in a notation.
- Repeats are indicated with the sign : || : : ||
- Simultaneous parts are bracketed as follows: [

It is suggested that the reader should reread and become familiar with the above before reading the transcriptions.

5.3 A CELEBRATORY DANCE IN THE OKAVANGO REGION - *EPERA*

[Video track 9]

The material leading to this description was recorded at the Leevi Hakusembe Secondary School, west of Rundu. The performance was by the school choir, who in an attempt to revive certain musical traditions, performed this *epera*.

5.3.1 Description of context, background and purpose

5.3.1.1 Socio-geographical context

The term *epera* is used by Vakwangalis to describe a kind of celebratory dance. Kwangali people live mostly in the northern part of Namibia along the Okavango river, west of the town Rundu. They also have relatives living across the border on the Angolan side of the river. See the map below which shows the region in more detail.

FIGURE 5.4 MAP OF NORTHERN OKAVANGO REGION

It is said that the people of this region were previously settled along the Kwando river as hunting-gardening peoples. They have a relationship with Subhia and Shanjo people in Zambia. The arrival of most of the people in the Okavango area is placed at about 1600, although it is believed that Mbukushu people might have arrived later, from between 1750 and 1810 (Gibson, *et al.*: 1981: 22). Vakwangali people of this area are known to have family totems. They have ten different totems or clans, including Vakwasipika (the hyena), Vakwandumbe (the eland), Vakwanyime (the lion) and Vakwankora (hunger).

Along the Okavango river people practice mixed agriculture. They stock Sanga cattle, goats, and plant grain crops such as maize and millet. Fishing also provides a major source of food. Cattle are prized possessions, providing not only food but also transport. Wooden sleds, attached by means of yokes to large oxen, transporting a load or a person, are a common sight. Cattle have cultural value in giving an indication of wealth and social status.

The main town of the area is Rundu. The climate is hot with average day temperatures in the 30 - 40 degree centigrade range. It is sub-tropical, with summer rainfall. Even though this area is quite highly populated (in Namibian terms) it is a rural area with most people living in family enclosures in small villages. Kwangali villages (*libata*) traditionally have a circular outline and are often placed next to the river. The village has numerous yards and passageways enclosed by palisades of roughly hewn wooden poles. Living areas are made private by the use of reed mats as partitions. Family compounds differ from those in the eastern Caprivi in that more wood and less thatch is used. The people of the Okavango region are widely known for their woodwork. Their carvings range from masks and drums to modern furniture decorated with designs traditional to this area. I give a rough sketch below of a typical design found in masks, on drums and on modern furniture. John Lumbala, a master carver at Mbangura Woodcarvers in Rundu, told me[18] that the face with its open eyes symbolises their identity as 'Kavangos', and the outward curving lines or ridges surrounding the face signifies " Come talk to us, we are open, we have nothing to

18 Interview notes, Mbangura Woodcarvers Co-operative, Rundu, 25 Jjuly 1993.

hide" - a statement which may give an indication of Vakwangali attitude to others. Other designs frequently seen are stylised diamond shapes (referring to work on the mine at Oranjemund, fishes (factory work at Walvis Bay), and the sun and stars.

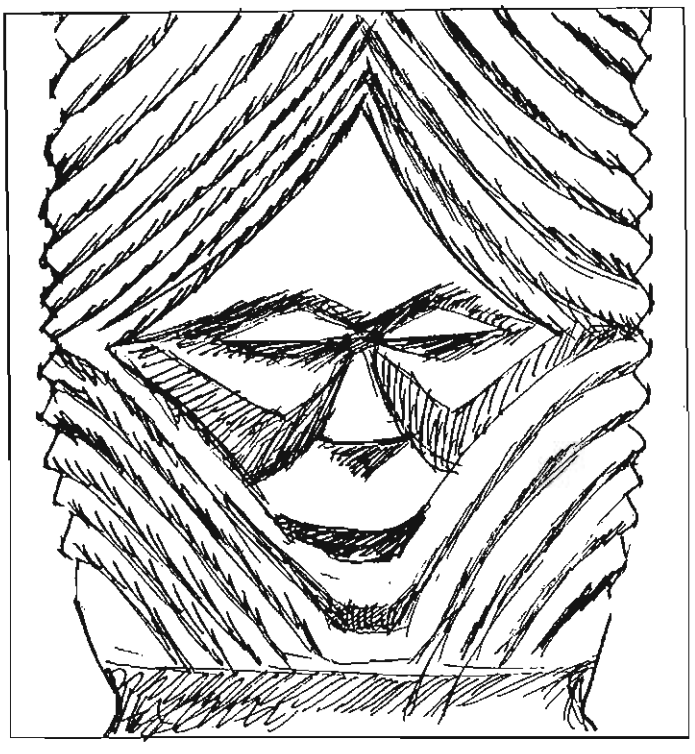


FIGURE 5.5 A TYPICAL OKAVANGO WOOD CARVING DESIGN

5.3.1.2 Language

The language of the song I have transcribed is Rukwangali. Other language groups of this region are Sisambyu, Thimbukushu (or Segora), Rumbundza (who today speak mostly Rukwangali) and Rugciriku (also known as Rumanyo or Simbogedu).

5.3.1.3 Background and purpose of the song/dance

Like other parts of northern Namibia, this area was deeply involved in the war leading to independence. Rundu was a centre of many cross-border battles, and the shattered buildings on the opposite side of the river in Angola, are testimony to the heavy artillery fired at SWAPO fighters across the border. At Leevi Hakusembe Secondary School[19] the artwork and song texts encountered in my 1993 visit recall the

19 Named after an important traditional leader.

stresses experienced when school pupils were questioned by armed South African soldiers and school grounds and villages were raked with gunfire from helicopters. Today people are putting those times behind them. The area is a centre for the revival of cultural practices, with music and dance playing a central role in this process.

Epera, the event discussed here, was traditionally a festive social event, during which people would be called together to celebrate something. This could be the installation of a new chieftain, a good harvest or hunt, a wedding, beer-brewing, or the completion of a communal project. In the past youths from the royal village would move from village to village as part of the *yitorondondwa* ceremony (the harvest of beans, or 'eating of new fruits') which starts at the royal village. When they reached a village, *epera* could last the whole night, performed outside the village. Petrus Kasera (interview, Windhoek 1996) describes this as "special songs which are sung before the *mahango* is ready to eat - a feast to test the new *mahango* through the night". These songs are more specifically called *siperu,* and the 'testing' is in the form of beer.

When missionaries settled in the area towards the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, dances such as *epera* were suppressed, largely because many festive dances ended with people of different sexes sleeping together (Gibson, *et. al:* 1981: 73). Today, *epera* is usually only 'played' by older people - often at cuca shops (drinking places), according to younger informants (Neromba, Kandjimi, Mungungi and Linonoka, interviews, Windhoek 1996). When occurring at cuca shops, the dance apparently generally takes place during the day. Other informants (Harupe, Shifafufwe, Haingura, Kasera, Kudumo, Wakudumo, Kavara, interviews 1993, 1996) describe it more seriously as a dance which symbolises something, which is why it is more often performed by older people (Kasera, 1996). For example, Kasera says the song might use the symbol *engomba,* "a red and black turkey-sized bird which is a snake-eater". This symbol also has fertility or sexual connotations. When *epera* is associated with a harvest festival, wedding or other celebration, it may start in the afternoon and continue through the

night.[20] Maria Wakadumo[21] explains that among Sambyu people, children in the past would not perform this dance with adults, but would have their own *siperu* "in order to respect older people". This young unmarried person's version was called *siwingi*, and was an opportunity "to check the opposite sex out". Through revivals of the dance by school and other cultural groups, the dance is losing its connotation of performance 'by drunks', and is regaining some of its earlier functions and values.

The dance is performed out of doors, with participants lined up in two rows facing one another. The one line is male and the other female. The distance between lines is approximately 5 metres. Everybody sings and claps hands and there are two or three drums depending on the particular custom of the area, or availability. The drums both accompany and integrate the song and dance. The drummers, who support the drums between their legs, are placed at one end of a line. The names of the drums are *nkurugoma* (the drum with the deep voice) and *nkinza* (or *nkindjo* - the drum with the small voice). These are open-ended conical wooden drums. They are quite long - about 1,75 metres for the *nkurugoma* and 1,4 metres for the *nkinza*. The diameter at the membrane end is about 10 - 15 centimetres. Similar to the Caprivian custom, specific patterns are associated with specific occasions. During *epera* one may find two *nkinza* drums - the one playing the pattern *machakili*, and the other playing *pundu* (these are mnemonics for playing patterns). The pattern of the *nkurugoma* relates to the dancers and is improvised to a large extent, but within the parameters of customary rhythms. One may also find a friction drum (*ngomanguito)* being used to create extra power.

20 Personal communications with F. Haingura, P Kasera, E Neromba, H Kandjimi, J Linonoka, F Mungungi, Windhoek, 1996.
21 Interview, Windhoek 1996.

In the past, but less so today, dancers (men and women) would wear grass skirts. These are made from a sturdy reed-like grass growing along the river. The stalk is cut into short sections of about two centimetres. These are attached to one another to form skirt-lengths. The movement of the skirt adds to the rhythmic

PLATE 5.3 (From left to right) NKINZA 1, NKURUGOMA, NKINZA 2

sound. Women today also wear brightly coloured printed cloth wrap skirts, with an extra length wrapped high around the hips to accentuate hip movements. In the past women used to wear elaborate coiffures with their long hair braided and extended by intertwining *mugoro* fibres with the hair and adding beads. Dancers also wear rattles made from caterpillar coccoons tied around the legs. These are called *nonkitu*. The repetitions in singing and strong drumming allow energy for the dance to be built up gradually. It is 'good' to put in your own individual movements, as long as they remain within the general framework of rhythm and style. Small, neat, sliding foot movements and subtle shoulders are considered aesthetically pleasing by Kwangali people (according to Neromba, Kandjimi and Mungungi). Hip sways should also not be too obvious.

The rows of singers are not mere onlookers, but full participants, in the sense that they are responsible for energy levels and encouragement, while awaiting their turns to dance. This is expressed from time to time in keen ululations (*runkalinkali*), which involve girls creating a very high pitched note while their tongues make rapid forward/backward movements against the front of the palate behind upper teeth. The pitch falls as the ululation ends. In *epera* the emphasis throughout is on enjoyment as in a social game. It is worth noting some differences in time and practice in similar dances among other groups in the Okavango and western Caprivi region.

Rukwangali	**Sisambyu**	**Rugciriku**	**Thimbukushu**
Vernacular term for the dance:			
epera	lipera	shiperu	dipera
Terms for drums:			
nkurugoma and nkinza	nkurungoma, nkinzo and mundindi	nkindju	ngurungoma, mbumo and ngindja
When performed:			
daytime at cuca shops	evening, through night	evening	anytime
Dance focus:			
feet, shoulders	hips (*mayimbwe*), play with neck and head or with shoulders, whole body movement in turns, feet	feet, hips and shoulders	shoulders, hips
Purpose of dance:			
celebration of harvests, weddings, collective building, or drinking (new) beer	Celebration of weddings, good harvests, hunt, installation of new chief	Celebration	celebration of good hunt or harvest, happiness

5.3.2 Transcription of music and dance

The transcription was taken from a video recording and followed up by interviews with eleven students from the area who provided additional information and viewed and criticized the quality of the recorded dance performance. This allowed me to establish parameters for aesthetic judgement, and also provided some insight into the differences between performances of this event among different language groups.

5.3.2.1 *Signs used in the notation of this song*

Descending vocal slide

Nkinza and *nkurugoma* are drumming parts

❖ **Kinemes for drums:**

= Right hand (or dominant hand) - full cupped hand

= Right hand - half hand, i.e. mostly fingers

= Left hand - half hand

❖ **Kinemes for dance:**

○ = Right foot small step fwd

● = Left foot small step fwd

□ = Right foot place next to left

■ = Left foot place next to right

)(= Shoulders/upper back small alternating fwd/bwd *shakes* in opposition to feet

◡— = small fwd/bwd *shrugs* of both shoulders (movement range 2 to 3 cms)

(Dancers would either shake or shrug shoulders, not both. Shoulder movements are only performed by girls, as boys have their arms up in the air. Hambukushu and Sambyu dancers are more likely to shrug, while Vakwangali dancers usually do small shakes)

Syllables, movements or sounds indicated in brackets mean that they are performed sometimes, but not always.

TALIYOWOYA MOMEMA KINA

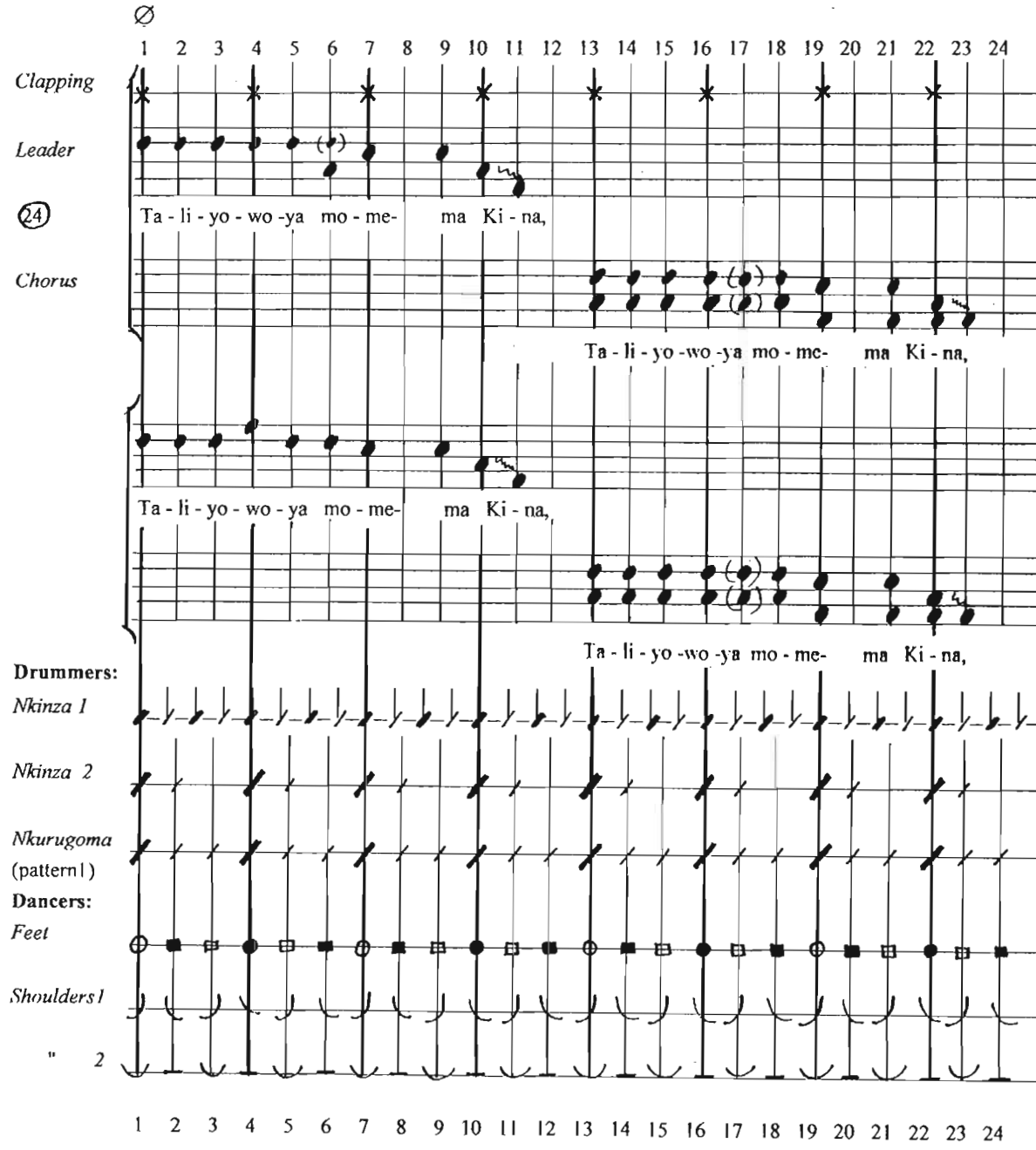
Video track 9
An *epera* song/dance
Language: Rukwangali

District Mbunza, Namibia, 1993.

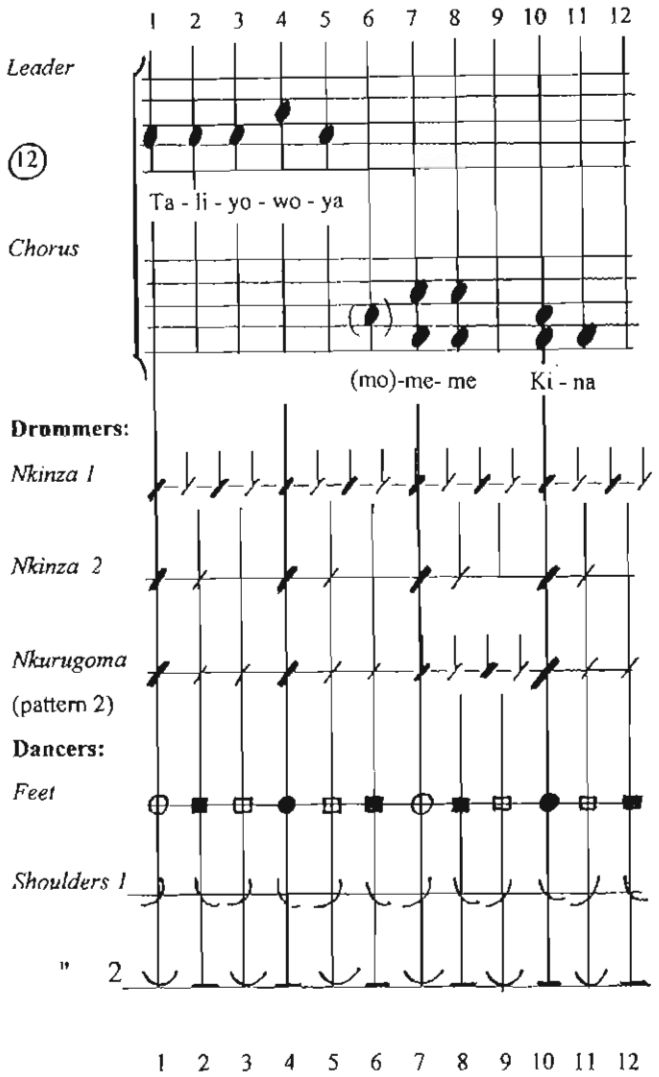
Text provided by A Dikuua

Tempo: X = 120

Section A



Section B



Vernacular text:

Taliyowoya momema Kina

Translation:

Kina is swimming in (dancing) on the water

- **Original Pitch:** tonal centre = F
- **Note store:**

5.3.3 Explanation of characteristics

5.3.3.1 Musical characteristics

"*Taliyowoya momema Kina* " consists of a **main cycle of 24 pulses** (repeated) which is followed by a truncated cycle in section B, consisting of only 12 pulses. The song is **cyclic and antiphonal**, with a leader's brief musical statement followed by the chorus answering. In section A the chorus answers with an exact repetition, apart from added voice parts. In section B, the leader's musical statement is diminished into only the first 6 pulses, with the chorus answering in the second 6 pulses with a slight variation. This B section is repeated as many times as the leader wishes, and its purpose is to energise singers and dancers through its rapid repetition. B does not have to balance A with an equal number of pulses. In the recording the B section sometimes consisted of 5 x 12 pulses, at other 6 or 4 or 7 times. B is followed by a return to A until people tire of the song.

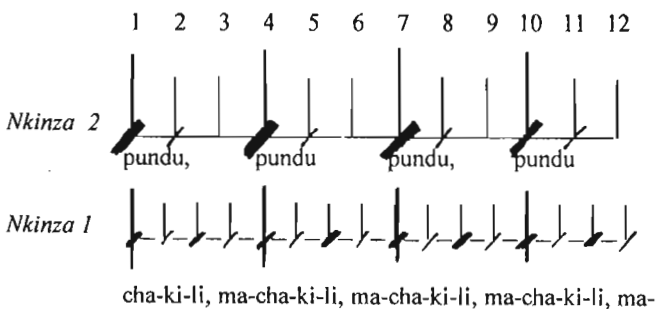
Regarding **the text**, the term *taliyowoya* is described by my student Mungungi as an 'old' word seldom used today, and is a synonym for *kuzogana* which means swimming. In section B the word *"meme"* replaces *"mema"*. My informants all described the song as an old one, and despite coming from different backgrounds and language groups, all my student informants knew the song, indicating that it is well known and popular. Other song texts collected but not transcribed here, included the following:

Nepemba ta liri ure wa Masare	Nepemba's crying could be heard as far as Masare
	(Masare was a leper hospital)
Mwana kolira	The baby is crying
Sikama medina lya Jesus	Stand up in the Name of Jesus
Vanasura vakwetu	Our fellow learners
Tunyanyi kileni efiku ndi	Let us be happy during this day
Unapu kukunda nare	You have been greeted already

(Texts and translations by A. Dikuua and S. Kavara)

The **tonal structure** of this song is tetratonic, (using four tones) although almost all the secular songs heard in this area are usually pentatonic. This song is organized into a pleasing descending melodic pattern. Male and female voices in the chorus replicate parts. The men sing an octave lower. The leader is a female singer. The vocal tone for women and girls is typically throat-resonated - not bel canto. It should sound quite thin and piercing. The descending squiggle at the end of phrases (on "Kina") indicate a descending vocal slide, a characteristic of most Namibian singing.

The rhythmic structure of this song is fairly simple, with relatively few simultaneous instrumental happenings. Each 24 pulse cycle is based on 8 reference beats - indicated by hand claps and foot movements. The smaller drum (*nkinza)* plays a 4-pulse pattern, while singers, *nkurugoma* and dancers use a 3-pulse pattern. The *nkurugoma* drumming, played by the 'master' drummer allows for more improvisation than the smaller *nkinza*. The event is recognizable by the particular drumming patterns used. The patterns and mnemonics follow:



The *nkurugoma*'s work is based on sound quality. The pattern below is one possibility.

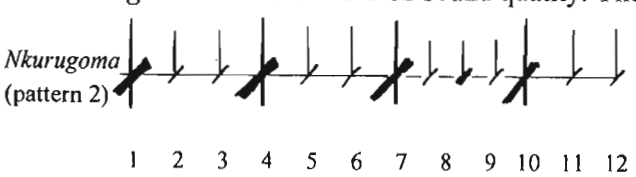


FIGURE 5.6 RELATIONSHIPS OF DRUM PATTERNS

Nkinza 1: A stronger emphasis falls on the second syllable 'cha', therefore the pattern has been written starting on the second syllable for easier reading. As the pulseline for this drum is 4 against the 3 of the singer/dancers, the drummer concentrates on coordinating with the main reference beat.

Nkinza 2 : The emphasis falls on the last syllable. This drummer coordinates with the singers in 3 pulses.

Nkurugoma: There is no specific mnemonic for this drummer. He does, however, work closely with the dancers, leading them in patterns and energy levels. This drummer should create different timbres with hand shape, position and striking distance, and be able to improvise within the given framework - always watching the dance. I have given a simple pattern in the above transcription. On the repeated vocal syllables of "*meme*" this player should create higher pitched timbre (more energy) with strong right hand strikes closer to the edge of the drum face.

5.3.3.2 Characteristics of movements

In the Kwangali *epera*, the basic body position is 'basic earth', with the torso inclined slightly forward from hips. The back is slightly arched. This is more pronounced in the women's posture. The neck and head are aligned with the spine, but with shoulders hunched slightly inwards and forwards. Women may also incline the upper body quite far forwards so as to take hold of and tuck in the skirt just below the buttocks. In this position the shoulder movements become even more emphasised.

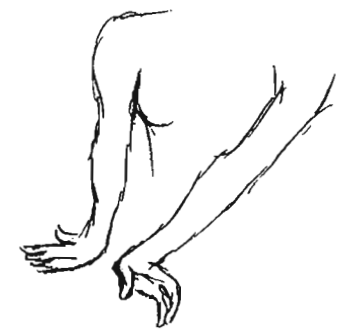
The attitude of the man is a little more upright, with arms raised (see at right). Men move so as to face their 'partners' first on one side then the other while they are executing the foot movements.

A man may circle around his partner. While doing so, they dance with their backs to one another, glancing at one another over their shoulders. Small foot movements are executed in a three-pulse rhythm, with a step-step (on pulse 1 and 2) with a foot placement (change of weight) on pulse 3 (like a very quick, small, waltz step.) Feet may be placed next to or slightly behind one another.[22] This is done in sets of 4 or 8.

22 In *shiperu* the style changes slightly, with feet placed in a 1-2-pause pattern, and the body executing step-turn movements, throwing out a longish skirt, while the woman dances around the man. This is altogether a more swinging and flowing style.

This means that they may perform 4 sets of foot movements forwards, followed by 4 in an S-shape. Foot movements are also reversed, i.e. a series of forward movements (maybe eight sets) may then also be repeated moving backwards. The foot-ground relation is close - feet are never lifted high. Footwork is considered 'good' when the spacing between feet is small and distance of feet to the ground is also small (the closer the better).

Arm positions are an important characteristic of the dance. Womens' arms are extended in front at waist or hip level, fairly close to the body. Some women flex their hands to a position at right angles to the arm, with thumbs almost touching and with palms facing outwards.



Men's arms are extended forwards, slightly above or at shoulder height, with elbows bent and palms facing outwards, thumbs towards the ground and fingers extended. This is said to symbolise the horns of cattle - *rupeto*. The man (bull) then moves to face first one 'cow' (female dancer) and then the other.[23] Female dancers have said that they see this arm position and movement as one of protectiveness.[24] In the dance the man may use his arms and body in ways which clearly show the behaviour of a bull, for example tossing his head, or 'charging' with lowered 'horns' and upper body. How well he performs this role is an indication of his skill at the dance.

In *epera*, because it is a group rather than a solo dance, the sequence of movements is not as important as the modality and ground pattern of the dance, which characterizes a structural style. Individual movements

23 Petrus Kasera, interview, Windhoek 1996.
24 E Neromba, H Kandjimi, J Linonoka, interviews, Windhoek 1996.

are led by the text of the song , according to Wakadumo who says: "The song's text is illustrated in the dance, to show meaning".[25] The description below is, therefore, merely an indication of possibilities.

Ground pattern for *epera*

After the drums and singing have commenced and the moment feels right, a man from one end of the men's line moves diagonally towards the opposite end of the women's line, performing small steps with his feet.[26] He then turns and moves back towards his own line, and returns once again to the opposite one. There he approaches two (or one) women who join him in dance - one woman on each side. They dance towards the central open space, where they dance around one another in circles and then move towards the mens' line. The first man is replaced by another and the basic sequence repeated. He returns the women to their line, to be joined by one or two others, and so they continue. See Figure 5.7 - looking at dancers from above. Sometimes three women may dance with one man, or someone may perform a 'solo' sequence while the rest continue the main sequence.

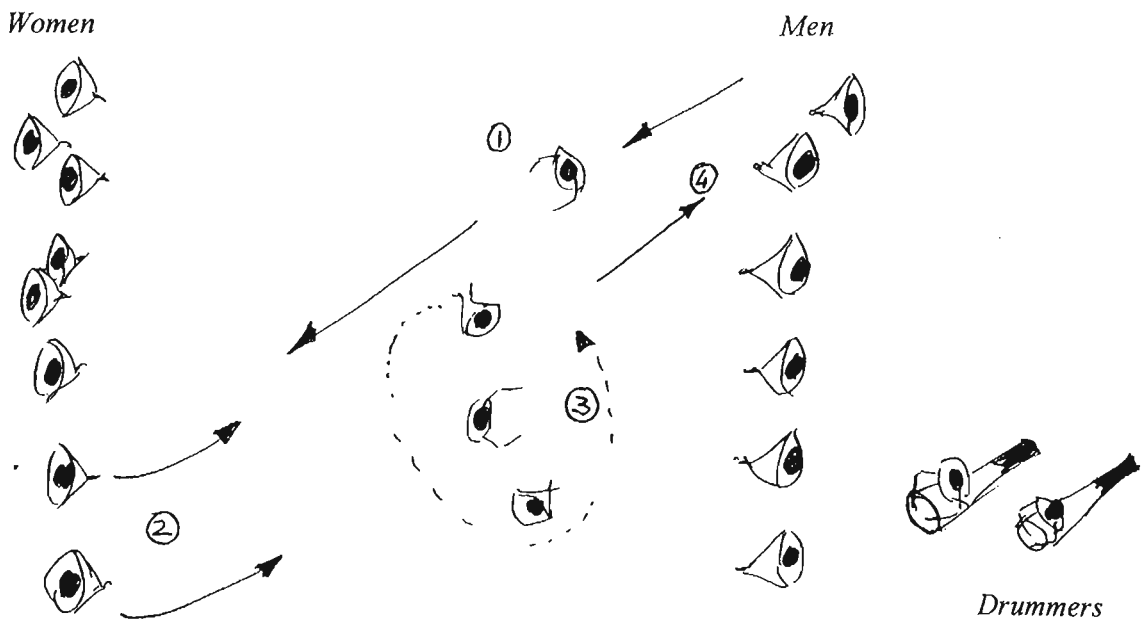


FIGURE 5.7 FLOOR DESIGN FOR EPERA

While the ground patterns performed in the centre may vary widely, some typical alternatives follow.

25 M Wakadumo, interview, Windhoek 1996.

26 In my recording the men start by first moving around in a large circle, their arms in position, doing the three-step pattern or skipping until they take in their place in a line. This is however a rehearsed version for a performance, rather than a dance as it would occur in a village. No informants included this part in their descriptions of the dance.

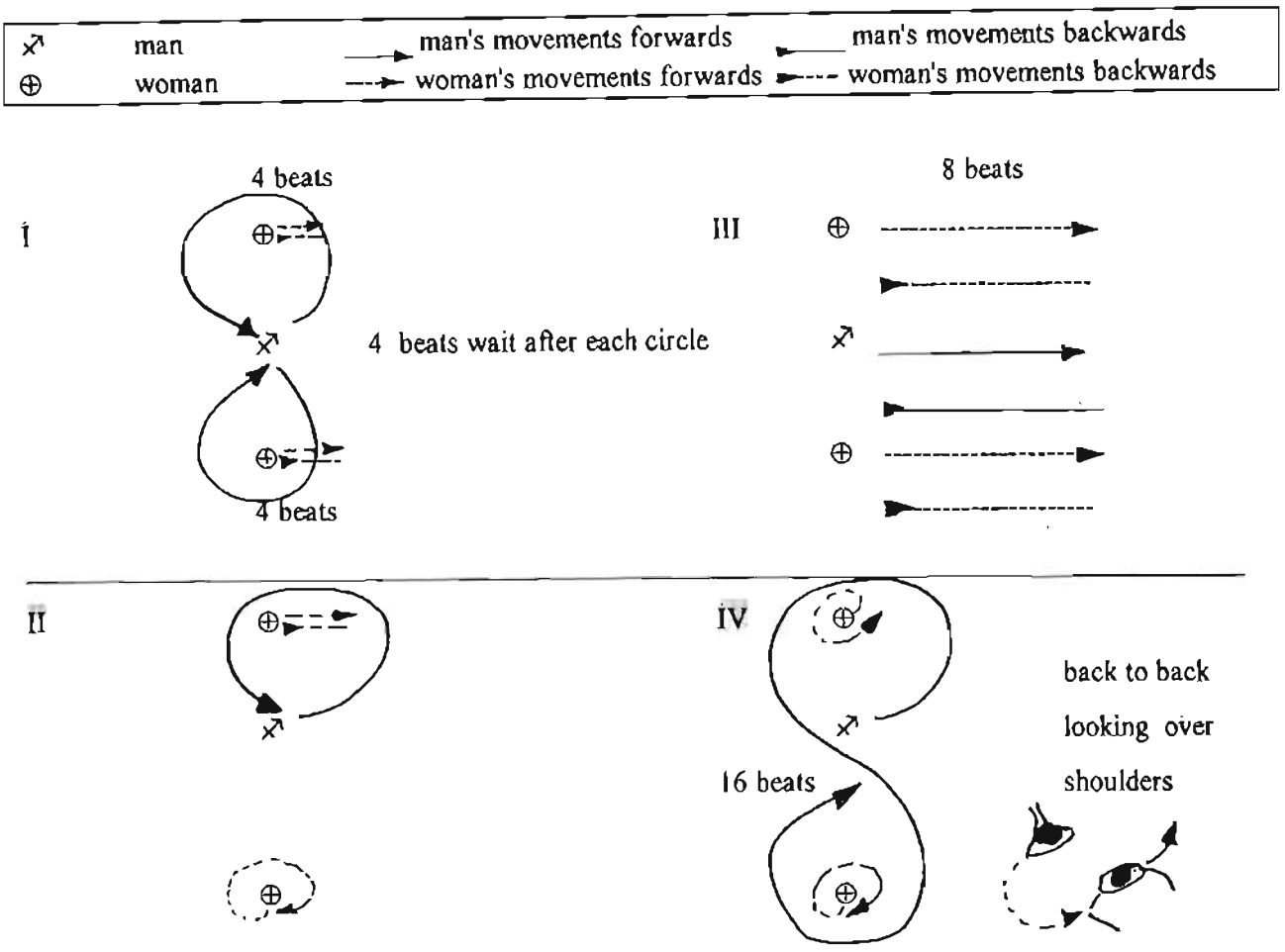


FIGURE 5.8 ALTERNATIVE GROUP PATTERNS

5.3.4 Suggestions for the classroom

This event is suitable for teaching at almost all levels of schooling, although younger children are unlikely to cope with the full event, particularly the drumming and with the flirtatious nature of the dance. They can, however, learn the song and the dance movements to go with it. Possibly the teacher, an older learner, or someone with a steady sense of tempo can play the pundu pattern (see Fig. 5.6). Because *epera* is a festive dance, the emphasis should be to develop this kind of mood. In reality, the dance would start with less excitement than would be observable once the right kind of atmosphere had developed.

- **Learn the song** section by section, at first with the teacher as leader, but without variations. Because the song is basically antiphonal, the learners will be repeating what the teacher is singing, thus

speeding up the learning process in a most natural way. When the song is known to all, the teacher can start with leader variations and improvisations, ensuring that the chorus continue as notated. Thereafter learners can take turns to act as singing leader. Identify and discuss certain characteristics of the song, for example the antiphony, the descending melodic line, the three-pulse rhythmic base, the integration of the cross-rhythms of the drums.

- Learners need to know and understand the **context** for *epera*, so as to be able to recreate it with integrity. To achieve this, teachers can provide information and direct learners to sources where they can discover the information themselves, possibly guided by set tasks. Information can be related to other subject areas such as social studies - discovering something about the geography and economy of the area, the historical background of the area, some similarities and differences in the languages of the area, something about the *Hompa* (chief or king or queen) and royal families and their practices, the meanings of traditional wood-carving patterns, the techniques involved in basket-weaving and dyeing of fibres, and so forth.
- **Chant the mnemonic patterns** for the drums (see Fig. 5.6). Add to this the drumming action, by having learners sit in a circle and drum the pattern on the floor while chanting together. Ensure a steady tempo. Demonstrate the correct drumming kinemes on an imaginary drum face, or let learners draw a drumface on paper (see Fig. 5.9) and perform drumming actions on this paper placed on the floor.

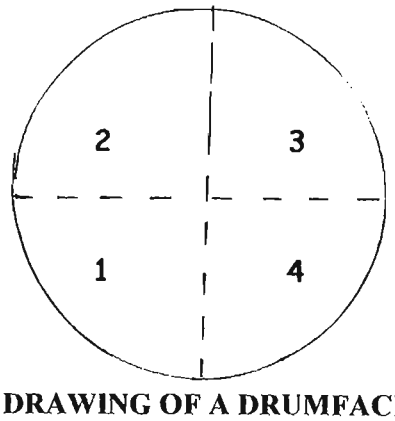
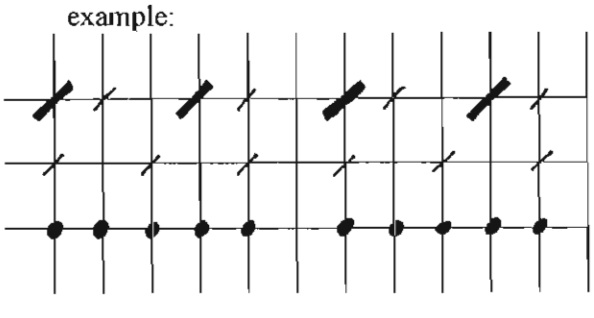


FIGURE 5.9 DRAWING OF A DRUMFACE FOR PRACTICE PURPOSES

- Once the three different patterns have been mastered, divide into two groups and **combine** two patterns, e.g. *nkinza* 2 and *nkurugoma* (as notated). Then combine *nkinza* 2 (pundu) with *nkinza* 1 (machakili), making sure that the initial pulse coincides, and thereafter that all the coinciding pulses

are correct. To ensure this, it may be necessary to beat a separate pattern (on a drum rather than the floor) which provides the guideline for coinciding pulses or reference beats. When these combinations have been mastered, attempt all three in smaller groups so that the patterns can be heard clearly.

- Allow individuals to take turns with the drums, so as to **explore the different timbres** on different parts of the drum face. This may not be possible realistically in normal class hours, but could be encouraged in other time slots.
- Make a **pulse or graphic notation** of the drumming patterns. Do this in such a way that the inter-relationships and reference beats become clear, for example if using pulse notation, make the lines for the reference beats thicker or draw them in a different colour. Indicate clearly where the threes and fours interface.
- **Identify** which drumming pattern(s) has a rhythm which relates most strongly to the rhythm of the song. Question why. When learners have identified the three-pulse rhythm underlying the song, it will lead naturally to the learning of the basic dance action, as described above (the steps or movement of feet).
- By means of a demonstration and repetition, and observation of a video recording, **learn the basic structure or ground pattern and the individual dance pattern** possibilities of *epera*. Ground patterns may be illustrated with drawings. Boys and girls may wish to separate to practice the style of their movements. Improvise and create new patterns.
- **Combine** the song and dance, then bring in the drums. Alternatively combine drums and movements before adding the song. Allow ample opportunity to clear up all the problems, especially those relating to coinciding pulses. When this has been mastered, the patterns will clarify.
- One direction in which to proceed, is to use given patterns to **create new pattern combinations**. For example:



This could lead to improvisation of movements to go with each pattern, or the combination. From there a new dance can be created.

- **Create skirts** from thick, hollow river grass or reed (or use drinking straws if unavailable) by cutting into short lengths (about two centimetres each) and threading lengths of about half a metre together. These lengths are then attached to a belt and tied around the waist for dancing. Girls' hip motions while executing the small foot movements should be slightly exaggerated so as to put the skirt into motion. Similarly, rattles for the ankles can be created. Coccoons commonly found on Namibian thorn bushes can be removed, soaked in water to soften and then the inner caterpillar is removed. A small pebble is inserted and the opening is pinned closed with a thorn and left to dry. After this it is threaded. Alternatively the beads from babies' pram rattles, or small 'coccoons' of paper can be used. These can be threaded and tied around the ankle for the dance.

- **Create a dramatic representation** of a traditional *epera*, as may have been practised related to *yitorondondwa*. Make use of a village representation, costume, learners as actors representing youths from the royal village and other villagers, village elders, a chief, and so forth. Learners should research the history of this event. They can create a story-line to help the dramatization of the event. This should lead up to the performance of the dance. Learners may create new songs in the characteristic style.

- **Perform** this dramatization for others.

- **Research** other traditional events of the area, for example *kuteza* (time of gathering vegetable crops); *kuhwaga* (harvesting grain); *yiyiwo* (close of the agricultural year); *hango* (a leaping dance performed by men); *nyambi-nyambi* (rain ceremonies); *nombali* (smelling out of witches); *nongoma* (curing) dances.

Many different songs for *epera* may be learnt from cultural insiders, but learners may want to use the basic music and dance patterns to create new songs.

5.4 DANCE-GAME IN OSHANA, OHANGWENA, OMUSATI AND OSHIKOTO REGIONS - *OUDANO*.

☼ [Video track 10 - transcribed oudano song, followed by other *oudano/uudhano* performances.]

5.4.1 Description of context, background and purpose.

5.4.1.1 Socio-geographical context

The central northern part of Namibia, situated between the Okavango and Kunene regions, is the most highly populated area in Namibia, apart from the area directly surrounding Windhoek. It is bordered in the north by Angola and in the south partially by the Etosha Game Reserve. The flat salt pans and plains of Etosha extend to the southern parts of these regions.

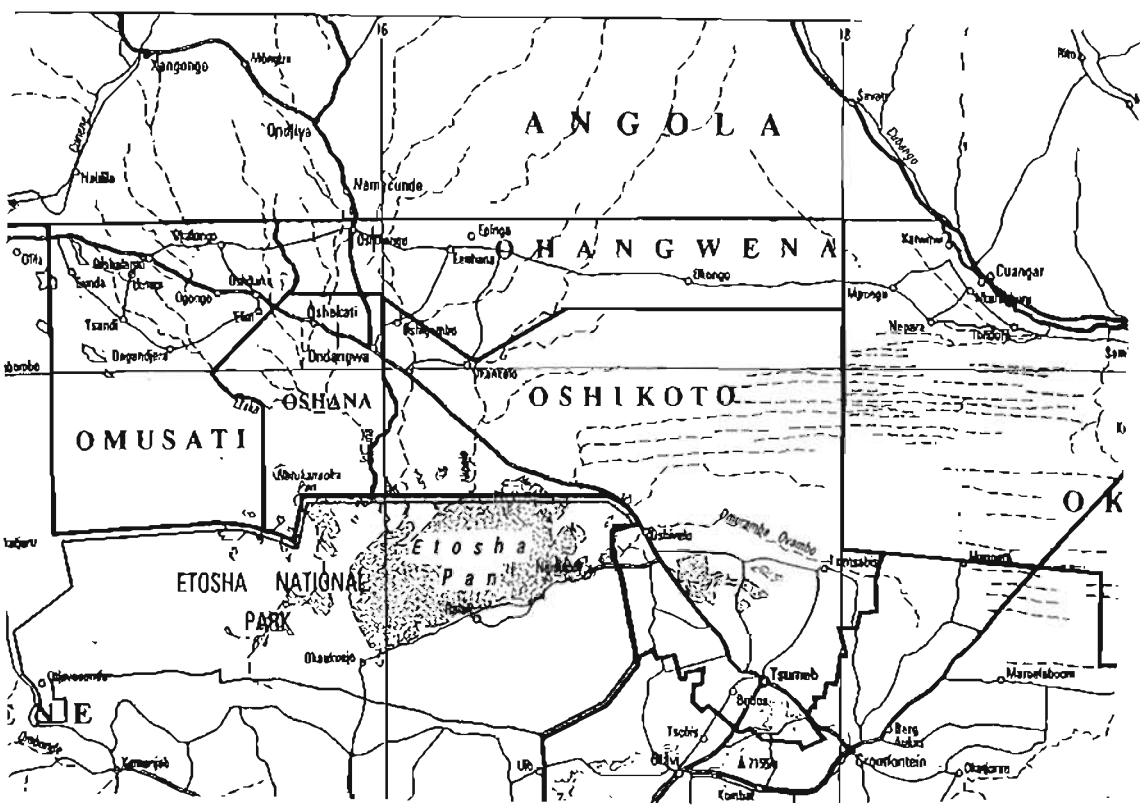


FIGURE 5.10 OSHANA, OHANGWENA, OMUSATI AND OSHIKOTO REGIONS

The area has been somewhat deforested, although *makalani* palms with their tall, slender trunks are a characteristic sight as one moves further north. Similar to other northern areas, the climate is very hot in summer, mild in winter. *Oshanas* (flat, salty pans) fill with water seasonally after the summer rains. Mtota refers to water holes as *omithima* and water flats as *eedungu* in Oshikwanyama.[27] In the rainy season, one may see local people with reed fish traps and nets moving into the watery plains to catch fish. Subsistence agro-pastoralism centres around millet, maize and vegetable crops and cattle production. Although the whole region was officially called Owamboland before Independence, there are now several regions, namely Oshikoto (which includes the mining town of Tsumeb), Ohangwena, Oshana, and Omusati. While there are a number of smallish towns, including Oshakati, Ondangwa and Ombalantu, most of the population is spread out fairly evenly across the area, living in extended family compounds. Such family compounds are mostly surrounded by their crop and grazing lands. Young people often walk long distances to reach school.

Prior to the 1960's, a system of conscripted labour, run by a corporation known as SWANLA, functioned in the northern regions. Many Owambo men were forced into labour on mines and factories to the south. The dreadful working and living conditions and forced separation from family were factors which contributed directly the resistance movement (mentioned in chapter 2) with its locus among the Owambo people. One result was that the main thrust of the war between South African forces and South West African Peoples' Organization took place in this area and across the border in Angola. Owamboland (as it was then known) was administrated by a Native Commissioner who resided in Oshakati, with administrative offices in Ondangwa. The South African Defence Force had a very strong presence in the area and most local people were considered by them to be possible collaborators with SWAPO forces, and thus 'the enemy'. Hence, these parts of the country were subjected to very strict curfews, interrogations, and armed conflict during the war. This resulted in extreme racial and personal tensions in the area.

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27 Ervast Mtota commenting on this section, personal communications, Windhoek, February 1997.

5.4.1.2 Language

There are a number of dialects spoken in the area[28] of which Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga are the most widely spoken. The different language groups of the area share many cultural practices, possibly under different names. For example, the 'traditional marriage ceremony' for girls in Oukwanyama (the area traditionally occupied by -Kwanyamas) is called *efundula*. In Ondonga (the area traditionally occupied by Ndongas) it is called *ohango*. The basic ways and means of practising these ceremonies, and the values attached, are however fairly similar.

5.4.1.3 Background and purpose of the dance

In SWAPO camps across the northern Namibian border, as well as in villages in the area, people continued their cultural practices of music and dance despite the restrictions resulting from the political struggle. Performances now became embued with the added purposes of emotional release, propaganda and training for new recruits, and political sensitization for young children. *Oudano* (in Oshikwanyama, or *uudhano* in Oshindonga)[29] was a major cultural vehicle by means of which these aims could be reached.[30] Zinke (1992) collected many songs in the camps of Namibian exiles in Angola. Although there are *oudano* songs in the collection, it consists mainly one of patriotic songs. She explains:

> Die Lebensverhältenisse der Exilanten im Camp unterschieden sich wesentlich von den gewohnten Lebensformen in ihrer Heimat. ... Das Leben im Exil und in den Reihen der Befreihungsbewegung brachte neue, dominierende Lebensinhalte. In diesen Jahren des Strebens nach nationaler Unabhängichkeit waren neue gesänge entstanden, die von den Namibiern als patriotische Lieder bezeichnet wurden. (Zinke, 1992: 8)

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28 Oshikwambi, Oshimbalantu, Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Oshingandjera, Oshikwaludhi, Oshinkolonkhadi.
29 A player is called *omudhani* in Oshindonga. Because the song transcribed is in Oshikwanyama, I shall continue to use the -Kwanyama term in this section, except when referring specifically to a particular tradition.
30 *Omupembe*, a leaping dance for young men, is another dance through which political resistance was expressed.

In other words, the camp existence was fundamentally different to 'normal' life, emphasising new or different life values. This, according to Zinke, resulted in even 'traditional' forms such as *oudano* being infused with patriotic texts.

Oudano is a dance-game where two or more persons enter the ring in turns, to perform a dance based on fixed stamping rhythms, each characteristic of specific areas and repertoires. The term *oudano* is inclusive of dance (*okudhana*) as well as play (*okudanauka*) (Zinke, 1992: 109). It was originally a game for adolescents. It was performed in the evenings around or next to a central fire as a form of entertainment. Sometimes it was performed by girls or boys only, but mostly it was a way young people could meet one another within the confines of strict social customs concerning sexual relationships. Adult women often play *oudano* on social occasions, but adult men normally only observe. Today a modern form of *oudano* has come to be associated with the political rallies of the ruling party SWAPO. The older rhythm patterns have been extended, and those of different areas combined, to create a new and longer structure. Children create their own texts and melodies. Songs may have texts which praise the party, the struggle for political freedom, and the new Republic of Namibia. Mtota says that there is a belief that those who perform very well do so because of talent inherent to the family or even clan. He advises that teachers should guard against this because it could discourage shy or less talented learners from participating.[31]

Older traditions of *oudano* in rural areas have a slightly different rhythmic structures to the example given here. An example of a movement sequence from an older tradition is the following: a group of women - two or more, enter the space and perform their sequence of movements in perfect rhythmic synchronization. They may for example perform a 32 pulse cycle facing the 'front', arms raised straight and high above their heads, and then repeat this sequence to the side, the back, the other side and again the front. They are then followed by a next group of women doing the same. Each group, however, tries to

31 Ervast Mtota commenting on this section, personal communications, Windhoek, February 1997.

outperform the others in terms of style and synchronization. Putting in more energy, with hip swings on the stamps, is considered very pleasing. These dancers or players are accompanied by the clapping of hands (*eempandu*), singing and sometimes drumming. I provide an *uudhano* song ("Onena hatu hambelele") and examples of such older *oudano* rhythms following the first transcription. This song was collected by a student Idda Shivolo, and I transcribed it from an audio recording. As the dance was not observed during the recording, I include the song purely for its interest and not for analysis.

In the past the tonal system of northern Namibia (in Oshiwambo-speaking areas) was described as based on an equidistant heptatonic scale.[32] Today however, the diatonic major scale has been creatively assimilated throughout this region, but traces of the old scale remain in certain songs. In older *uudhano* songs (the Oshindonga term), the singing tone is fairly sustained. Word-sounds (syllables) like "*iyoyei wei*" make the sustained tone possible. The vocal tone of younger children is more articulated.

Traditional dress for women of this area (*odelela* in Oshindonga) is a skirt of pinkish-red, overlaid with beltwork of blue or pink beads and vertical lengths of cloth upon which large shells (*omihanga* or *ongo*) are fixed. Complex systems of braids formed hairstyle traditions of the past. In the photograph below (Plate 5.3) the hairstyle of the young bride is calles *egala*, which means 'hat' in Oshindonga. Her beads are referreed to as *onyoka*. In present times performers may wear SWAPO colours, that is red, blue and green. One or two drums may be played, but are not a requirement. A drum may be played by a girl. She is extremely important to the rhythm of the dance. The drum is called *ongoma*, which is a generic term for drums in the Oshiwambo dialects. The drum is conical with one open end and a socle or foot. Drums tend to be medium sized, varying between a length of 80 cms to just over a metre.

32 A. Tracey, transcription workshop, Windhoek, 1990.

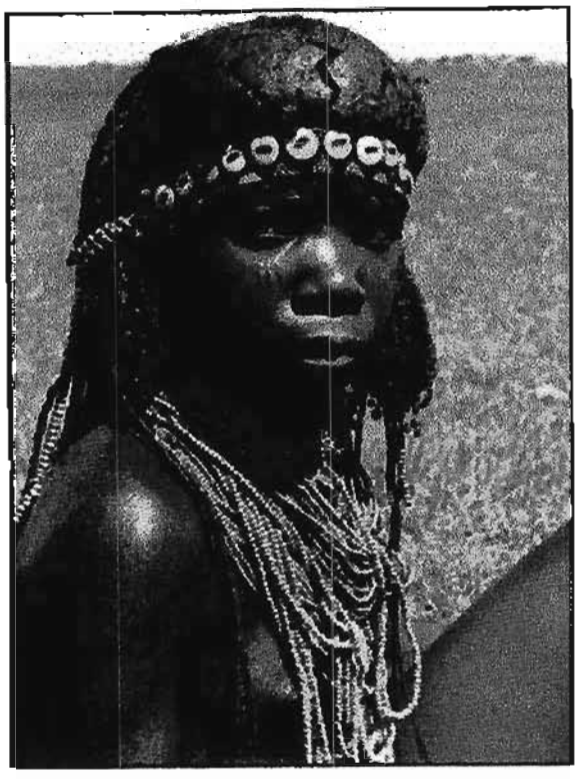


PLATE 5.4 A TRADITIONAL OWAMBO BRIDE'S HAIRSTYLE / HEAD DRESS

5.4.2 Transcription of *oudano* music and dance

The transcription of "Omutwendi-one ya Maalitsa" was taken from a video recording of the Namibian Broadcasting Company. Unfortunately the master recording was deleted by the NBC, hence the poor quality of the dubbing on my accompanying tape. I include further recordings from the NBC to give an idea of similar performances. I was assisted in the text translation by Idda Shivolo, a student, and in understanding and performing the dance, by another student, Nelago Kalilo. The song "Omutwendi-one yaMaalitsa" celebrates the political independence of Namibia, which occurred on 21 March 1990. The song "Onena hatu hambele" was transcribed from an audio cassette recording made by Idda Shivolo.

5.4.2.1 *Signs used in the notation of the song Omutwendi-one ya Maalitsa*

Ongoma is the drum

❖ **Kinemes for drum:**

Right hand (or dominant hand) - half hand, lower right quadrant of membrane

Left hand half hand, lower left quadrant of membrane

❖ **Kinemes for dance:**

full stamp Right foot

full stamp Left foot

small stamp Right

small stamp Left

hop (strongly) on both feet, hip-width apart

lift Right foot with energy to knee height, weight on Left

lift Left foot with energy to knee height, weight on Right

Right stamp with strong hip-thrust to R

hip-thrust return towards Left

Left stamp with strong hip-thrust to L

hip-thrust return towards R

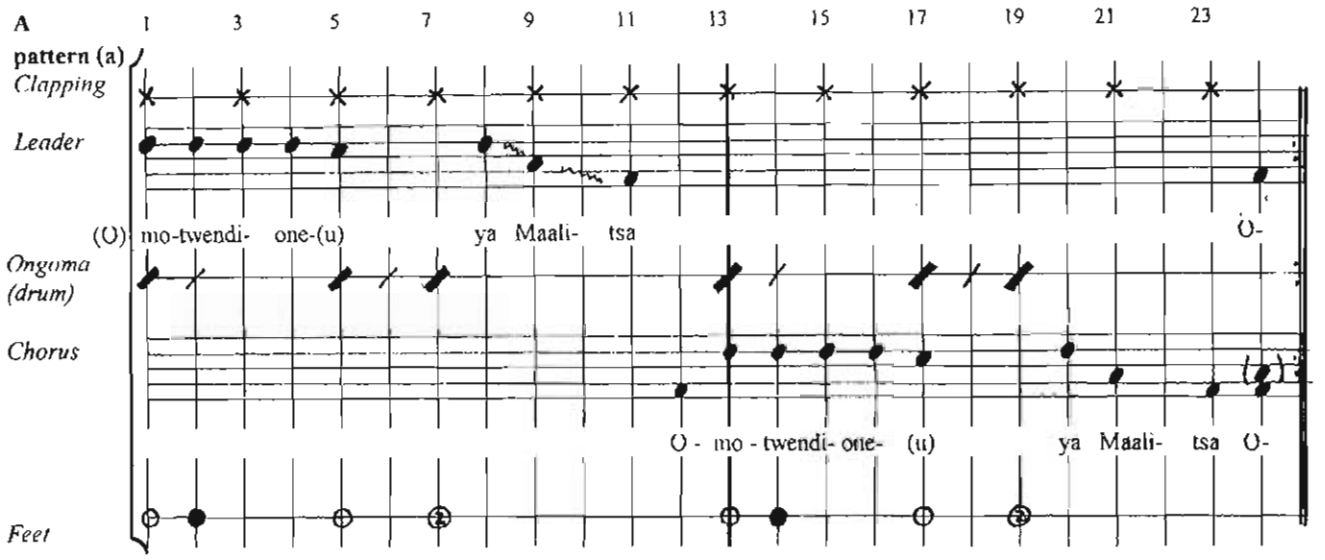
bent leg lifted to knee height, lower leg swing in

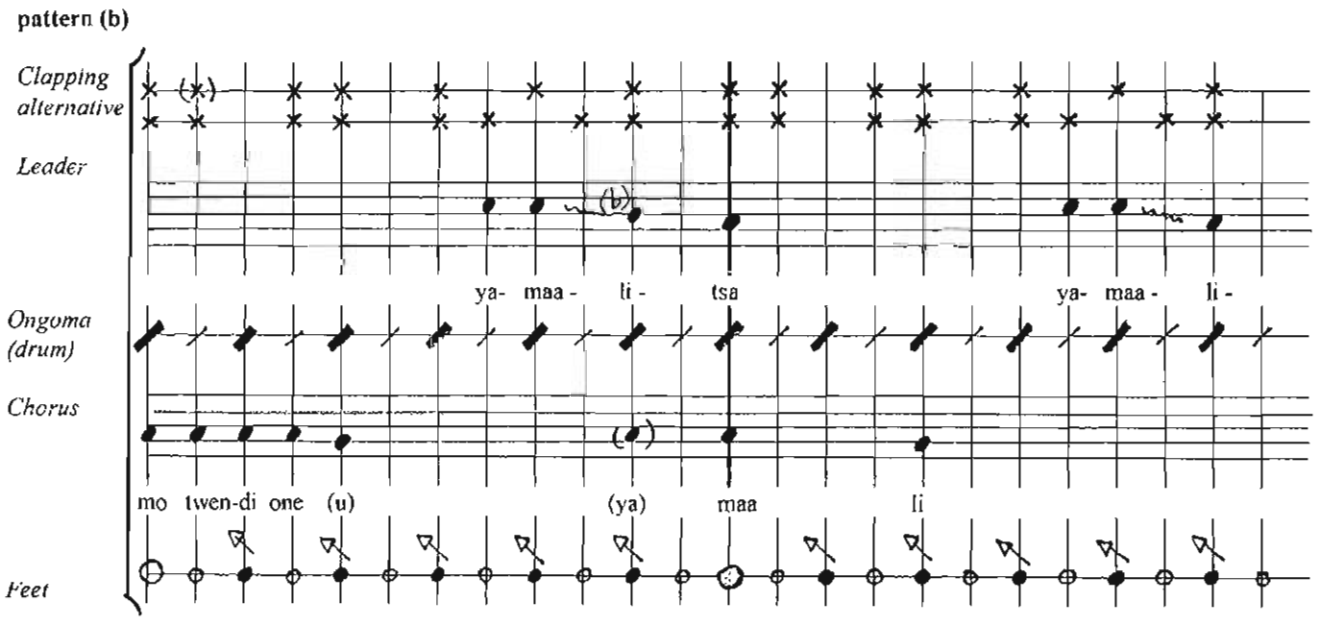
bent leg lifted to knee height, lower leg swing out

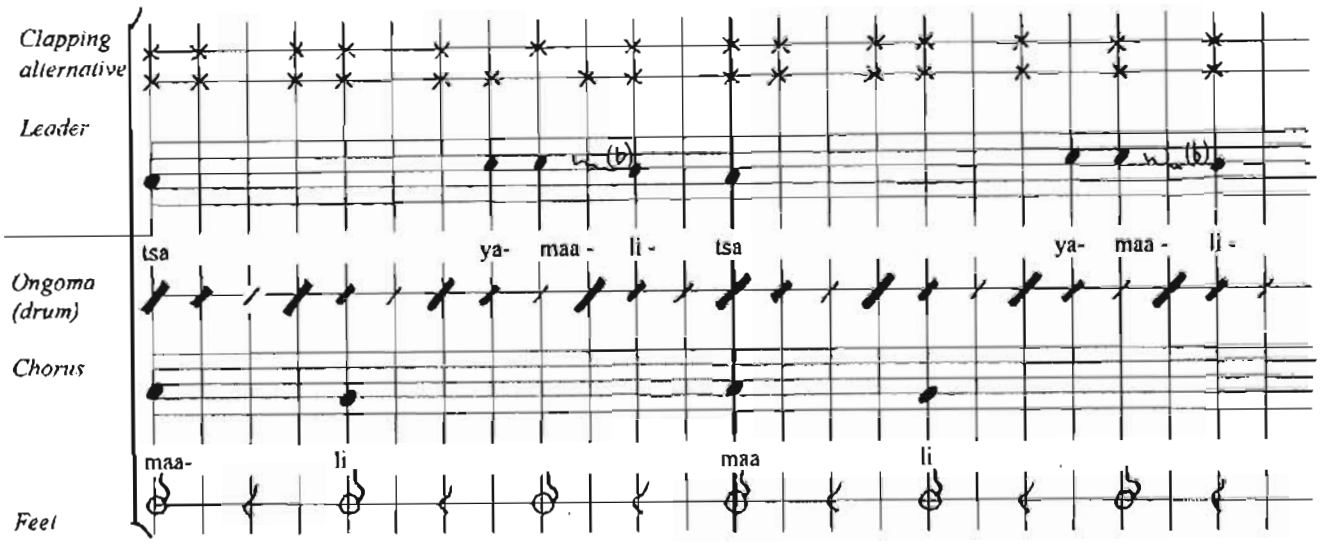
OMOTWENDI ONE YA MAALITSA

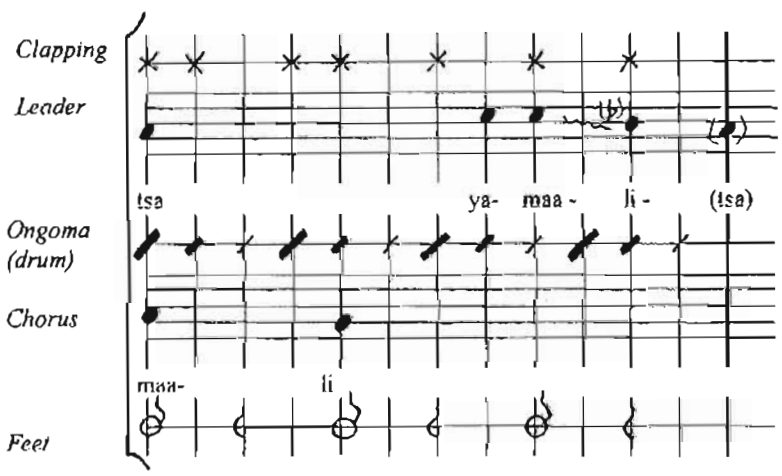
Video track 10
Celebrating Independence (21 March)
Language: Oshikwanyama
Tempo: || = 176
Ø

Text and translation by I Shivolo

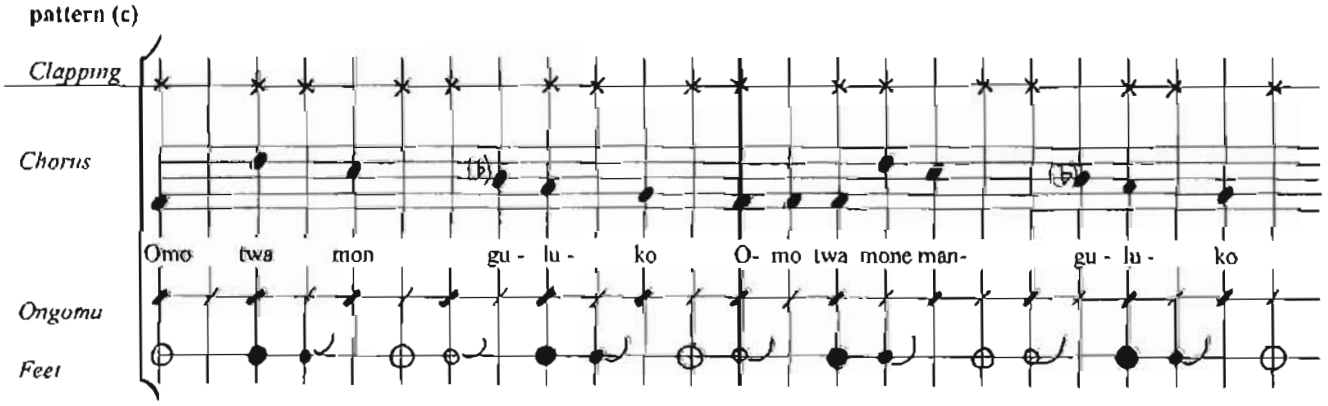


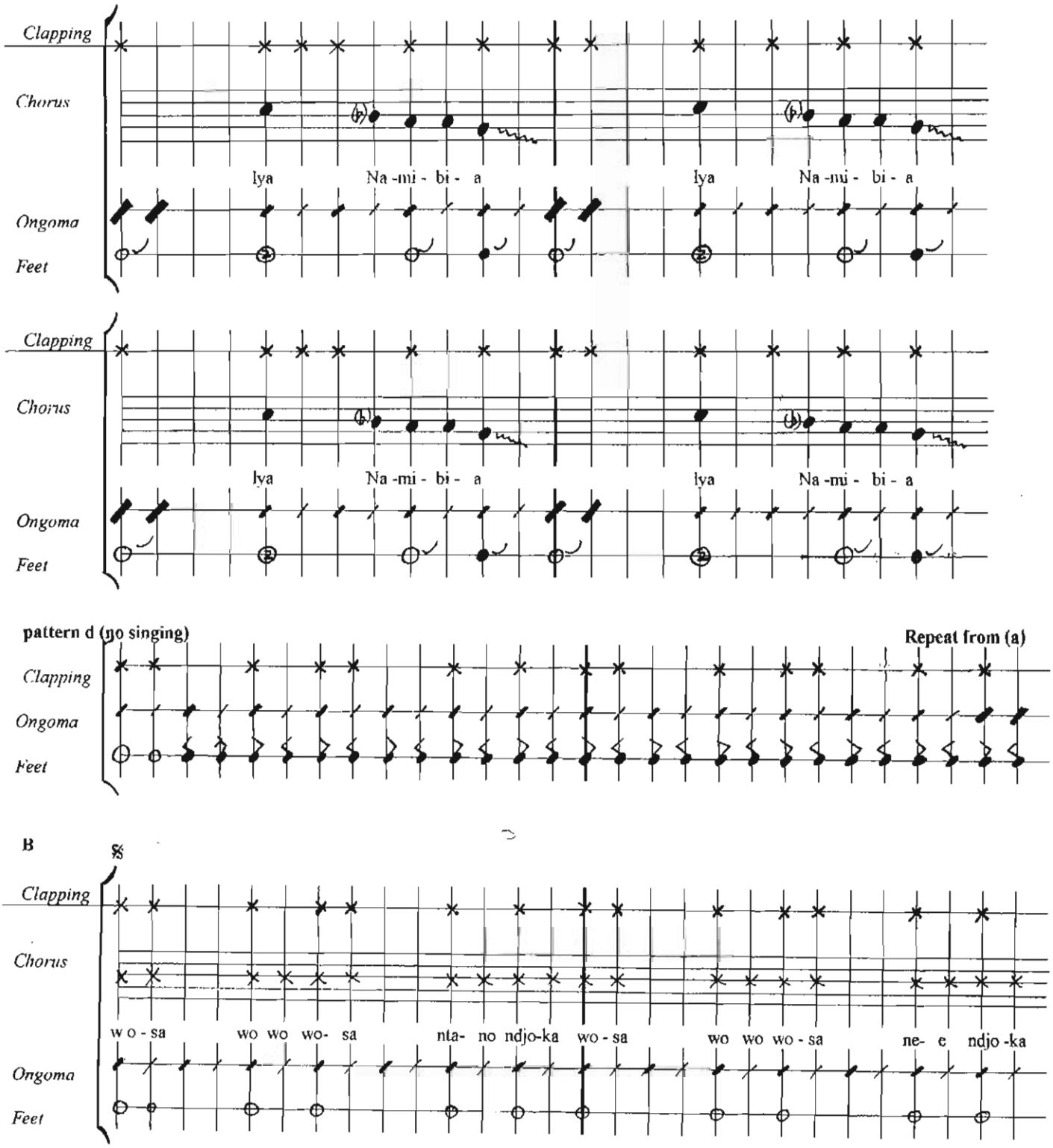


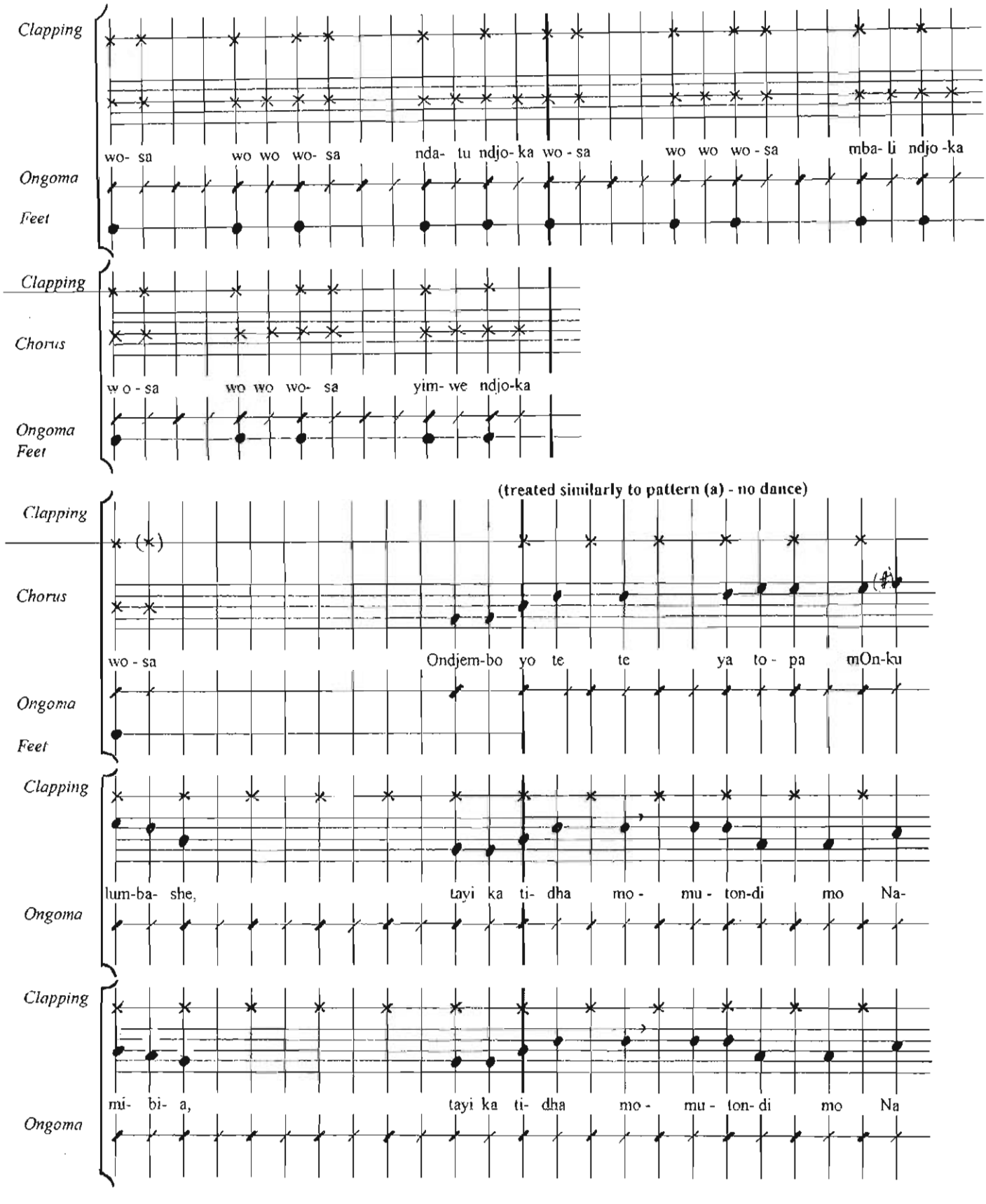

Clapping alternative
Leader
tsa ya- maa - li - tsa ya- maa - li -
Ongoma (drum)
Chorus
maa- li maa li
Feet


Clapping
Leader
tsa ya- maa - li - (tsa)
Ongoma (drum)
Chorus
maa- li
Feet

pattern (c)


Clapping
Chorus
Omo twa mon gu - lu - ko O- mo twa mone man- gu - lu - ko
Ongomu
Feet


Clapping
Chorus
Iya Na -mi - bi - a Iya Na -mi - bi - a
Ongoma
Feet
Clapping
Chorus
Iya Na -mi - bi - a Iya Na -mi - bi - a
Ongoma
Feet
pattern d (no singing)
Repeat from (a)
Clapping
Ongoma
Feet
B
Clapping
Chorus
w o - sa wo wo wo- sa nta- no ndjo-ka wo - sa wo wo wo - sa ne- e ndjo -ka
Ongoma
Feet


Clapping
wo- sa wo wo wo- sa nda- tu ndjo- ka wo - sa wo wo wo - sa mba- li ndjo -ka
Ongoma
Feet
Clapping
Chorus
w o - sa wo wo wo- sa yim- we ndjo-ka
Ongoma
Feet
(treated similarly to pattern (a) - no dance)
Clapping
Chorus
wo - sa Ondjem-bo yo te te ya to - pa mOn-ku
Ongoma
Feet
Clapping
lum-ba- she, tayi ka ti- dha mo - mu - ton-di mo Na-
Ongoma
Clapping
mí- bi- a, tayi ka ti- dha mo - mu - ton- di mo Na
Ongoma

(treated similarly to pattern (b)

Clapping

Chorus

mi- bi - a Ondjem-bo yo te te ya to - pa mOn-ku

Ongoma

Feet

Clapping

lum-ba- she, tayi ka ti- dha mo - mu - ton-di mo Na-

Ongoma

Feet

Clapping

mi- bi- a, tayi ka ti- dha mo - mu - ton- di mo Na-

Ongoma

Feet

Repeat from 𝄋

Clapping

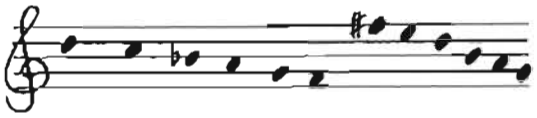
mi- bi- a.

Ongoma

Feet

- **Tonal centre = F**

- **Note store:**



5.4.2.2 Signs used in the notation of the song Onena hatu hambelele

- **Kinemes for drum:**

Ongoma is the drum

Right hand (or dominant hand) - half hand, lower right quadrant of membrane

Left hand half hand, lower left quadrant of membrane

- **Kinemes for dance:**

○ Right foot stamp

● Left foot stamp

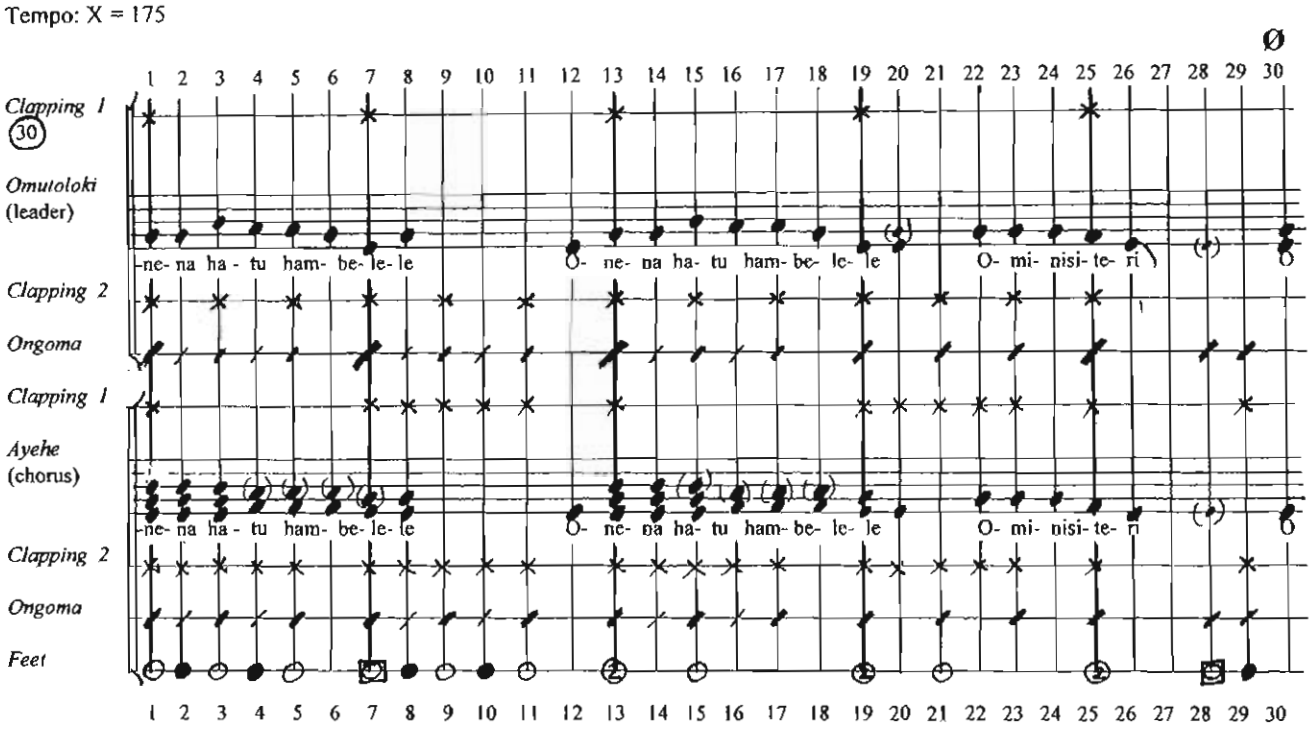
② Small hop onto both feet

Similar to right foot stamp, but with a slight hop

ONENA HATU HAMBELELE

(No video)
Uudhano
Language: Oshindonga
Tempo: X = 175

Recorded by I. Shivolo at Oshita
Text by I. Shivolo



Vernacular text:

Omutoloki: 1. *Onena hatu hambelele*
Ominisiteri
Ayehe: *Onena hatu hambelele*
Ominisiteri

Omutoloki: 2. *Ithana gweyu okwe ya po*
Otu mu wete
Ayehe: *Ithana gweyu " " "*
etc.

3. *Ithana gwetu okwe ya po*
Na pewe epandulo
4. *SWAPO yetu oya win* *
Tse otwa pandula

Translation:

Today we are greeting
The minister

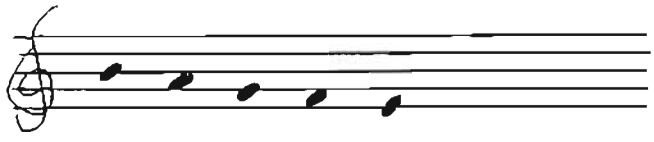
Ithana is among us
We see her

Ithana is among us
Let us give her thanks
SWAPO did win
We are thankful for that

5. *Aleli yetu out ya na*	Now we have our leaders
Ne omu ya wete	You see them
6. *Aleli yetuotu ya na*	Now we have our leaders
Taye tu wilike	Who lead us
7. *Ohatu pandula Angola*	We give thanks to Angola
Okwe tu kwafela	Who helped us
8. *Ohatu pandula Zambia*	We give thanks to Zambia
Okwe tu kwafela	Who helped us

* Ululating *(ondigola)* starts at this verse in the recording

- **Tonal Centre = E**
- **Note store:**



5.4.3 Explanation of characteristics

While the explanation below refers more specifically to the song-dances transcribed above, some general comments about *oudano* structures are made. It must be understood however, that apart from fairly fixed rhythmic patterns, each song and dance would have certain unique characteristics.

5.4.3.1 Musical characteristics

I discuss the two songs separately.

The song "***Omutwendi-one yaMaalitsa***" has an almost **strophic structure**, consisting of **three main sections**, one for singing, stating the occasion (Independence) (A) and one for chanting (B). The third section (C) recounts the beginning of the war, as the point at which the real struggle began. B acts as a chorus.

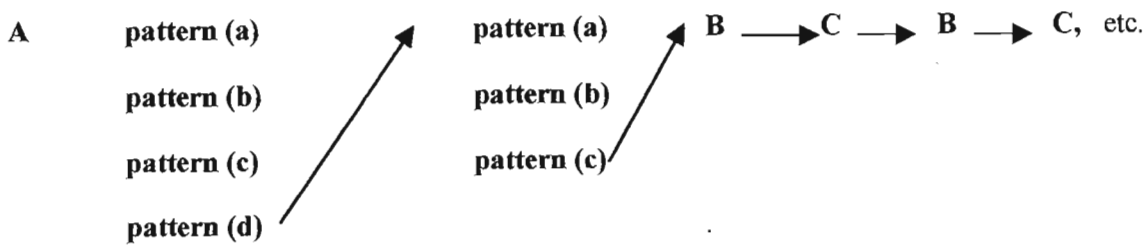
The first section (A) is subdivided into smaller sub-sections or patterns: an introductory pattern (a) and two other patterns, each forming a small sub-section. Each of these has a different stamping rhythm. A pattern may be repeated. The chanting or shouted section (B) differs rhythmically from A and C. It is not subdivided and is the section allowing for most dance improvisation. When the end of the chanting section is reached, the song moves to section C. This section is repeated until all the dancers have played. Each verse is intersected by the chanting section B.

Texts for songs are easily made and easily discarded for new ones. The melodic and rhythmic structures remain more fixed. The text of this song, apart from celebrating independence, typifies some pre-occupations of young children and their games, by focussing on counting. By doing this from back to front and then the other way around, the counting order is fixed in the memory by means of a game. The spoken languages of this area are very fluid, running many syllables into one another almost without a break. Alternatively, one could say that what may be written as more than one syllable, is pronounced as one. For example in the syllables "moneman", the e is not pronounced while singing. Sometimes the u of "omu" is dropped. One pronounces/sings the word "Ondjembo" as "ndjembo". The word "one" is followed by a pronounced u, in other words "one-u". My students describe this as "Oshiwambo-rised".[33] The word "tidha" is pronounced as "titha" with a soft th. The reader should follow indications on the transcription, which will show whether there is one or more than one note to a word-section.

The song has a **mainly responsorial** character, but not in a strict sense. In the introductory section (pattern a), the leader's statement is repeated exactly by the group. Following this, the chorus goes straight into their response, and the leader's part is more of an interjection. In the third sub-section (pattern c), everybody sings in unison. This happens in (B) the chanted section as well. Different groups also sing in unison. The leader's part may be sung by one or more singers. Therefore the song contains a mixture of responsorial and unison singing. According to Mtota the role of leader in singing may be alternated.

33 Anna Akaye, Windhoek, 1997.

"When a singer gets tired or runs out of vocabulary s/he may pass the chance to another one, or if the one who is leading wants to dance s/he may pass the singing to another one, because it seems as if it is difficult to sing and dance at the same time."[34] The order of the songs is as follows:



The **tonal structure** of the song is similar to a major diatonic scale, although the seventh tone from the tonal centre does not appear in this song (see note store). As with so many other Namibian vocal styles, the voice is throat-resonated, and ends of tones are allowed to slide down. Similarly, the descent from one tone to the next is often done with a slide.

The **rhythmic patterns** of the song are integrally related to the dance. Thus, the clapping patterns and drumming patterns often replicate the stamping rhythms of the dance. The song sections A and C are in a 12 pulse structure, sometimes consisting of 4 times 12, at others of 5 times 12.

In section A, the introductory pattern (a) consists of 48 (4 x 12) pulses. Pattern (b) consists of 60 (5 x 12) pulses. Pattern (c) consists of 72 (6 x 12) pulses connected to an unsung sub-section (d) which is 28 pulses long. The song is then repeated from the beginning (the next two children dance). When pattern (c) is completed the second time, the singers skip (d) and go straight into section B. Interestingly, the pulse structure is now based on 14 pulses while the children clap and chant. Section B consists of 70 (5 x 14) pulses. This section introduces the second song part - section C, which consists of 72 (6 x 12) pulses. Below a summary of sections appears. This includes an analysis of the aural rhythmic patterns by which players recognise *oudano*, the mental template in other words. This is exposed sometimes by feet,

34 E. Mtota in personal comments on the materials I have written on *oudano*, Windhoek, 1996.

sometimes by the clapping and drumming.[35] Therefore Figure 5.11 forms an aural summary of different sound aspects of *oudano*.

While there are no polyrhythms, the aural or sound patterns do alternate between the two-pulse and a three-pulse rhythm in different sub-sections. Thus, both pattern (b) the alternative clap, and pattern (c) are performed in three pulses in terms of the clapping pattern, although in pattern (b) the dance is in two pulse structure. The drum supports the three pulse feel created by the claps by accentuating the first of every three pulses beaten. The alternation between the 12 and 14 pulse sections make the song/dance rhythmically quite complex.

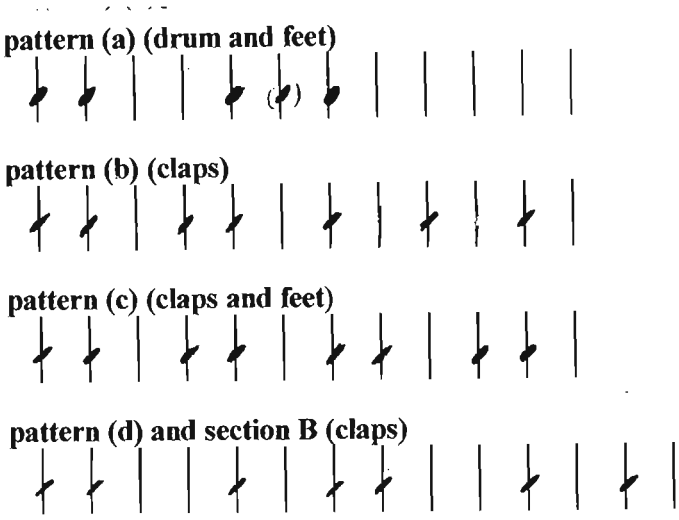


FIGURE 5.11 AURAL STRUCTURE OF THE SONG

The drum (*ongoma*) provides the cue for the first entrance. Although one or two drums are used to accompany the game, the drumming patterns are not as complex, nor as important to the event as those in other parts of Namibia, for example the Caprivi. For the children's *oudano*, the drummer, for the most part, plays on every pulse or replicates the stamping pattern. The creation of different timbres and cross-patterns are not apparent here, but by using different emphases, the drummer creates a two-pulse or three-

35 This was demonstrated to me by N. Kalilo, Windhoek 1996, and confirmed by a group of dance students in 1997.

pulse sound. In two-pulse sections every drum beat was played with alternate hands, but in three-pulse sections the drummer played right, right, left.

In patterns (a) and (c), the drum follows the emphasis of the music and dance, creating short gaps of silence with strong emphases on the two pulses following "Namibia". Because this dance was performed by young children, the drummer, a girl, sat on the drum which lay on the floor. This way she had more control over the drum and her playing.

The second song, ***"Onena hatu hambelele"*** is sung by older women, and is a much simpler song with simpler dance patterns. This song is **cyclic** and **antiphonal** with the leader's part being repeated by the chorus with added voices.

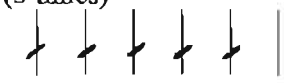
The **text** of this song consists of short verses, of which there may be many. Usually verses are added or repeated until everyone has played. The song was recorded at a political rally addressed by the Honourable Minister Pendukeni Ithana in the Oshana region. The text expresses patriotic views, and was sung to welcome the minister and other guests at the rally. Again, vowels are sometimes not articulated. "Minisiteri" is pronounced without the i after the s, and "mu wete" is pronounced "mwete".

The **tonal structure** of the song makes use of 5 contiguous tones sounding something like a minor scale - a quality that I have perceived in other songs in the area as well. The vocal quality is surprisingly quiet, almost musingly or meditatively. Yet, with the build-up of dance energy, singers add ululations and shouts at will.

The **rhythmic patterns** of this song are far simpler than the first song., but are also integrally related to the dance. The song consists rhythmically of a 2 x 30 pulse cycle. Each 30 pulses can be subdivided into 5 x 6 pulse sections which can be clearly identified in the foot stamping and drumming parts.

The drum pattern shows:

(3 times)



then

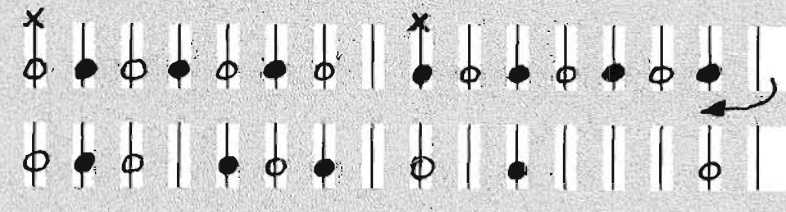
The **drum** and the clapping patterns often replicate one another in this song, . This is clear in the drum and claps of the chorus part. The drum pattern is also partially replicated by the stamps of the feet. This happens in the first two sets of 6 pulses. The drum is played with hands alternating on every beat.

Below are similar patterns which may be found in different *oudano / uudhano* customs, generally played by older women.

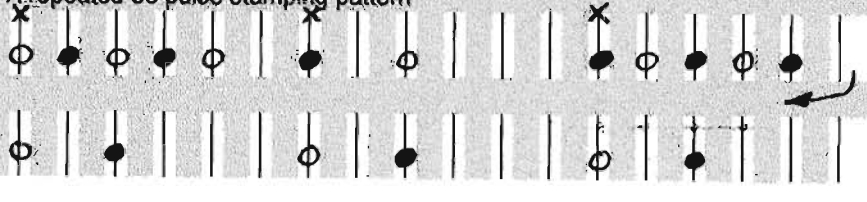
The rhythmic patterns of older women's game (in the Ombalantu area) vary, but some are shown here for the sake of comparison, and for possible use in the classroom. They include the following patterns, which are stamped with the feet:

- A repeated 12 pulse stamping pattern

- A repeated 32 pulse stamping pattern



- A repeated 36 pulse stamping pattern



From this it can be seen that the rhythmic patterns are fundamental to understanding *oudano*. They form not only the groundwork upon which *oudano* is based, but also provide richness and variety of pattern.

5.4.3.2 Characteristics of movements

Traditionally this is a dance-game for children, adolescents and women. Although adult men may participate, it is not usual, according to Nelago Kalilo, who taught me the dance.[36] The first song illustrates a modern version performed only by children. The second song illustrates a version performed mostly by adult women.

- ***Omutwendi-one ya Maalitsa***

The **basic movement components** are strong stamps and lighter double stamps of the feet; lifts of one bent leg to knee level combined with a stamp of the other foot; hip thrusts; pelvic thrusts; swinging of lower portion of a lifted leg. A sequence of these movements may be performed moving forwards, remaining on the spot, or moving backwards.

Movement sequences are performed in twos or threes, rather than solo. Two persons dancing mirror one another's movements, that is, if one uses the right leg, the other uses the left. Timing and matching of range of movements are important. Because creative movements are prized, one sees many individualised movements, such as lying on the floor on the back and spasmodically jerking legs and arms.[37] The rapid tempo at which the movements are executed are characteristic. The key to performing the rapid stamps and double stamps coupled with leg lifts, is careful weight placement. When doing a double stamp, the weight is only placed on that foot on the second, stronger stamp. Dancers do not give particular thought to arm movements (Kalilo, personal communications, 1996) unless they work in a particular choreography. For example, when performing the hip thrust-stamp to the side, the dancer swings one arm (the same as

36 Windhoek, October 1996.

37 Although healers sometimes tend to use similar movements in their dance, their prone movements often have overt sexual connotations. That of the girl in the video recording, on the other hand, apparently portrays somebody who has been shot, according to comments by Nelago Kalilo, Windhoek 1996. This is supported by texts of songs which refers to the fighting at Ongolombashi.and other battles.

the hip) outwards, while the other arm crosses the body, hand to centre of body. Arms swing to opposite side when hip returns. Alternatively, when the left leg lifts, the right shoulder may be pushed forwards sharply. Below are sketches of some typical body attitudes during the execution of rhythmic patterns.

The **game sequence** involves participants forming a circle or semicircle. These are the singers and hand clappers. The drum initiates the song with the (a) pattern. This pattern makes the song/game instantly recognisable to cultural insiders. A leader commences singing, along with the playing by the drummer (they may be the same person). Two dancers enter the circle. They either wait for pattern (a) to pass and start on pattern (b), or they may commence immediately with the introductory pattern (a). The different rhythmic patterns have been memorised by participants, so that sequences all follow the patterns, but still allow individuals to create their own movements. The exception is (b) in which everyone performs the stamp-lift sequence. This acts as a 'signature' pattern - stating new participants' entries. This is similar in section C, which is a slightly different form of pattern (b) of section A. The first 3 lines of the "Ondjembo yo tete" part of the song acts as pattern (a), in that performers wait without dancing, and commence on the repeat of the text and melody, in other words the second "Ondjembo yo tete".

Partners watch one another and mirror each other's movements - one starts on the left foot, the other on the right. The synchronicity of their movements, that is performing their actions together, and lifting legs more or less to the same height, is important. Each couple performs the entire song before retiring to the circle, at which point two others enter and perform their 'game'. Each set of performers tries to excel and impress with their energy and originality. The drumming rhythm in (c) dictates the dance rhythm and clapping rhythm. Notice that the alternative clapping rhythm in (b) gives a 3-pulse feel - if this is clapped then the dance should also reflect a 3-pulse feel, e.g. using the double-tap shift movements.

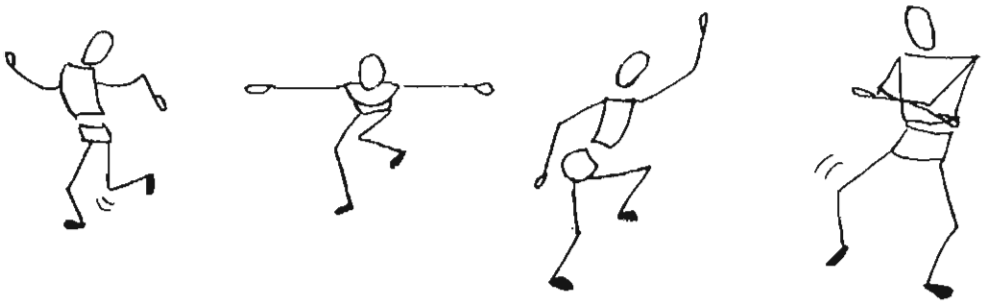


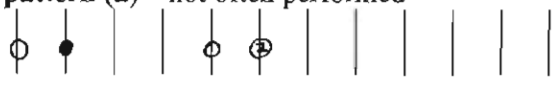
FIGURE 5.12 SOME *OUDANO* BODY POSITIONS

The movement in section B is a hop on one foot, while the other leg, bent at an angle of 90°, is lifted to knee height and the lower leg (that is the portion beneath the knee) is swung energetically in and out. The upper torso may bend quite far forwards towards the knee (for balance) leaning slightly away from the working leg, or the back may arch in contrasting motion to the leg.

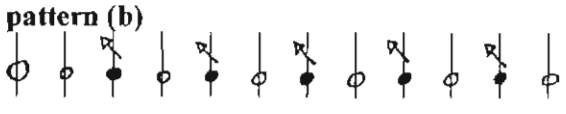
Great amounts of energy are put into the execution of movements throughout.

The **typical sequence of dance rhythms** for the style of *oudano* described above, has been isolated below for clarity:

pattern (a) – not often performed

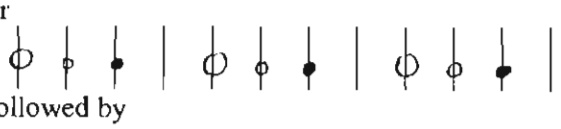


pattern (b)



then

or



followed by

pattern (c)

or

FIGURE 5.13 *OUDANO* RHYTHMIC DANCE PATTERNS

- *Onena hatu hambelele*

The basic **movement components** are strong alternating stamps of the feet, performed in different directions. Apart from single stamps, there are also stamps created by hopping strongly to land, like a stamp, on both feet simultaneously. Some stamps are initiated off a slight hop. Arms may be at the sides, swinging loosely, but often they are held up above and slightly in front of the head, palms facing outwards. This looks almost like a greeting. Shoulders and hips swing slightly in sympathy with the foot stamps.

The **movement sequence** consists of at least two sets of the following: the first set of 5 stamps consists of 5 alternating quick, strong stamps to the ground; the second set begins with a slight hop onto the first stamp, giving it an added accent; this is followed a strong hop onto both feet and a right stamp, a sequence that happens twice, followed the third time by an extra little stamp on the left. Dancers may perform the whole sequence starting on the left rather than the right. The sequence is performed/played in twos, threes or even fours, rather than solo. Often the first set is performed facing in one direction, while the second is performed facing the opposite direction.

5.4.4 Suggestions for the classroom

Oudano / uudhano can be taught at any level of schooling, although the song texts may differ according to level. This game is traditionally performed by children from a pre-school age to adolescence, so even the lower primary learners should cope with at least some of the aspects. In my opinion, there are two aspects for teachers to consider: one, the first song is thought of as fun and modern, but it is difficult for cultural outsiders; two, the second song's style is thought of as rather old-fashioned, but it is far simpler for non-culture-carriers to learn. The teacher will have to make a decision based on the particular group of learners and their prior knowledge and attitudes.

- **Teach the song in sections**. The vocal tone is thin and high for the first song, but quite soft for the second. The "*wosa*" section of "Omutwendi-one" is shouted/chanted rhythmically as in other counting games. Ensure correct pronunciation. Learn the complete song.
- **Place the event in its context**. As always, teachers should provide some information, but learners should be encouraged to gather their own information through the completion of tasks, for example, "Draw a map of Namibia, clearly indicating the region from which *oudano* originates"; or "Collect pictures of people in the central northern area. They may depict agro-pastoral activities (fishing, herding cattle, sowing, tilling or harvesting crops); social activities, economic activities, geographical scenery, arts and crafts. Bring them to the classroom and discuss."
- Try to **locate an expert *omudhani*.**[38] Ask this person to teach aspects of the dance-game, or to improve dancers who already know the game, or to discuss the history, meaning and values of *oudano*.
- **Establish the tempo of a song** prior to commencement. The feel or inner hearing of the pulses per reference beat or per clap, for example, can be internalised by clapping or moving until the pulse system becomes clear. This will promote easy reading and interpretation of the transcription.
- **Start by clapping the different patterns separately** because *oudano* is based on a structure of rhythmic patterns. For example, clap pattern (a) for a 12 or 24 pulse sections and add the sound of feet or drum of pattern (a). Once learners can clap and stamp, or clap and drum, put all three together for pattern (a). In this way the different patterns can be tackled separately. Clearly identify the different patterns, by giving a name, a cipher or use another method of identification.
- Alternatively, **create a mnemonic for each pattern**, by allowing learners to listen to the sound, and then generate suggestions. Learners select the one that appeals most (as long as it accurately reflects the sound). An example for pattern (a) could be "taka --- tai – taa" (performed as ♩♩| | ♩| ♩| | | | |).
- Allow learners to **explore the different rhythmic patterns** inherent in the music. For example, after learning to sing pattern (a), ask learners to stamp with their feet any pattern which they feel sounds

38 The Oshindonga term for a person who performs/plays *uudhano* or *oudano*.

good. After allowing learners to demonstrate their ideas, either select one which resembles the original most closely, or teach the traditional pattern. Proceed in this way to following patterns (b to e). Some learners should sing while others are exploring their stamps. Alternatively, make use of a recording if facilities allow.

- Allow ample time to **practice and memorise the sounds of the rhythmic patterns**, as improvisation cannot occur until the basic structure has been internalised. While the basis of instruction should remain oral/aural, some learners may find it useful to make use of visual aids as well. Therefore, one can provide learners with written patterns, or work with learners to create a written (or drawn) form for the patterns. For this, I suggest that graphic notation, drawn patterns or pulse notation are most suitable, but if desired, western conventional notation may also be used.
- Teach learners the **drumming patterns,** by drumming on the ground while seated in a circle. If the dance rhythms are known, then the drumming becomes easy. Learners need to experience the close relationship between drummer and dancers. The importance of maintaining a steady tempo should be stressed. If learners speed up, they should go back to performing the stamps. Later a steady drummer(s) can be identified for further development of the event. Drummers may sit on the drum which lies flat on the ground.
- The **repertoire of dance movements can be extended**, by demonstrating to learners some of the possible actions, for example the lifts of the leg, the use of the hips to emphasise double stamps, the knee-lift and swing of the lower leg. The video is useful for this process.
- Divide the class into small groups who can **explore and develop their own movement sequences cooperatively**. Through discussion and critical appraisal of one another's work, they can **choreograph** a short (e.g. 48 pulse) sequence and polish it for performance.
- **Combine** different efforts into the whole.
- Allow plenty of time for **discussion** - time where learners can air their views, make suggestions, share their feelings and responses. Topics for discussion may centre on aspects such as body awareness (use of space, mirroring, use of effort, etc.), comparisons with other games or dances relating to their own backgrounds.

- **Research and learn** about other performance genres from the same area, for example *ongovela* (songs for cattle), *okuxua* (threshing songs), *etenda lyaandonga* (songs for young men jumping with sticks), *oshiimbo sheendina* (hoeing or working songs), songs for *okaana* (lullabyes or songs for tired children).
- Through discussion and appraisal, allow learners to **identify the main points of focus** and criteria for evaluating the quality of the performance - when is it 'good'.
- Once a whole song plus dance, clapping and drumming can be performed from start to finish, the learners can **create new songs in this pattern**, through communal or individual effort. They can develop new movements and they can make suggestions in terms of material traits (dress and so forth) to enhance their performance. They can also perform the event for other groups, parents, or school.
- **Create a journal** in small groups, partners, or individually (depending on age) in which the event, own experiences and responses to *oudano*, their creative ideas, impressions, as well as teacher assessments are entered.
- Without becoming formal, it is important for teachers to **make regular assessments** of learners in the course of the learning process. This should describe progress in terms of participation, involvement, quality of input and performance, without necessarily giving a quantitative value to the learner's product. The aim is merely to keep the learner informed in terms of his/her progress. The journal mentioned above can be used as a vehicle for discussion of progress.

While this song may at first appear rather complex to work out, it is in fact simple, but should be prepared in stages. The sense of holism in *oudano* lies in the connections found between the music and dance, the context, the atmosphere, the meaning. All of these can culminate in a performance in which learners transport themselves mentally and spiritually into the world of the original performers, thereby gaining intercultural insight.

5.5 SOCIAL DANCE-GAME IN THE KUNENE REGION - *ONDJONGO*

[Video track 11 (*ondjongo*) and 12 (*omutjopa*)]

These recordings were mostly made by myself in the Kunene region. The recording commences with the song transcribed and then moves to a different performance which shows the game movements more clearly. Track 11 illustrates Ovahimba practice, while track 12 illustrates (for comparison) Ovazemba practice in the same area.

5.5.1 Description of context, background and purpose

5.5.1.1 Socio-geographical context

The Kunene region is situated in the extreme north-western part of the country. Its western part is an extension of the Namib desert, and is therefore a very harsh area for human survival. The extreme north borders on the Kunene river which tumbles through rugged terrain towards the Atlantic ocean. A section of the eastern side of the Kunene region is bordered by the huge Etosha Game Reserve. The rest of the region varies between flat plains covered in mopane-'forest', and rugged mountain ranges, such as the Hartmann, Zebra, Otjihipa and Baynes mountains.

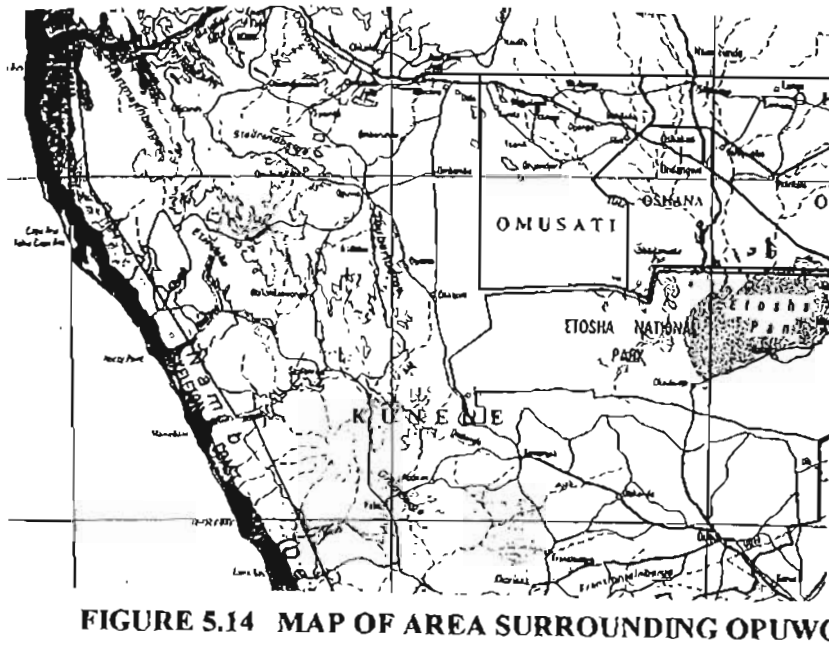


FIGURE 5.14 MAP OF AREA SURROUNDING OPUWO

This region is not heavily populated because of the harshness of the terrain. The Tjimba (Cimba) people are described as hunter-gatherers who live mostly in the Baynes mountains, have far fewer cattle than their neighbours the Ovahimbas and Ovazembas (van Warmelo, 1951: 32). In older literature, Tjimbas are said to have adopted the Otjiherero language, assimilating aspects of the numerically dominant cultures surrounding them. However, on questioning the people, it appears that this is not a different group of people, but they are also Himbas. The term Tjimba is derogatory and means 'poor people'. People in the area do not describe themselves as Tjimba. In the past, Ovahimbas lived a nomadic pastoral life, herding their cattle and goats from one watering place to another. They traded with Owambo people for iron goods. Today this existence is continued almost unchanged. Women still go to the mountains to mine the ochre which they prize as a cosmetic substance, young men herd the cattle, and families move from one area to another. Some people spend part of the year nomadically, and part of the year in and around Opuwo or other villages. Few Himba children attend school.

Ovahimba society is structured around double sets of clans and a combination of matrilineal and patrilineal descent which describe their *eanda* (matri-clan) and their *oruzo* (taboos relating to the patri-clan). Ovazemba patri-clans are called *oluzo*. Some matri-clans are shared with Ovahimbas and Ovahereros as well as Owambos and Nkumbis (Vivelo, 1977). Although there are several distinctive styles of dress and ornamentation in the area, that of the Himba people is most familiar to outsiders. Despite rapid changes taking place, most locals (especially women) maintain their traditions of dress. For Himba people, this functions according to age sets - those of small children, young children, teenagers, and married or adult people.

Adult Himba women wear layered skirts (*ombanda*) made of the softened skin of cattle or goats. These skins are draped in flared layers, longer at the back (knee-length) and shorter (mid-thigh) in the front. The back apron is called *oruheke*, and the front apron *oruhira*. In cold weather a cloak called *orupera* is worn. Ankle bracelets made of metal beads or layers of metal circlets, wrist bracelets of decorated bone or copper, and multiple necklaces (*ondengura*) of iron, copper and leather and a studded belt (*epando*) adorn

their bodies. A necklace extension hangs down the middle of the back, with a flat, shaped end decorated with metal studs and beads. A very important part of their ornamentation is a large shell worn around the neck. Women's hair is shaved back from their foreheads. The rest is formed into ringlets or braids caked with a paste made from clay, red ochre, fat and herbs. On top of their heads *ekori* or *ekarembe,* different styles of upright headdresses made from pieces of cowhide or sheepskin, are attached. Their skins are covered in a paste made of powdered ochre, fat and herbs, and this is applied daily by those who can afford it. They wear handmade leather sandals.

Although many men today prefer western clothing, the traditional style of dressing is not uncommon. The latter includes a skirt or apron (*ombuku*) - two pieces of cloth hanging from a belt - longer at the back and shorter in front. Their long hair (unless they are in mourning) is covered with a cloth tied in a characteristic style (*ombuja*). This is worn at all times - even when sleeping. Around their necks they may carry a little horn (*ohiva*) filled with snuff or protective substance. A metal pin (about 20 cm in length) with a shaped head, is stuck in the headwrapping. Men also wear sandals on their feet. They very often carry a stick on which they lean when stationary, or which is tapped on the ground to music. When walking, this stick is characteristically carried across their shoulders.

In the past more than today, Himba youths used to wear their hair in a single plait (*ondatu*) along the middle of the head, hanging down the back. The rest of the head was shaved. Similarly, young girls would wear two thick plaits, starting on top of the head and hanging forwards over the face on either side, while teenage girls would wear many small plaits with beadwork hanging forwards over the face. Small children have only a centre patch of hair with the rest shaved off, and small boys wear only a leather belt, while small girls wear a tiny leather apron (*oruhira*) in front. Young people, especially boys, who now attend school are instructed to shave their heads and now wear western dress.

PLATE 5.5 OVAHIMBA DRESS (1994)

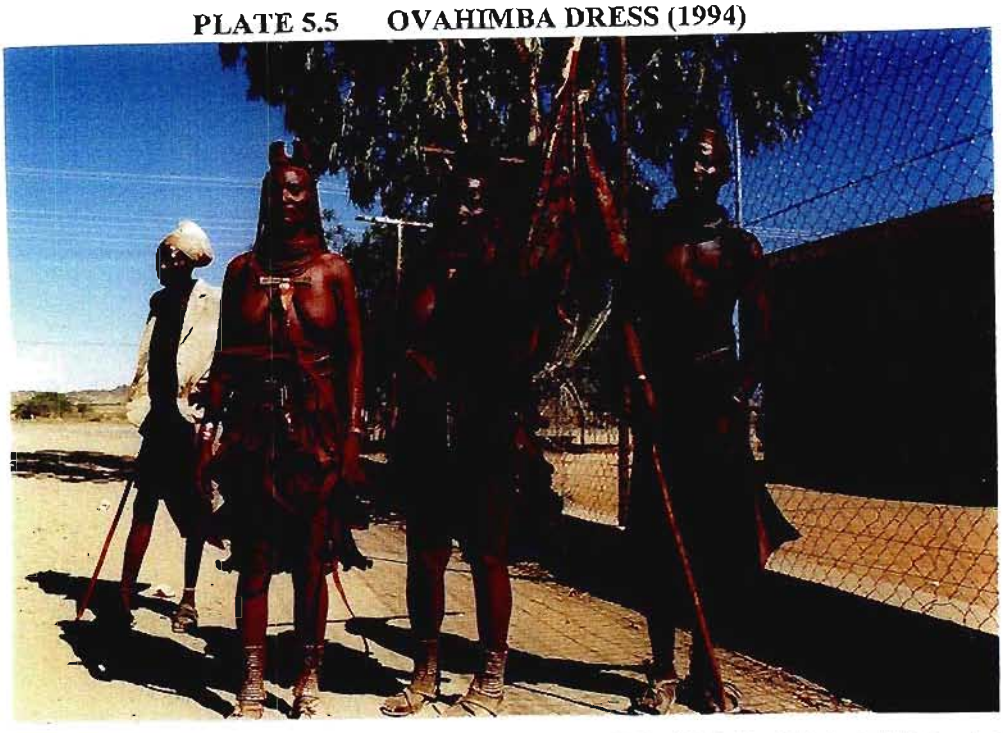
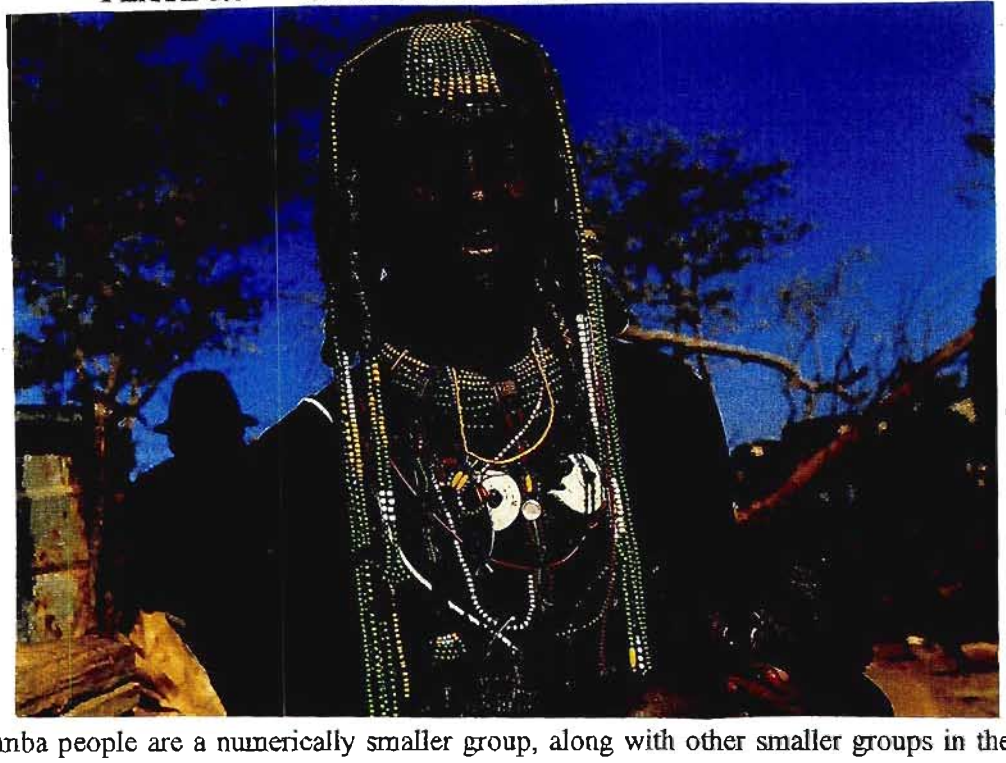


PLATE 5.6 OMUZEMBA / OMUHAKAHONA ORNAMENTATION



(Photo: G. Grein)

The Zemba people are a numerically smaller group, along with other smaller groups in the area such as Kuvale, Ngendelengo, Hakahona, Ngambwe and Tjavikua. Among the people I met, those who describe themselves as Zemba do not use the ochre substance to cover their skins. Men also wear cloth skirts, longer in front than those of Himba men, and they may wear a shirt as well. An older Zemba woman came

to show me her 'traditional' hair-style. It consisted of many small braids lying against the head towards the back, partially caked with a black clay and fat mixture, and decorated with an extensive array of coloured beads, mostly in green and yellow. Around her neck she also wore a neckplate or chestplate of coloured beading. Her skirt was of brightly coloured cloth. She was, however, the only person whom I observed dressed in this fashion. This may indicate that few Zemba women presently dress this way. Young girsl around the age of puberty wear braids of equal length at jaw length.

5.5.1.2 Language and history

The people who live here mostly describe themselves collectively as either Ovahimba, Ovazemba, Ovaherero, or Tjimba. The prefix ova- means 'the people' in Otjiherero, and omu- is the singular.[39] The majority group in the area is Himba whose language is a form of Otjiherero. While Otjizemba shares many words with Otjihimba, there are also dissimilarities and terms shared with or borrowed from Oshiwambo and Otjingambwe in Angola. This appears to be supported in the different names given to events and instruments, for example "Goodbye" in Otjihimba is "Kara nawa" and in Otjizemba it is "Twapiti". The main dance is ondjongo in the one and omutjopa in the other language. Some Otjizemba terms for instruments are linguistically close to Angolan languages (Mans, 1997: 70).

Nevertheless, there are strong linguistic and cultural ties among -Himbas, -Zembas and -Hereros. Historically[40] they were part of a large group who migrated from Moçamedes province in Angola and settled this part of the country possibly as early as the 1600s. Around 1750 a large portion of this population elected to move further south towards the central and eastern areas of Namibia. They called

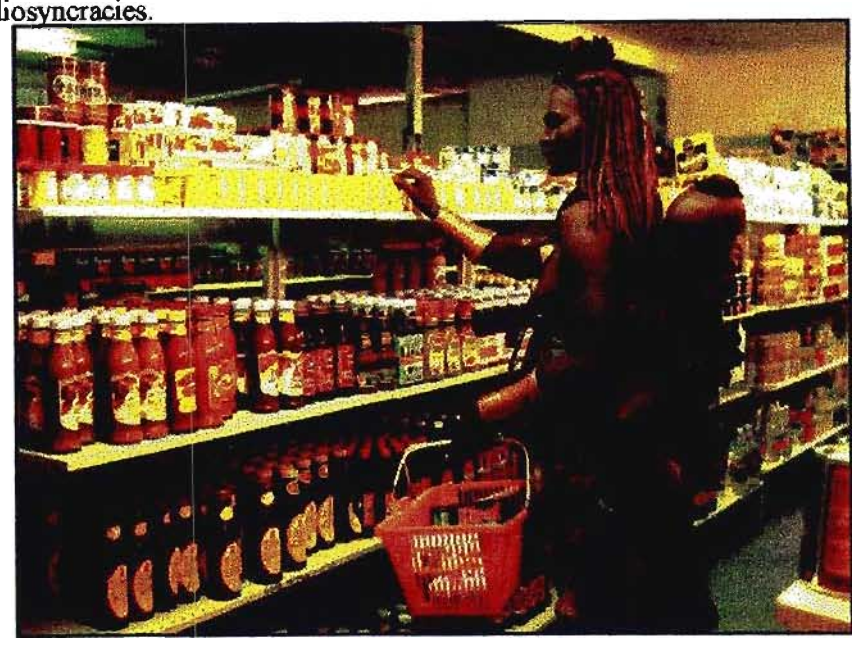
39 Similarly, the prefix otji- refers to the language. The Herero people therefore were instrumental in calling -Kwanyama people Ovakwanyama, and Ambo people Ovambo. In the latter case the name has stuck, while in the case of the Kwanyama people the prefix uu- is preferred.
40 Information according to Jacobsohn (1990) with some aspects corroborated by informant F. Tjoola in personal communications, Opuwo 1993.

themselves Hereros and Mbanderus, and they adopted settled pastoralism.[41] During the nineteenth century, the people who remained in the north-west found themselves being raided and plundered regularly by Nama stock thieves. They eventually fled north of the Kunene river to present-day Angola, where they were forced to rely on the goodwill of locals, as they were without livestock or trading goods. In the early twentieth century, a man who went north from Otjimbingwe, called Vita ('Oorlog') Harunga (born around 1865),[42] started organizing people into a fighting force in support of the Portuguese against Kuvare (Kuvale), Ngumbi and Kwanyama groups. As their battle prowess and livestock situation improved, Vita rallied together those who wanted to return and led his people back to Namibia around 1915 (Jacobsohn, 1990). They once again settled in the area then referred to as Kaokoland, at Otjijandjasemo. Slowly they rebuilt their huge cattle herds and resumed their way of life. Up to recent times the people have resisted modern western culture, maintaining their distinctive lifestyle of dress, language, rituals.

Opuwo (also spelt Opuwa or Ohopoho) is the only 'town' in the region, although its size does not really qualify it being called a town. The meaning of this name is 'finished' or having reached the end. This town was basically developed as an army base for the South African Defence Force in the 1960s. Its aim was to protect the western regions against 'terrorist' incursions. Prior to this, the region supported a population which functioned in a self-supporting way, without real contact with a cash-culture. Subsequent to the establishment of Opuwo as a declared town with a school, hospital, garage and shops, a certain measure of urbanization started taking place. In the past decade, there have been signs that prostitution, alcoholism and unemployment are greatly on the increase, possibly exacerbated by contact with armed forces during the independence struggle. As youngsters need to remain in one place to attend school,[43] and as people accumulate material goods which do not transport easily (furniture, radios, television), the nomadic ways

41 Many Mbanderus later moved further east into Botswana as a result of hostilities with the Germans and the resultant massacre of many thousands of Hereros, but are presently in the process of returning to Namibia.
42 According to oral narrations, Vita originally came from Omaruru. In Angola he was regarded as a general by the people, therefore having great status as a military strategist and warrior (Heywood, et al. 1992: 174 - 209). Jacobsohn (1990) gives his birth date as 1863, saying he was born to a Herero mother and Tswana father in Otjimbingwe. As a young man he followed Green and Erikson on a trek to Angola. Even as a young man he was known as a skilled and brave hunter. He died around 1937 and is buried at Ukwaludhi (van Warmelo, 1951: 18).
43 School education for girls is still frowned upon by many in this region, according to Mumbinda and Tjoola, personal communications, Opuwo, 1993.

are exchanged for a more stationary life. This is resulting in rapid changes to traditional cultural practices. People in the area are, however, discovering that both the unspoilt landscape and their colourful cutural practices have potential for the tourism industry. Possibly income from these alternative sources can help people to find new ways of coping with the modern world. The photograph below illustrates one of modern life's idiosyncracies.



(Photo: T. Pupkewitz)

PLATE 5.7 MODERN HIMBA WOMAN

With more permanent houses built in the township Otuzemba (adjacent to Opuwo) many people now spend part of the year in this area, grazing their stock on the lands surrounding the town. When the rains come, they depart with their livestock and move towards their particular traditional grazing areas. Because of their nomadic customs, people of this area are able to cover great distances walking with their herds or walking towards a place where the rain may have fallen. Some people move between Purros, a perennial watering place in the Namib, and Orupembe. Others move north towards the Kunene river, or cross into Angola. They keep small homesteads on their regular routes, and occupy these only when in the area. A sacred fire or hearth (*okuruo*) is lit in all fairly permanent places of abode. This small fire, between the

cattle kraal and the main homestead, may never die, and must at all times be treated with the greatest respect. Separate fires are made for cooking and lighting.

5.5.1.3 Background and purpose of the song/dance

The music-dance event I shall describe here occurs in a similar form among both Himba and Zemba groups. Despite small differences in terms of language and custom, these groups share many aspects of culture.

Ondjongo (Otjihimba) is a dance-game which may take place at a picnic or any other social gathering. In Otjizemba a similar game is called *omutjopa*. While *ondjongo* makes use only of voice and handclaps, *omutjopa* also makes use of a small close-ended drum, playing what Festus Tjoola describes as a "tu-tumpe tu-tumpe" pattern.[44] *Ondjongo* may be played by a mixed group (men and women), although it appears that there are versions played only by men or women.

The basic structure of *ondjongo* involves the group standing in a circle facing a central space. A song is initiated by a leader's call and followed by the group's response. When the song reaches an end, everybody waits. If the feeling is good, somebody enters the central space and performs an energetic series of dance motions. The group supports this by clapping in unison with increased intensity and tempo, while shouting, ululating, making sounds in cupped hands, and so on. The completion of the dancer's series of movements coincides with the shouting of a 'name' or comment on or for the dancer by the singers. The dancer either returns to his or her place, or moves towards another person (usually on the opposite side of the circle), and challenges or invites this person to play. Either the invitee or another person enters and the sequence is repeated until participants tire or lose interest. When this happens, a new song is commenced, followed by the dance section, or the game. Women's song texts are called *Omambo wo vakaendu*, while

44 F. Tjoola, interview Opuwo, 1993.

those of the men are called *Omambo wo varumendu*. *Ondjongo* can continue for many hours, even throughout a night and the following day.

Clapping patterns usually consist of different sub-patterns to form a whole. Sub-patterns may involve alternate claps in regular beats, or a dochmiac pattern[45] clapped by some while others pick up certain points of emphasis, or a different pattern between lead-singer and the group, and so on. Patterns are described more fully after the song notation. The group sings a repeated response to the leader's longer melodies. Overlapping occurring between the entrance of the group and the end of the leader's part is common. The leader may be either a man or a woman. Although individual voice parts may be picked out, and although such parts may be sung by more than one person, many different patterns may be sung at once. The overall effect of the group singing tends to be complex - one where the melodic outline is audible, but characterized by a complex 'fuzziness'. The transcription, in this case, cannot truly reflect the quality of the sound. Similarly, the vocal interjections (while the dance takes place) are impossible to transcribe realistically. In order to replicate this music, it is therefore imperative to use audio and video tapes in addition to the transcription. Despite deficiencies, the transcription which follows allows the reader to perceive the breakdown of rhythmic patterns, overlap, and the strongest melodic patterns and tonality.

5.5.2 Transcription of *ondjongo* music and dance

The transcriptions were taken from field video and audio cassette recordings. The basic game structure in each performance is similar, but songs, their texts and the individual movements may differ.

45 See previous chapter for explanation.

5.5.2.1 Signs used in the notation of this song:

Read the pitch for women's parts as though written in the treble clef, and men's parts as though written in the bass clef.

❖ **Vocal sounds**

● indicates one singer or group as it appears on one stave

⊙, ■ indicates a second singer or group on the same stave

●— indicates notes sung with a longer duration

●∿ indicates a 'trembling' tone

◊∿ indicates a trembling tone sung into cupped hands

∿ indicates a 'scoop' towards note shown in brackets, without really pausing on second note

⟋ indicates a vocal slide towards second note

❖ **Vocal sounds during dance-game section**

hu, hu-hu produced with cupped hands held in front of mouth

aau produced with a rough voice and an upwards scoop

aai produced with a rough voice, sliding upwards in pitch

rrrr produced by rolling tongue on r with cupped hands held in front of mouth

❖ **Dance kinemes**

② Hop onto both feet

○ Right foot stamp

● Left foot stamp

Right foot stamp, with Left leg lifted, bent sharply, knee at waist level, foot at knee height

Left foot stamp, with Right leg lifted, bent sharply, knee at waist level, foot at knee height

▫ Right big walking stride, heavy

▬ Left big walking stride, heavy

Turn, by placing one foot past front of other like a corkscrew, change of weight

Lunge, leaning in towards centre of circle, like 'listening'

Arms rotate forwards together from shoulder, elbows bent - position high

Arms rotate forwards together from shoulder, elbows bent - position low

Hand cupped to ear, while lunging to one side

Lean over and 'touch' somebody

OKUREOKO PO KUVAKA

Video track 11
Ondjongo
(*Omambo wo vakaendu* - women's text)
Performed by Ovahimba men and women
Language: Otjihimba (Kuvale)
Tempo X = 120

©Recorded at Otuzemba, M.E. Mans (1993)
©Transcribed by M.E.Mans
Text by F. Mumbinda

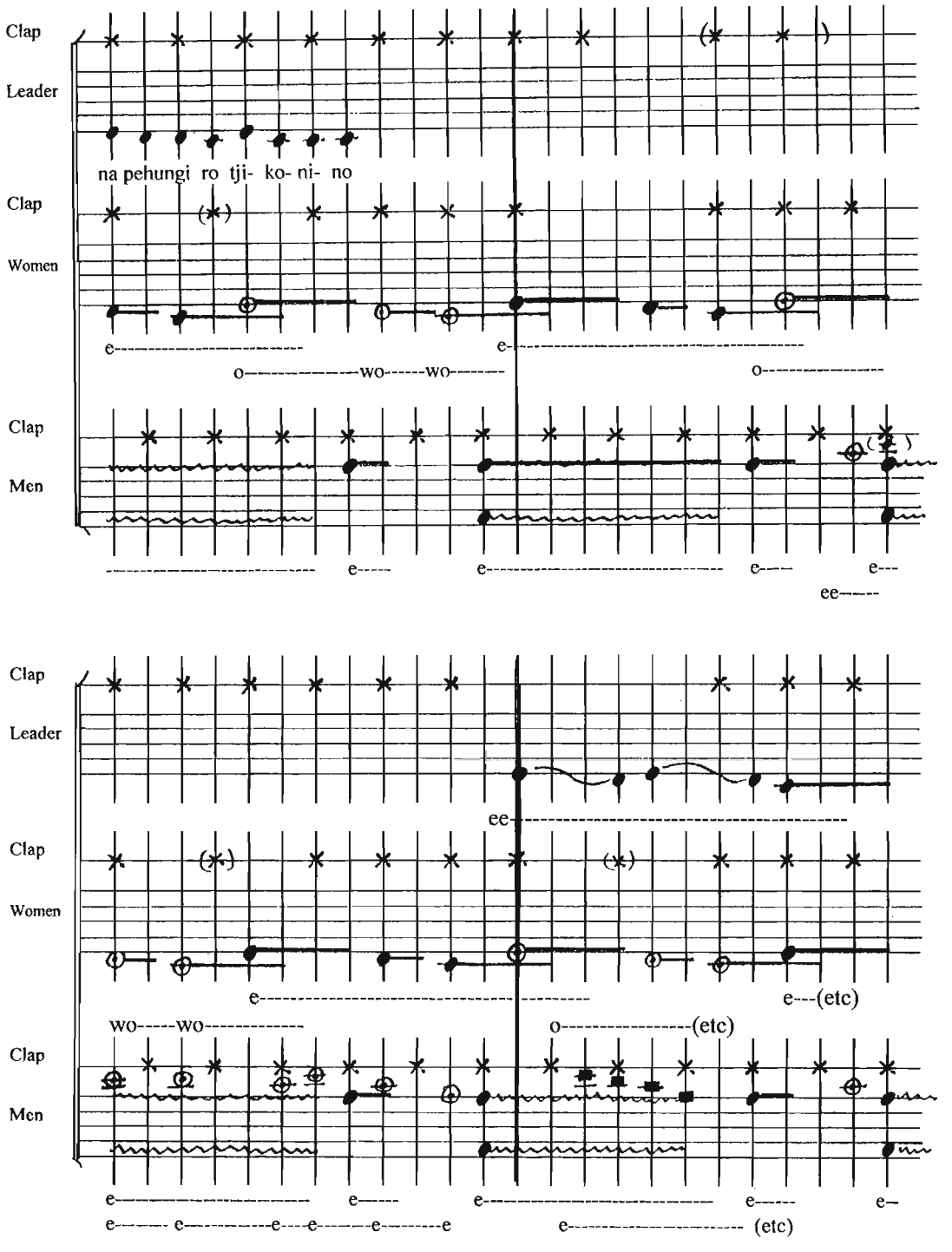
SONG

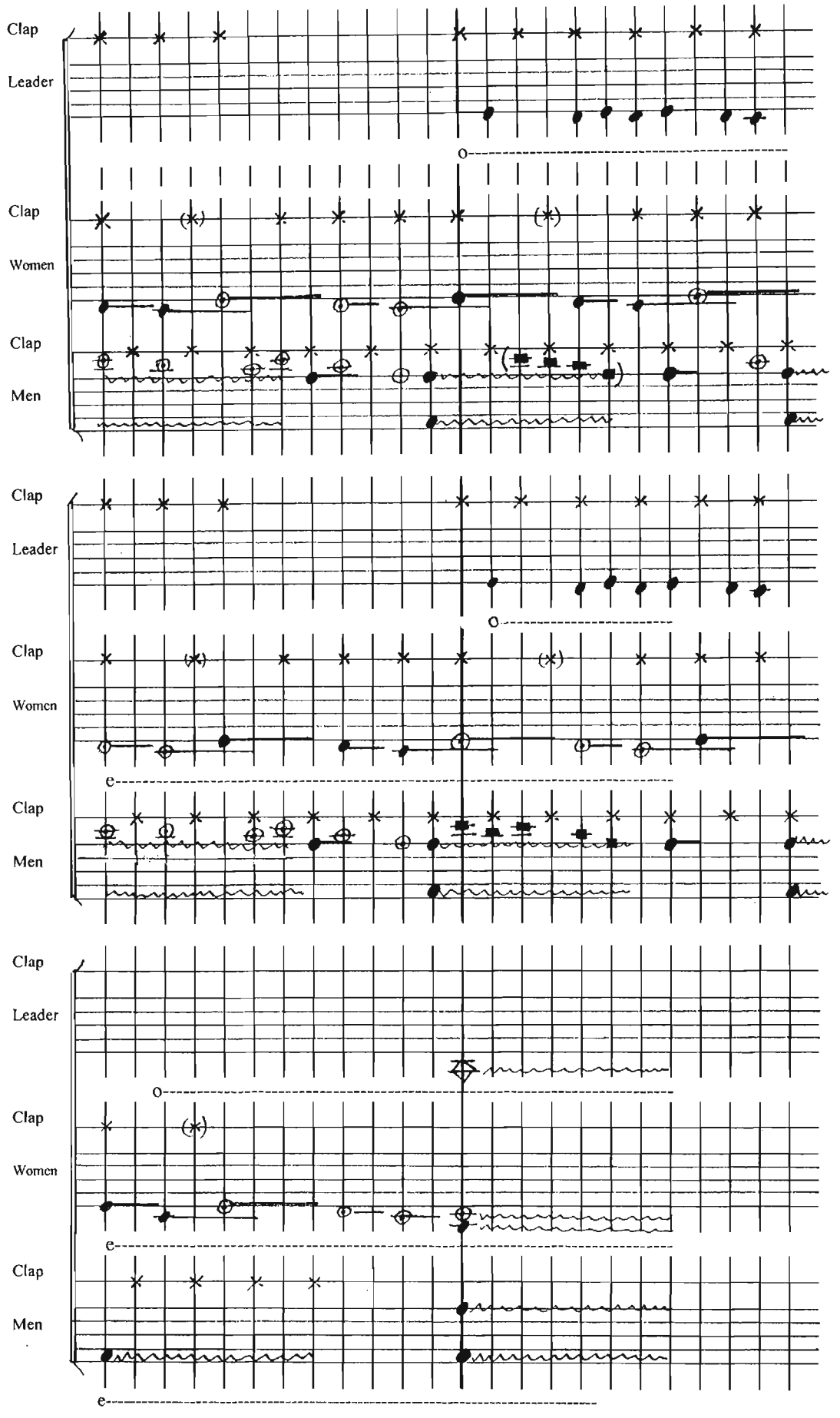
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

Clap
Leader
O- ho O-

Clap
Leader
ku- re- o- ko (po) ku- va- ka ka twari- po ka-
Clap
Women
E - ye

Clap
Leader
twa- ri- po mbiri yo O----
Clap
Women
E----------ye----------ye e----------
o----- o----------wo------wo-------
Clap
Men
E---------- e---


Clap
Leader
na pehungi ro tji- ko- ni- no
Clap
Women
e
o
wo
wo
e
o
Clap
Men
e
e
e
e
ee
Clap
Leader
ee
Clap
Women
e
e---(etc)
wo
wo
o
(etc)
Clap
Men
e
e
e
e
e
e
e
e
e
e
e
(etc)


Clap
Leader
o
Clap
Women
Clap
Men
Clap
Leader
o
Clap
Women
e
Clap
Men
Clap
Leader
o
Clap
Women
e
Clap
Men
e

DANCE-GAME

Clap
All
Feet
Arms

"Ka-van-ye"**

aaw aaw

Clap
All
Feet
Arms

"Ka-van-ye"** (etc.)

etc. to place

Other dance movement possibilities:

Feet
Arms

or

Feet
Arms

or

Feet
Arms

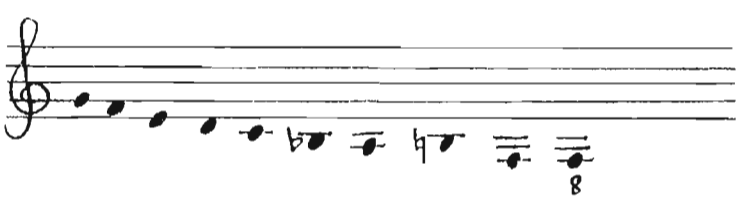
Note: Throughout, the pitch for women should be read as if written in the treble clef, and that for men as though written in the bass clef. Different lines of text indicate different singers.

** Here a name or comment is shouted to suit the dance character of the individual.

Vernacular text:	*Translation:*
Okureoko po kuvaka ka twaripo	a 'long arm or leg' (a thief) has stolen -
twari po mbiri yo	we were not there, we were at
tjana pehungiro tjikonino	a meeting for the garden (growing of crops in communal area)
"Kavanye"	means jackal - a playful or teasing description of somebody's nature

❖ **Tonal centre:** F (original pitch one semitone higher)

❖ **Note store:**



5.5.3 Explanation of characteristics

Although texts vary for different songs and occasions, the musical structures remain very similar. In fact, they may remain identical for songs with different texts. The repertoire of the people contain numerous song structures, which are adapted to different texts, preferences and situations.

5.5.3.1 Musical characteristics

The song above consists of 16 times 12 pulses. The song is **responsorial**, with the leader singing a fairly long theme, to which the group (in this case women first) respond with two 'thirds' sliding down, to echo the initial two notes of the leader. Thereafter the chorus sings repetitions of their patterns. The leader's singing does not stand out as strongly as in many other styles of song, and resembles a narrative form.

The parts of the chorus appear to be basically **multi-monophonic**, over a bass drone. Multi-monophony here refers to the fact that women sing a single short 12-pulse melodic pattern, with minor variations, but in an interlocking structure. In other words, a second group enters before the first has completed a statement. In the case of the men, some sing a drone in a trembling tone, doubled where possible in the lower octave. Others introduce a very unexpected and interesting melodic pattern, and again different men sing it in various versions, one after the other.

Although the transcribed form makes the song appear longer than the other songs transcribed in this chapter, this is because ad libitum repetitions do not occur. When the song has been sung from start to end (as written), the dance-game commences. Following the dance-game section a new song is sung, although some singers repeat exactly the same patterns. Players know that each song's duration is about 16 times 12 pulses, unless the group changes over into a new rhythmic pattern.

The songs' **texts** generally include descriptions of people, everyday situations, events, hopes for the future. Texts are not fixed[46] but may be made up by older or experienced persons while playing *ondjongo*. They may think about possibilities before. The following are some texts of songs recorded on the occasion of my visit in 1993, translated verbally by Mumbinda and Tjoola. Not all these texts are suitable for classroom use, as an underlying racism is evident in at least one. I include all the texts in this summary merely for the sake of accuracy:

Omambo wo varumendu (men's texts)

• *Ehi retu rakutuka Namibia yetu oveni*	our country is celebrating Independence
• *Ondunda ya Mbombo inunisa ozongombe*	the hill of Mbombo (a place) makes the cattle fat
• *Tate Sem (sic) Nujoma ongwakotora ehi retu ko uyara womundu*	Tate (mister or older person) Sam Nujoma (the President) took back our land and responsibility for the people

Omambo wo vakaendu (women's texts)

• *Orutjanda rwa Hopoho karuumbirwa ruzera*	the pan at Hopoho (Opuwo) is holy, people may not be shot there
• *Ozomburu ka zeno nganda mazekwatere mo ndjira*	white people don't have homes, they have children alongside the road (like whores)
• *Mbaimbira okateipa ka Muhata*	I have sung in the tape of Muhata (name of person)

It is interesting that there are separate categories for men's and women's texts. Although not enough evidence has been gathered to make conclusions in this regard, it does seem to imply that certain matters are regarded as the field of a particular gender. Responses are commonly sung without words, on vowels such as o and e. In common with other peoples in the north of Namibia, the letters l and r are often

46 According to F. Tjoola, Otuzemba, 1993.

exchanged. In the recording, therefore, the singer is heard to sing "Okuleoko" and "twalipo". Both Tjoola and Mumbinda nevertheless assure me that the correct written version is with an r.[47]

The **tonal structure** of the *ondjongo* music is interesting and rather different from those described earlier. In the transcription above, the tonality appears to be similar to a major diatonic scale. This feeling is supported by the F drone in the bass part (pulse 12, men) which appears to create a strong fundamental tone. Yet most of the musical 'action' does not resolve to the F. The fourth tone above the F is sometimes performed as a B^b and sometimes as a B natural. This rather typical tonal organisation gives the music of the area a distinctive quality.

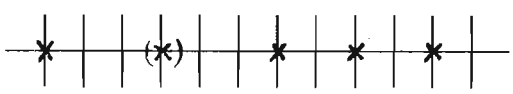
The most distinctive **tonal quality** resides in the use of the voice. The vocal tone of women's song is throat-resonated, but placed forward with a fairly deep, rich quality. For want of a better word, I describe the vocal tone used for the drone and for endings (and sometimes in between) as 'trembling'. The voice is forced through the vocal chords while the diaphragm and lower jaw is vibrated. The shorter *ee* tone of the bass drone is sung with a glottal stop.

The tendency throughout is **sustained vocalization** without impact or emphasis on particular notes., except for the women's pattern with a scoop, where the initial note and its return is emphasised. The song ends in this termbling tone on a sustained chord, over which some individuals may still add short little melodic improvisations. The main melodic 'feel' of most of the Ovahimba songs recorded, is that of three related descending tones - giving an impression (in western terms) of a major triad, or sometimes a minor triad. This distinction is apparently not conceptualised or felt by singers, and there does not appear to be any reasoning for a choice of 'major' or 'minor' tonality. The same song may be sung in both kinds of tonality. By singing similar, but interlocking patterns on different vowels, the overtones thereby created render the tone quality more complex. To this the singers add small improvisations to the patterns. In the

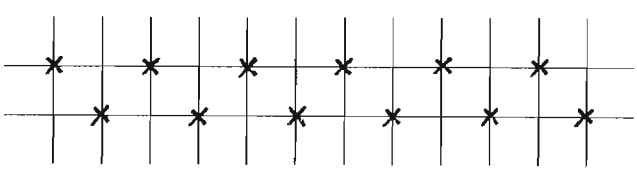
47 F. Tjoola and F. Mumbinda, interviews, Opuwo, 1993.

transcription above, I have only notated the most common patterns. Although notated per pulse line, quicker vocal syllables of the leader are not always sung strictly as written, but the syllables tend to run into one another more as in a narrative, passing through certain tones.

Initially it is quite difficult to identify the **rhythmic structure** of this song, partly because of the sustained singing style. Some songs recorded appear to be structured in 8 beat (16 pulse) timelines, while this one appears to be structured in a 6 beat (12 pulse) timeline. Clapping patterns and vocal entries provide the necessary clues. Pulse groupings occur in twos and threes. This song has been notated in a two-pulse rhythm because the clapping pattern is alternated in an equal division between two groups of clappers (see line three, where the leader and the women's group alternate pulses). The alternate clap is then taken over by the men. It coincides with their drone entries. Some singers clap in what at first appears to be a random pattern, when they feel like clapping. But the concurrences of claps, seen holistically, creates a dochmiac combination pattern, even though the pattern is sometimes interspersed among different people clapping. It appears thus:

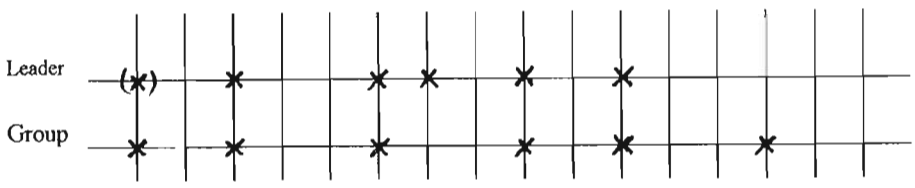
Clap 

Some women continue to clap the same alternate pulse pattern as the men.



During the dance-game section, the claps happen on each pulse, clapped by everybody. Certain pulses may on occasion be left unclapped, as has been notated. The increased clapping contributes to intensity and excitement.

In -Zemba practice, one or two drums (*ongoma* and *ompindjingo*) are added to the song. This is especially so when playing at weddings, for example. These songs are also responsorial, with a statement introduced by a leader, while the chorus, singing mostly in two parts, answer with a repeated response, somewhat more extensive than that of the song above. In *omutjopa* the clapping is as important as in *ondjongo*, although different rhythmic patterns may occur, for example a song cycle may be 32 pulses over an 8 pulse timeline in a dochmiac pattern, with the leader clapping a different pattern to the rest:



The most common or basic pattern for clapping *omutjopa* is:

In both Himba and Zemba practice, vocal sounds (mostly in cupped hands) provide the aural accompaniment to the dance. According to Tjoola, the sounds are not necessarily representative or symbolic of any animals or spirits or any other object. They merely "make it good".[48] They are however crucial to the characteristic sound and atmosphere of both *ondjongo* and *omutjopa*.

5.5.3.2 Characteristics of movements

In *ondjongo* movements start and are maintained in 'basic earth' position. Knees are bent, feet are flat upon the ground and the torso is inclined forward. The depth of inclination depends upon the individual's preference. One often sees men with their upper backs rounded as they lift the one knee. Women are more likely to have straighter backs, even slightly arched. They may be dancing with a baby strapped to the back. Heads are aligned with the spine, although a woman may keep her head more upright and inclined towards one shoulder. The eyes are either focussed on the ground or to the front. See illustrations below.

48 F.Tjoola, personal communications, Otuzemba, 1993.

Movements are energetic and strong. The feet are strongly stamped into the earth - it should make a thump sound.

FIGURE 5.15 ***ONDJONGO* ACTION POSITIONS**

The most prevalent **movement component** is a stamp with the weight on one foot, while the other foot is lifted into the air, the leg being sharply bent at the knee. The foot is thus raised approximately to knee height (see Fig. 5.15). This action is repeated rapidly, while moving forwards across the open space in the centre. It comes to an end either when the dancer stops and leans over to touch or invite another to join the game, or possibly by performing a few turns while stamping, or by coming to a halt and throwing up the arms. The dancer then walks, strides or stumbles (laughing) back to his or her initial position in the circle. This is the game aspect. The manner of return has much to do with individual personality and how the dancer feels about his or her performance. The body attitude when returning to place is almost always with the torso bent forwards, and the steps taken are large.

Some players, especially older women, merely walk heavily across the space, turn and return. Others perform active and even wild movements in their turn. Thus a dancer may quite often lose balance on a quick turn and have to prevent falling with hands on the ground.

Occasionally someone, a man for example, may merely lunge or lean inwards on one leg, as though listening for something. When a few people do this consecutively, there is much laughter and shouting.

A variation on other movements, apparently only performed if one is an owner of cattle (but then most people in the area are), is performed by a husband and wife. He crouches on all fours, feet flat on the ground, back fairly straight. He performs a stamp pattern with his feet (see below), while she does the basic step moving closely around him, and then, resting her one hand one his head, she performs a stamping pattern in front of him. The man's stamping pattern is:

Men's **arms** are bent sharply at the elbow and execute a forwards rotation from the shoulder - almost as if one is swinging a rather short skipping rope rapidly. Women's arms are also bent at the elbow, their hands held above shoulder height. Their action is not quite the same as that of the men. Women's arms (in the bent position) are moved up and down rapidly, rather than rotated.

Good dancers are those who perform intense, strong movements, put in something original now and then, maintain balance, and very importantly - enjoy it!

While individuals perform in the central space, the rest of the participants clap loudly, leaning forward into the claps to create more intensity. The leader moves past the front of the singers exhorting them to greater intensity and excitement. In this way they feed energy into the dancers and make the game more

pleasurable. Twelve pulses of claps, starting after one pulse of silence and ending with a pulse of silence, are followed by a concerted shout, giving the person a descriptive 'name', repeating an old name, or calling out a comment. The sound of the words dictates the rhythmic pattern in which it will be shouted, although it always fits into 4 pulses. I have heard the following rhythms for the shout:

Omutjopa [see video track 12] is similar to *ondjongo* in many respects, yet the dance movements show slightly different characteristics. The men I observed mostly raised their arms to a position with hands above the head. Women's movements are less sharply articulated than those in ondjongo. Women enter the circle in pairs and synchronise their light stamps and turns.

Sometimes, at the end of a dance 'phrase' a male performer freezes in a position with the whole body inclined forward, balanced on one leg, the other foot raised at the back. The arm opposite to the raised foot is raised above the head, while the other arm is placed alongside the body, hand behind the back.

Instead of the strong stamps of -Himba convention, these young men tend to drop forward onto one foot, and then execute stamps, but with less intensity. In its place, more attention is given to 'freezes' of position, to collective improvisation with partners, and to turns.

The **ground pattern** or design of both *ondjongo* and *omutjopa* is not really formalised, but the following general pattern is followed. Participants stand in a circle or semi-circle facing inwards. First a song(s) is completed. Everybody then waits to see whether someone feels like playing. If not, a new song is begun. If somebody decides to play, they may begin by entering the space with a jump on both feet, stating their intention. This is not always done. They then move across the space towards the opposite side, or just generally into the space, while performing their actions. In *ondjongo*, it is usually one person at a time

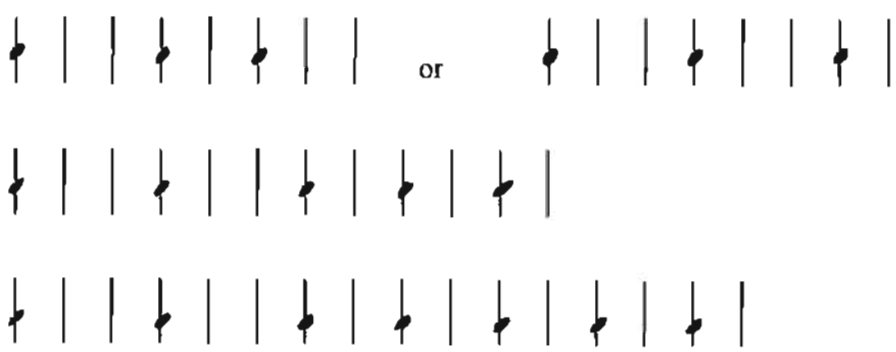
who enters the circle, while *omutjopa* requires two persons to enter the circle, move simultaneously, and 'give' the turn to someone else. Within local conventions, movements are improvised freely, more or less within the bounds of the rhythms as transcribed.

5.5.4 Suggestions for the classroom

Ondjongo is most probably better suited to learners at the secondary level, but simplified clapping patterns may be commenced by learners in upper primary and gradually built up from there. The complexity of rhythmic clapping combinations and interlocking provide a challenge even at secondary level.[49] The vocal tones also work best when voices have reached a reasonable level of maturity or depth of tone quality.

- Begin with simplified **clapping patterns**. These provide the clue to understanding the music of the area. There are various patterns used in the area. Work with different ones, so as to create a feel for the inherent pulse structures in these patterns. Here are some examples found in the area:

and different forms of the same pattern -



- In two groups, **practice alternate claps**. Let one group fall silent, and then - at a sign - come in again on the correct pulse. Do the same with the other group. repeat a few times until learners find it easy to pick up on alternate clapping.

49 In sessions with university students to whom the culture is unfamiliar, I found that it required at least three 1 hour sessions before the clapping patterns were mastered. The singing parts were accomplished more easily, but combined with clapping, some difficulties were experienced.

- **Combine** contrasting patterns, or combine with simple claps (beats) on every second pulse. Eventually combine alternate claps (two groups alternately clapping on every second pulse) with one of the above patterns.
- **Contextualize** the event, by providing opportunities to learn about the area, the people and their history, life-style, cultural practices. Locate a respected Otjiherero narrator and translator to come to the class to narrate a story or aspect of the peoples' history. Listen for the way in which events are narrated or sung.
- **Observe** the video recording or listen to an audio cassette version. **Identify 'different' vocal sounds,** e.g. trembling tone, singing into cupped hands, whoops, rrrrs, shouts, and ululations. Experiment with new sounds.
- **Explore the various vocal sounds and timbres** seen in the video. Allow learners to experiment with these and other sounds which they find interesting or exciting.
- **Start teaching the song** by isolating the women's pattern and singing that in unison. Then break into two (or later more) groups singing the pattern by interlocking. The first group sings the pattern. The second group enters halfway through the last syllable. Repeat. Do the same with the men's (boys') parts. Combine all the parts of the chorus. Add the leader's part. Allow more inventive learners to create melodic variations to the leader's part. It may be easier for learners to sing with the video, although the tempo is quite fast. This does, however, allow them to get the 'feel' of the song.
- With the help of an Otjiherero or Otjihimba-speaker, allow learners to **create new texts**. If there is no access to anyone who speaks the language, use vowels, meaningless syllables, or even another language, as long as the sound-character of that language is not too different.
- **Write a poem or narration** as a group effort, telling something of the history or life of the Ovahimbas.
- After observing how movements are performed in the video recording, **experiment** with individual movement sequences, while everybody claps the dance-game patterns. Remember to shout a comment or name on the 4 pulses as notated. At first learners may find this concerted, thinking-the-same-thought action very difficult. It may be necessary to first practice that separately. The teacher may

describe a performance verbally. Learners discuss and decide what may be shouted, to fit in the given slot. Then add the group merely clapping a regular pulse pattern. Somebody should act as clapping leader to encourage intensity of involvement and cohesion as a group. Make a game of encouraging learners to communicate by eye and gesture only, and come up with a common word. With practice, learners will develop a 'vocabulary' for this comment.

- It is important to remember that *ondjongo* is a game. It would not be wrong to **include some humour** into the game. Some dancers may comment on their own or other's work through this medium. Learners invite others by 'tagging' or touching them. If they were using the ochre body paint, some of that paint would be left on the arms of the person invited.
- Learners should be encouraged to **create their own personal styles of movement** within the characteristic cultural style.
- Through **discussion and appraisal,** identify which kinds of movements, tempos, intensities, combinations and styles work best. Discuss symbolism in the dance - the role of the cattle-culture.
- **Research** similar dance-games among other people of the area, as well as among Herero people in other areas. Are there other dance-games in Namibia? In other parts of the world? Learners can do a group project by researching this topic and putting the information together in the form of a collage for public display in the school or classroom.

While assessment of learners' progress is always an integral part of all arts activities, it is my feeling that the emphasis in *ondjongo* should remain on the fun of playing it with humour, and not on performance for its own sake.

5.6 *NYAKASANGA* - PART OF A HEALING CEREMONY IN THE CAPRIVI REGION

☼ [Video track 13]

This recording by a cultural troupe formed part of a rehearsal for a public performance. The dance is however a correct rendition of the form.

5.6.1 Description of context, background, purpose and procedure

5.6.1.1 Socio-geographical context:

The Caprivi region is a narrow strip of land extending eastwards towards Zimbabwe (see map detail on following page). The northern part shares borders with both Angola and Zambia, while Botswana borders the south. In the eastern areas of the Caprivi strip in particular, many cultural practices are shared in common with Lozi people in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Batswana influence is not readily visible. People in this region practise mixed agriculture. They are mostly crop farmers, and they also keep a number of cattle, goats, chickens, and so forth. Fish forms an important part of the diet, especially for those who live along the banks of the Okavango, Kwando, Zambezi, Chobe and Linyanti rivers. Geographically, it is a forested, sandy region where wood carving, basket weaving and pottery[50] are widely practiced. There is only one town, Katima Mulilo, in this area and it serves as administrative headquarters. Nasilele says that the name of this town refers to burning coals being extinguished. When settlers arrived by canoe, their coals were extinguished in the rapids just up-river of where the town is presently situated.[51] There are however numerous villages covering the strip, making it quite well populated. Large sections of the region have been declared game reserves although still inhabited by local people, and there is a relative abundance of game, especially elephants.

50 The clay for pots is found along certain parts of river banks.
51 Moses Nasilele, interviews, Katima Mulilo 1993.

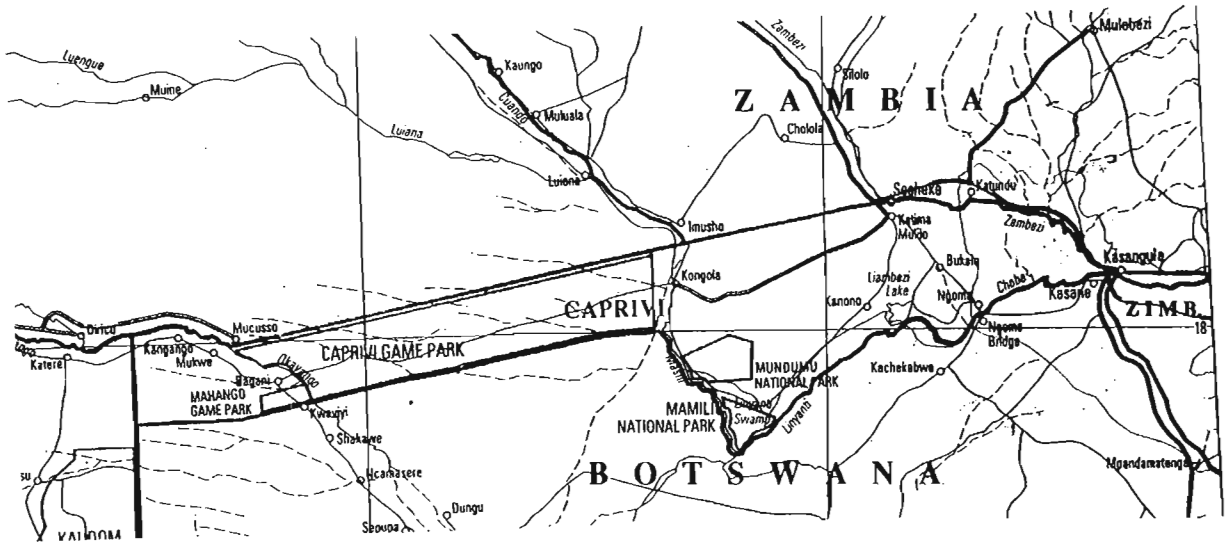


FIGURE 5.16 MAP OF CAPRIVI STRIP

Homes are traditionally built from poles, covered with a clay and dung mixture for walls, and thatch roofs. Family compounds are surrounded by palisades of poles and grass matting or a hedge. These are rapidly being replaced in more urbanised areas by brick or corrugated iron constructions. Few homes are equipped with electricity or running water at this stage (even in Katima Mulilo), but efforts are being made to rectify this. A large section of the Trans-Caprivi Highway (from central Namibia to the eastern border) is paved. No other roads are paved at present.

Historically, the area near Katima Mulilo was the first area where the Namibian war leading to independence commenced. Yet, despite a huge airstrip and heavy military presence by the South Africans, few skirmishes or battles took place here. Largely because of its isolation from the rest of Namibia and a relatively small colonial impact (as a result), lifestyles have not undergone as much change as, for example, those of the people of the Owambo and Okavango areas.

5.6.1.2 Language

The major language group of this area is Silozi, found along with Sifwe, Subhia and Siyei are common. The terms used here are those provided by various consultants and informants. Where alternative terms for different areas are known, those will be placed in brackets after the more common term.

5.6.1.3 Background, purpose and procedure of the healing ceremony

Based on my discussions with Moses Nasilele, Dominic Lunenge, and Austin Muyunda,[52] it appears that the healing ceremonies practised in this area consist typically of three different sections, each with a different purpose. The total ceremony generally lasts from early evening throughout the night until early morning, although I have been told that when the situation requires it, a healing may take up to three nights. The different sections or phases of a Valozi healing are the performing (*nyakasanga*), the divining (*liyala*), and the curing (*kayowe*). Healings normally follow the process below, as described to me in some detail by Dominic Lunenge.[53] In the main I have used Lunenge's way of telling the story.

A healer, male or female, is generally summoned to a particular village or family enclosure if that family feels that the illness of a member of the family is serious enough to warrant the expense. Depending on the seriousness of the problem, a healer may demand a head of cattle or a given number of goats in payment. Cash may also exchange hands.[54] Healers build their reputations upon their rate of successful cures, and this reputation directly affects the fee. A particular healer may be summoned from as far afield as Zambia or Angola for a particular case.

The nature of an illness may be physical or psychological, and in this area is often thought to be the result of witchcraft. Although the cost of these healings is very high, they take place with surprising regularity, particularly on weekends. The full ceremony is not always required. The sound of drums playing the *nyakasanga* patterns alerts people of the surrounding area. Following the sound, people proceed to the village or home where the healing is to take place. Almost everyone is welcome to attend the healing. Persons who are suffering from ailments or spiritual complaints bring smaller forms of payment (chickens, fruit, crops), as they hope to consult the healer as well.

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52 Personal communications between 1993 and 1996. All the information about this kind of healing is based on information provided by these three persons.
53 See transcription of interview in Addendum 8.2.
54 In Namibia registered traditional healers are (theoretically) recognized by government and health authorities.

During the first phase of the healing, the *nyakasanga*, three drummers, who may either be part of the healer's retinue or local village inhabitants, start by playing the drums. Drums in the Caprivi are always played by men, and Nasilele has described women's drum-playing as taboo in his culture.[55] Traditionally this consists of a group of three conical open-ended drums. They are referred to as the mother drum - *sikumwa*, the son drum - *kandili* (or *kachakili* or *kachikumwa)*, and the father drum - *mulupa o mutuna* (or *nguluoma* as Lunenge prefers to call it*)*. These three drums each have particular patterns (see explanation following the transcription) which signal that *nyakasanga* is proceeding. This phase is generally performed by the healer's assistant (*sishambi)* while people are still arriving.

PLATE 5.8 THE SET OF THREE DRUMS USED IN THE CAPRIVI

Nyakasanga is performed as a solo dance by the healer's assistant or *sishambi*, although onlookers (especially women) may join in the dance. Members of the healer's group are often the first to become involved. They would be good dancers and know his particlar style of movements, and can therefore match his movements or perform collective improvisation.

55 Personal communications, Windhoek, Namingoma, 1995.

The purpose of this phase of the ceremony is mainly entertainment. Thus, the *sishambi* performs dance which is aimed at attracting attention, demonstrating that this is a healer of excellent reputation. The singing and clapping is performed by female attendees, while men are the only ones responsible for the drumming. As a drummer tires, another may take over. The music thus creates a sense of cohesion and keeps people entertained and occupied.

Later in the night the healer enters, rolls out his or her mat in the center of the gathering and sits down while the *sishambi* continues the performance. The healer now dons a special costume, consisting of a grass skirt (*mashamba*), shoulder fittings upon which a zebra mane is made to stand upright (*makumbi*),[56] and a headdress (*singalangala*) into which special magic herbs are secretly placed as protection against evil spirits and witchcraft. Any other material requirements are also set out. These may include hand-held shakers or rattles (*milayi*) and special, secret unguents.

The healer proceeds to speak to the crowd, saying something like " ..... (name of the person who summoned the healer), you have called me to your village to see what is the problem. Now you must give me your cooperation so that this healing may be a success."

A mediator (using Lunenge's term) is appointed for the divining, someone who can answer all the questions. The healer then turns the mortar (which is used for stamping the maize) upside down. This symbolizes a turning upside down of witches. Their senses thus confused, they cannot find or touch the healer. The spokesperson for the family of the ill person indicates that everything is in readiness for the ceremony, that the cow (or whatever the agreed payment is) will be there in the morning. What the family now requires is for the healer to tell the family who is 'witching' the person who has become 'sick'.

56 It is worth noting that the dance motions of shoulders carry the name of the shoulder fittings (*makumbi*) and that the term *mashamba* implies the skirt as well as movements of hips and pelvis - anything which puts the skirt into motion.

At this stage it is announced that all the people who have problems should bring their money, as the healer is ready to do the divining. The more powerful African doctor will announce that people who are having problems may hear their names being called. If they are called in, they are expected to come forward. The healing thus proceeds into the second phase, which is *liyala* - the divining. The healer starts his dance - which Lunenge describes as "not so strong" at first. The emphasis in the *liyala* dance is on *makumbi* (shoulder movements). The repertoire of songs for *liyala* all concern the divining, in terms of the person who is sick and others who are attending. They concern the village itself - the life and health of the people living there, and the strong witches in the surrounding areas. Those are "the themes of the African doctor" (Lunenge 1995). Through the mediator, the healer starts divining the smaller problems while dancing. At about midnight, when people are starting to tire, the healer's dance increases in intensity so that "people do not go to sleep". Through his/her dance, the healer creates an atmosphere in which people stay awake not only to see his performance, but are filled with curiosity to see and hear what is going to happen next. Questions relating to recent happenings and people who may have been in contact with the sick person continue.

Eventually, when everybody has danced, the healer, through the questioning, has put together a "story-line". All factors and persons involved in the illness have been drawn together and the healer is ready to pronounce who is bewitching the sick person. By this time it is sunrise. The healer must now perform *bedje*. The spokesperson indicates that the cow is ready; she is brought in and tied up. The healer now has to point to the one who is 'witching' the sick person and indicate whether he/she "dies or what". This sign, or the pointing out, is called *bedje*. I was told that if identification of the guilty person would create too much stress or too great a problem in the village, the healer would refrain from pointing to a specific person, but would show that the guilty person is known to him/her, leaving hints in such a way that the villagers themselves would eventually be able to identify the guilty person (Lunenge, 1995) and decide upon appropriate action.

Following these pronouncements, the curing (*kayowe*) starts. The diviner now has to indicate to the people whether he/she is willing or able to commence the healing. If not, another healer should be named. According to informants, it is rare for the same person to (successfully) perform both divination and curing. Quoting Lunenge (in personal interview, 1995) the reason is as follows:

> [B]ecause you see it depends with the African doctor, because you find that those who divine most, they don't touch some... those people who are sick. ...What happens, you see, because the African doctor, once he is in that process, he is not allowed to... because those people they do eat the human flesh. [...] If that African doctor would eat the human flesh, then he can't touch a sick person. Once he touches that sick person have to die. [...] Ja, but you find that people who are doing the healing is his assistants... assistants - the people who know just ..he just give them directions -people just take this type of tree, the root of this, this, this,... and then those people do it. [...] Uh-huh, he wouldn't do it himself. Yes, because probably he can also pick up spirits if he touches people.

The healer instructs the family in terms of medication, for example where to find the necessary herbs or ingredients required. In some cases, different forms of curing take place. An example to protect the patient involves needle pricks surrounding the entire chest being rubbed in with special unguents. During the *kayowe* phase the healer performs the most spectacular movements in his/her repertoire, sometimes lying on the ground jerking and twitching spasmodically as though possessed. Emphasis is placed on *makumbi* (shoulders) and in particular on *mashamba* (the movements of the skirt), which may be thrust up forwards or rotated. The *singalangala* headdress is particularly important to keep the healer safe during this phase. According to Lunenge, a fundamental source of the healer's power in this process lies in the involvement through the music and dance of all the people attending. He suggests that this may be the reason traditional healers have less success when they practise at hospitals, as they do in Zambia.

Below follows a transcription of one *nyakasanga* song plus a modelised or template score for drums and the dance. The texts of the songs for *nyakasanga* tend to reflect matters relating to the particular village or area. The songs may be sung by local women, who may never have seen the healer before (although I have witnessed a healing where the healer brought his own singers who sang special songs to praise him). The drum patterns and basic dance structure and patterns are what typifies it as *nyakasanga*, and therefore the actual songs, although vital to the performance, are incidental in terms of melody or text.

5.6.2 Transcription of *nyakasanga* music and dance

The transcription was taken from a video recording. As the song is very short, I have included additional songs that follow the first, in order to illustrate the dance. In addition to the video recording I was assisted by Lunenge who identified aspects of the main structure of the dance and relationships between instrumentalists, vocalists and dance. Thus, the drumming of the *sikumwa* supports, underlies and draws together all aspects of the performance. *Kandili* 'motivates' singers and dancers and creates energy. Both *sikumwa* and *kandili* patterns differ according to the performance type. Lunenge (1995) says every dance has *mukumwelo* - its own way. Through the recognition of patterns, people living some distance away know what kind of event is taking place, and decide whether they want to go there or not.

The freedom of the master drummer, *mulupa o mutuna,* is controlled by the dancer. "He's dancing the dance on the drum" (Lunenge, 1995). The *milayi* (shakers) connect the singers and drummers. If the singers lose impetus, the dancer (healer) shows them with the *milayi* that they should increase their intensity level. The healer also keeps a whistle like that of a sports referee in his mouth, and blows on this in a rhythmic pattern which relates to the dance and *mulupa*.[57]

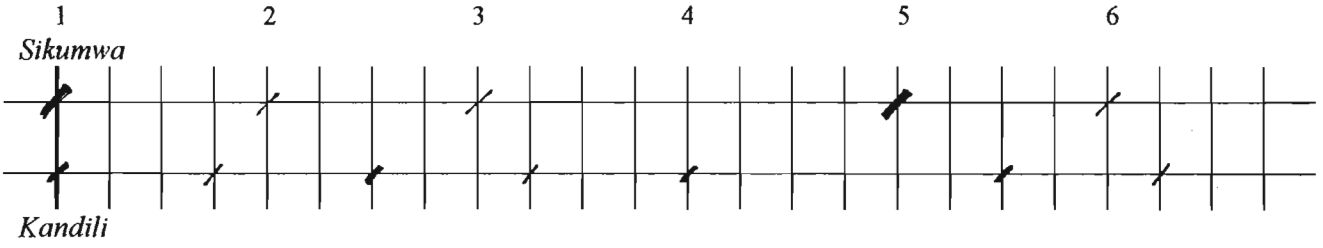
5.6.2.1 Signs used in the notation of this song

❖ **The notation:**

- The bold vertical lines indicate reference beats - on which different pulses and movements coincide. There is another coincidence of pulses halfway between the reference beats. I shall refer to these as half-beats, because the main movements occur only on reference beats, not on the half-beats.
- Note that the *kandili* and *mukakashi* play in fours, while the rest of the performers sing, play and dance in threes.
- The part of the vocal leader begins at the Ø sign and then proceeds from the top. The same applies to the chorus, which follows after the leader has finished.

57 The generic term for all drums in Silozi is *mulupa*.

- To simplify the score, patterns have been notated as they occur with the singing. When an instrument or movement appears on only one line, that pattern must be repeated. Most patterns are repeated for four lines. Only those with variations to the fourth line of song are written below the given line of song.
- The notation for the dance movements should be read vertically as well as horizontally. In this way, one can see, for example, that three forward foot movements are followed by one *makumbi.* The body should therefore be seen as a whole, not merely discrete parts.
- In order to get an exact idea of the interface between the *kandili* and the *sikumwa*, for example, the smallest common pulses can be illustrated as follows (each pulse is sub-divided into four):



This expanded version of the notation covers only 6 pulses, or the distance from one reference beat to the next.

- NOTE: the lines for the whistle, feet, makumbi and mashamba are all that of the dancer(s).
- the lines for sikumwa, mulupa o mutuna, kandili and mukakashi are the parts of the different drummers

❖ **Kinemes for dance:**

○ place right foot forward as though stepping, but without real weight

● place left foot forward as though stepping but without real weight

step to right side

step to left side

□ place right foot next to left

■ place left foot next to right

step forwards

step backwards

lift leg with a curved motion from forward position to return to place

rapid shaking of shoulders (*makumbi*) while placed on both feet flat, apart, with bent knees

on knees, 'step' to right

on knees, 'step' to left

place R knee next to L

place L knee next to R

extend (free) leg

mashamba - small sharp pelvic contraction so that skirt swings up front

x clapping with forward motion of the upper body. Stance is basic earth. Arm motion from shoulders downwards on beat to clap at waist-level. Raise arms for next clap.

R hand *milayi* (shaker)

L hand *milayi*

both hands *milayi*

❖ **Symbol for whistle:**

blow the whistle

❖ **Kinemes for drums:**

full dominant (right) hand, struck with curved hand - strike center drumface (right) (full sound)

full non-dominant (left) hand

half dominant (right) hand, fingers curved/ cupped - strike lower quarter drum face

half non-dominant (left) hand, fingers curved/cupped - strike lower quarter drum face

(outside edge of hand (left) - strike upper (left) quarter near edge of drum face (dry sound)

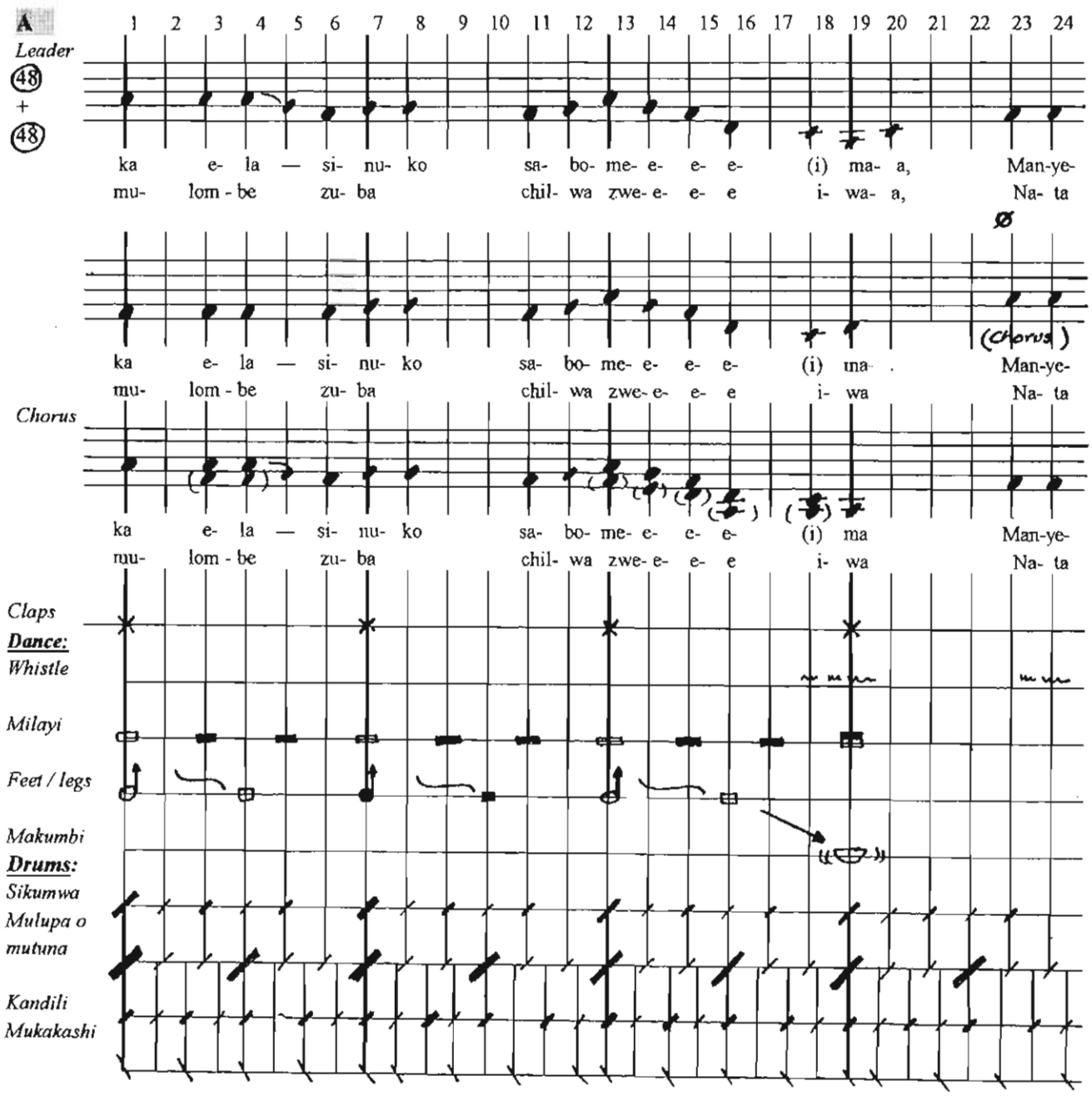
mukakashi - a stick beaten against the outside of a drum which usually lies flat

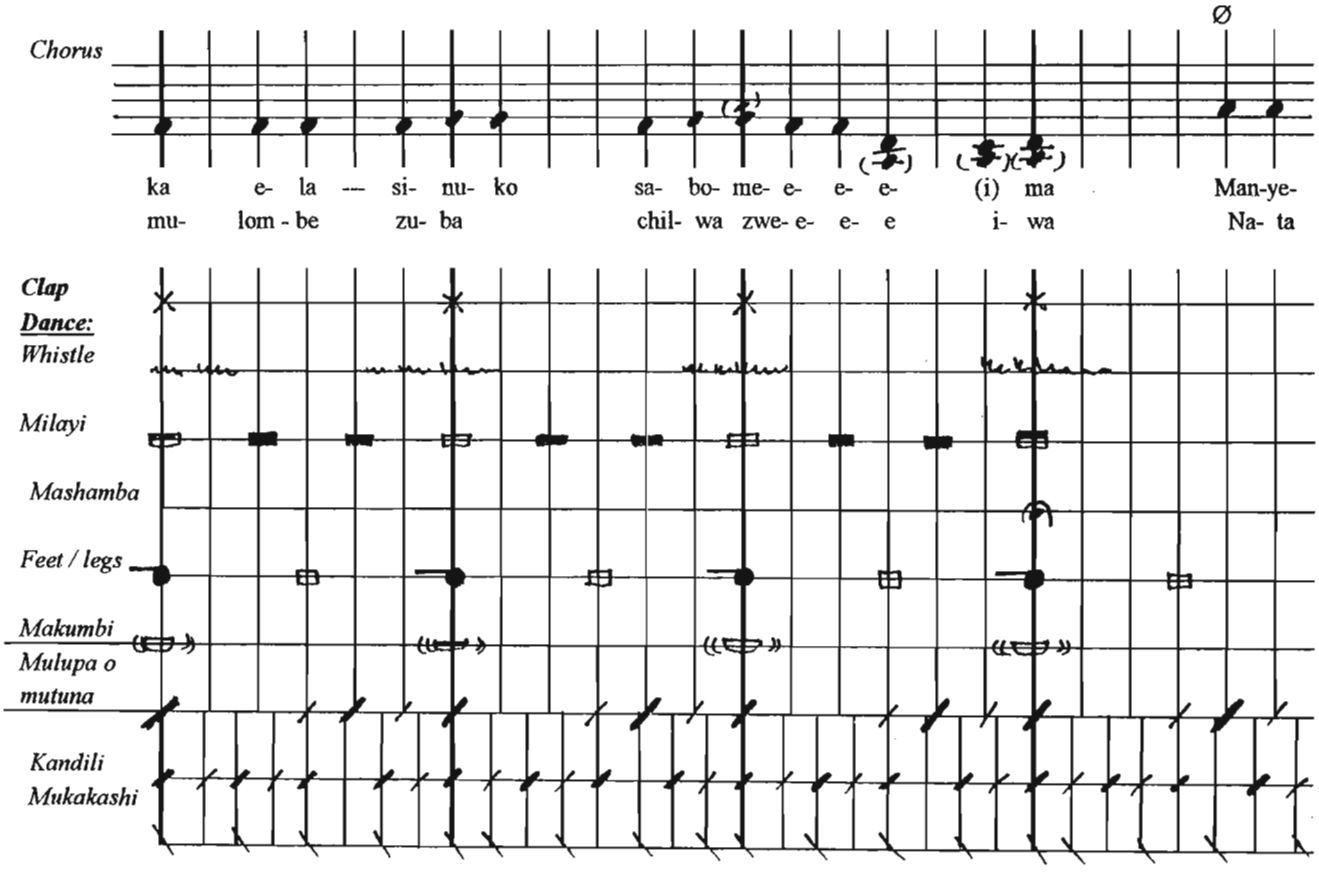
MANYEKA ELA SINUKO SA BOME IMA

Video track 13

Song for Nyakasanga
Performed by Katowa Dance Troupe
Language: Silozi
Tempo X = 72

Text transcribed by Dominic Lunenge




Chorus
Ø
ka e- la — si- nu- ko sa- bo- me- e- e- e- (i) ma Man-ye-
mu- lom - be zu- ba chil- wa zwe- e- e- e i- wa Na- ta
Clap
Dance:
Whistle
Milayi
Mashamba
Feet / legs
Makumbi
Mulupa o mutuna
Kandili
Mukakashi

B

Leader

ka e- la — si- nu- ko sa- bo- me- e- e- e- (i) ma Man-ye-
mu- lom - be zu- ba chil- wa zwe- e- e- e i- wa Na- ta

ka e- la — si- nu- ko sa- bo- me- e- e- e- (i) ma Man-ye-
mu- lom - be zu- ba chil- wa zwe- e- e- e i- wa Na- ta

(chorus)

Chorus

ka e- la — si- nu- ko sa- bo- me- e- e- e- (i) ma Man-ye-
mu- lom - be zu- ba chil- wa zwe- e- e- e i- wa Na- ta

Claps

Dance:

Whistle

Milayi

Feet / legs

Makumbi

Mashamba

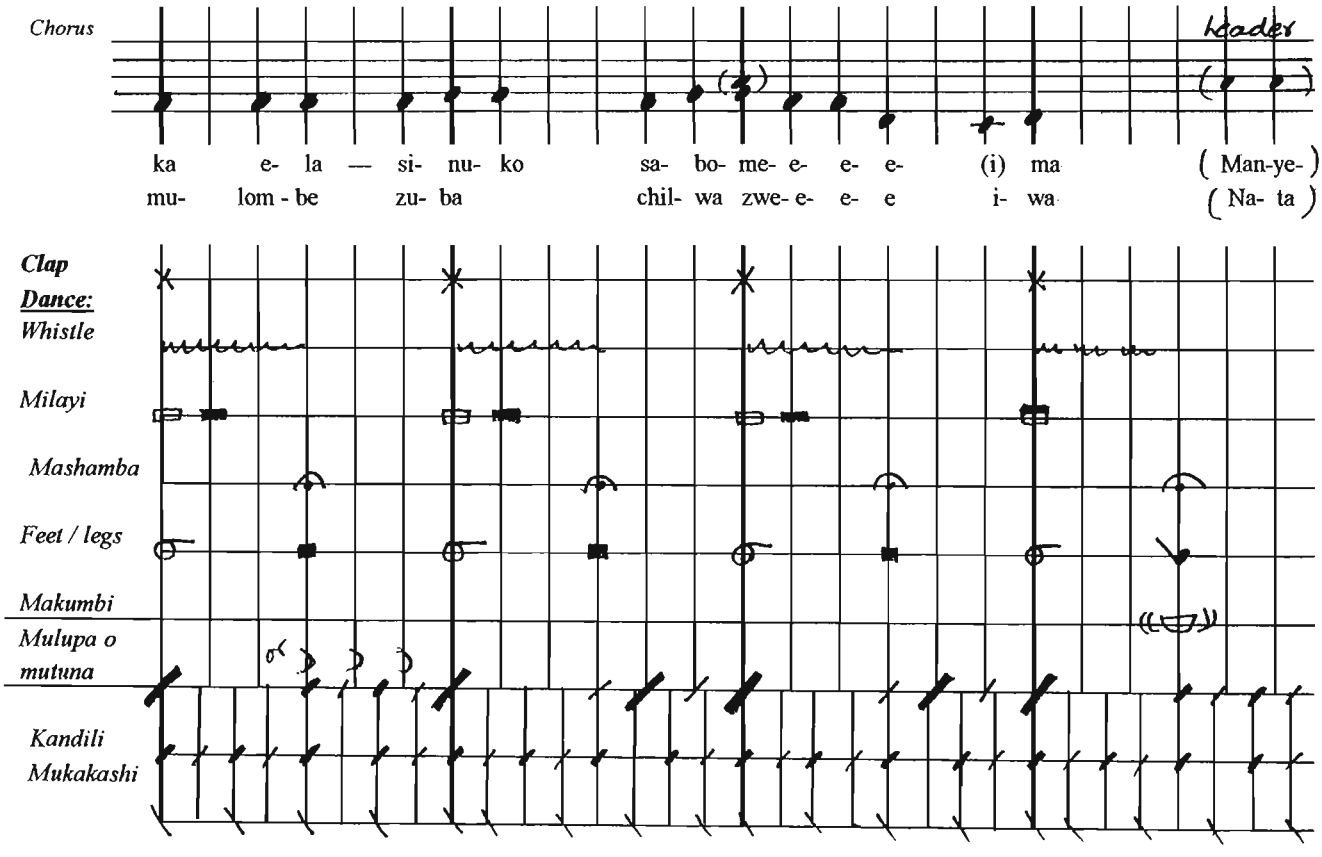
Drums:

Sikumwa

Mulupa o mutuna

Kandili

Mukakashi


Chorus
Leader
ka e- la — si- nu- ko sa- bo- me- e- e- e- (i) ma (Man-ye-)
mu- lom - be zu- ba chil- wa zwe- e- e- e i- wa (Na- ta)
Clap
Dance:
Whistle
Milayi
Mashamba
Feet / legs
Makumbi
Mulupa o mutuna
Kandili
Mukakashi

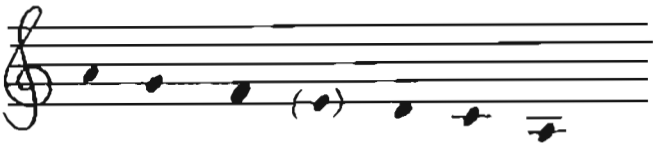
Text in vernacular:	Translation:
Manyeka ela sinuko sa bome ima	"(The) small of the back of my mother bounces" (Meaning the baby, carried on the mother's back, feels the movement as she walks or dances)
Nata mulombe (mulupe) zuba chilwa zwe iwa Manyeka ela sinuko sa bome ima	He should beat the drum because it is sunrise

The leader completes the statement (or half-cycle) of 48 pulses before the chorus enters.

Then the leader sings the B statement and the chorus answers with their part.

The whole (A and B) are repeated any number of times.

- **Tonal centre**: D
- **Note store:**



5.6.3 Explanation of characteristics

In *nyakasanga* the healer may perform alone or be joined by other dancers. As the purpose of the dance is entertainment as well as advertisement, the dancer must give an exciting performance, and involve onlookers by inviting them to dance, and by ensuring that the levels of intensity in singing and drumming are maintained.

5.6.3.1 Musical characteristics

The song transcribed above is **cyclic**, and consists of two 48 + 48 pulse cycles sung by women only. It has two main melodic sections: A and B

In section A the leader's call has a length of 48 pulses, followed by the chorus response of 48 pulses. Similarly in section B the leader's call is 48 pulses and the response is 48 pulses. The song may be repeated

repeated any number of times. In my recording it was repeated six times. Lunenge felt that this was too short,[58] and explained that at an authentic healing which has to last the whole night, songs are stretched out to last, otherwise the repertoire requirements for villagers would be immense. The above song could therefore be repeated many times, before continuing almost seamlessly into a next song.

Texts of the songs are typically short. Those recorded (not transcribed here) include the following:

• *Musala nduna ku lobala mwa limboke*	The wife of the councillor (headman) is sleeping in the limboke grass (she sleeps with anyone)
Musala yawee ku lobala mwa siliba	she sleeps in the muddy or small waters, (symbolising that she doesn't care)
• *Siwelela sa bona, mahule*	Their life of prostitution (mahule means loose girls)
katalimelo ka bona	the embarrassment of being caught with somebody's
kaswale helo ka bona	husband, looking at one another with eye
kasa maelo ka bona	communication "that already finish everything"[59]
• *Haunikala mulimo napobola*	If you continue to look for trouble with me, then
nya kuluna namaloya uka ise	I "will assault you to hell", you will not be able to stop me, because you are evil, someone will kill you one day
(sesa sesa)	
• *Kuinyalela libali*	To be a polygamist means problems
• *Muyumelise Katowa*	The group is greeting/praising Katowa (their leader)

The **song structure** of "Manyeka ela sinuko sabome ima" is antiphonal, with the leader making a vocal statement which is repeated by the chorus, with little variation, if any. The song consists of two sections (A - leader plus chorus, B - leader plus chorus) which follow directly upon one another. After completion

58 Comments made while working on the text and translation, Windhoek, 1995.
59 The text and translation are by D. Lunenge, Windhoek (1997) and M. Nasilele, Katima Mulilo (1993). These two persons give slightly different spellings to the words.

of B the song is repeated from the beginning (A). The second voice part in the chorus was not always sung (and sounded incomplete) in the original recording, possibly due to the fact that there were only four singers. Notes indicated on the score in parenthesis were not sung every time, but did sound occasionally.

The **tonal structure** initially appears to be pentatonic. However the first part of section B by the leader brings in a differently felt tonal centre through the introduction of the first tone of section B. Before assumptions can be made regarding the tonal structures which typify music of the area, more songs should be analysed. Voice production (timbre) is typically clear, and sharp and produced in the lower register.

The **rhythmic structure** is more complex. There are 8 reference beats in each 48-pulse half-cycle, or 16 beats in the full cycle. This ties in with the dance structure, which consists of 4 sections of 4 beats each.[60] There is a ratio of 3 pulses (for singers, dancers, *mulupa o mutuna* and *sikumwa*) to every 4 pulses of *kandili* and *mukakashi*. *Mulupa o mutuna* is exceptional in that his improvisation may move briefly into the 4 (8) pulse framework. A breakdown of the drumming patterns appear below.

60 In recorded dances there were a few exceptions to this, where the dancer did 5 times 4 beats, but then this was balanced by 3 times 4 beats or 7 times 4 beats in the next cycle.

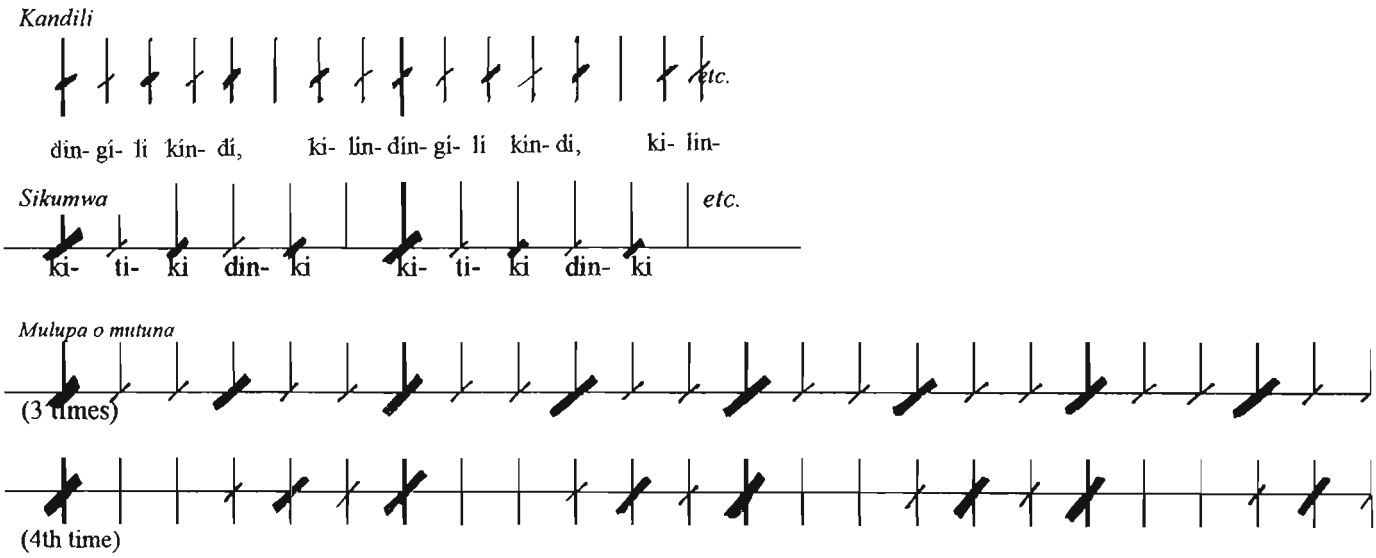


FIGURE 5.17 *NYAKASANGA* DRUMMING PATTERNS

Although the **drumming** tempo is rapid, the dance movements and reference beats appear unhurried, and allow ample time for completion of motions. The quality of sound is crucial in terms of the drumming.

- On the full right hand strike of the *sikumwa*, a deep strong tone should be produced. This is often the largest drum and should form a good strong basis for the other performers.
- By contrast, *kandili*-playing should have a relatively high and rapid tone. A certain amount of improvisation is allowed for this drummer, yet he may not stray too far from the characteristic pattern, as the event is recognizable largely through the pattern of this drum.
- The person playing the *mulupa o mutuna* should be a 'master drummer', or at least the most experienced of the drummers. This person will seldom rest during the course of a healing, as there are too few such drummers. Although his rhythmic pattern is not as fixed as that of the others drummers, the characteristic sound he produces is crucial to the dance. Timbre variations are essential to his playing. This drum is not as large as *sikumwa*, but the pitch is lowered by fixing a wax mixture to the membrane. The drummer may thus adjust pitch as required. By skillful placement of the hand on the drumface, by adjusting striking distance, and through adjustments to the shape of the hand and striking area, this drummer varies the timbre. He follows and anticipates dance movements. It is especially on the fourth section of 4 reference beats, when the dancer repeats the *makumbi*, that this drummer has to create deep "doobededoo" sounds coinciding with *makumbi*. Before learning to play *mulupa o*

mutuna one should first be able to perform the dance with skill, in order to comprehend how to "dance the drum".[61]

- The *mukakashi* stick, beaten on the wooden side of a drum provides a time-line of 12 pulses. This clear sound overlies most of the other sounds and acts as a kind of reference or time-line for the performers. In *simbayoka* and *siyamboka*[62] dances I have observed, the same *mukakashi* pattern transcribed here for *nyakasanga*, was played. On other occasions, drummers have played at healings without the addition of *mukakashi*.

5.6.3.2Characteristics of movements

The dance is performed by a male *sishambi* (healer's assistant).

The drums commence playing, singers may start singing, the dancer walks around using shakers, getting into the correct frame of mind for the dance and setting the atmosphere. All foot and leg movements are accompanied by shaker movements, as indicated on the score.

The step movements are really a forward or sideways placement of the foot at a distance of about 35 - 40 cm. executed with a dip in the knees and the downwards motion of the right hand shaker on the reference beat. The retraction of the foot is again executed with a slight knee dip. All movements (apart from those on the knees) take place in basic earth stance, with loose, supple knees and body motion to accompany kinemeic motions. The head of the male dancer is sometimes held at an angle, inclined towards the shoulder. At other times the head gives a quick shake-inclination. This puts the head-dress (*singalangala*) into motion. The dancer in the recording usedhowever, does not make much of these head motions or perform them with regularity. Below, I describe a dance sequence. This starts from the basic sequence and gives alternatives. The dancer may of course improvise different movements, but the main sequence (1a and b) characterises the dance.

61 It was not until I learnt to perform the dance, that the rhythmic structure of this music became clear to me. According to Lunenge, himself a dancer and drummer, the master drummer first has to perfect the dance before learning this drum.
62 Relating to a girl's transformation ceremony.

A possible sequence of dance:

The cycle consists of 4 x 4 slow reference beats for the dance. L is Left and R is Right.

Each reference beat is marked X on the score (beat 1 is the first X, beat 2 is the second X, etc.)

Basic sequence:

1 (a)	Beat 1	Step/place R foot forward, return on halfbeat, (downward shaker/arm motion on beats)
	Beat 2	Step/ place L foot forward, return on halfbeat
	Beat 3	Step/place R foot forward, return on halfbeat
	Beat 4	Shake *makumbi* - for about 3 pulses
	Repeat sequence 3 times	
(b)	Beats 1 - 4 *makumbi* 4 x in succession while stepping 4 x to L on beats, place feet together on halfbeats	
	Improvisations take place around this basic structure	

Alternatives:

2	Beat 1	Step R with *mashamba* on halfbeat, fairly upright stance, place feet together on halfbeat, deeply bent knees
	Beat 2	Step R with *mashamba*, fairly upright stance, place feet together with *makumbi*, deeply bent knees
	Repeat for beats 3+4, 5+6, 7+8 - On beat 8 extend left leg diagonally forwards and retract on halfbeat	

3 (a)	Repeat I (a), but stepping sideways instead of forwards.
(b)	*Makumbi* 4x in succession, extending leg diagonally forwards on fourth beat with *mashamba*

4	Repeat **III**, but when extending leg on beat 4, bend upper torso far forwards towards ground

5 (a)	Beat 1	Step to R side
	Beat 2	Step forward on L, place R on halfbeat
	Beat 3	Step forward on L, place R on halfbeat
	Beat 4	Lower onto left knee
(b)	Beat 1	'Step' R on knee
	Beat 2	place L knee next to R
	Beat 3	'step' R on knee
	Beat 4	*makumbi*
(c)	Beat 1-4 Repeat **5 (b)** to Left side	

6	Beats 1-3 *Mashamba* (still on knees)
	Beat 4 extend R leg sideways, retract on halfbeat
	Repeat series 4x, stepping on L to rise on beat 4 (of 4th time), to face backwards

7	Beats 1-3 Step L, place R (double time) with exaggerated *mashamba* (as a hip isolation)

		on halfbeat following R foot placement,
	Beat 4	Extend R leg sideways and retract

8	Beats 1-4 Basic pattern (1) moving backwards

A female singer(s) may at any time during the basic exposition of the dance pattern, join the male dancer for a short time. She completes a series of at least 8 beats or more, and tries to mirror the movement patterns of the healer, before returning to the circle of onlooker-participators. The woman's *mashamba* motions are more subtle than the man's. Her pelvic contractions are noticeable but small and she is able to isolate them to R hip, L hip or by means of a rotation of isolations.

5.6.4 Suggestions for the classroom

Due to the complexity and meaning-laden quality of *nyakasanga*, the full performance is most probably better suited to older learners at secondary level (age 14 years plus). However, beginning to learn the drumming skills, the drumming patterns and aspects of the movements are best started earlier, possibly from about 9 or 10 years of age. In this way the various actions and understandings have reached a certain level of competency before the total event is reconstructed for the classroom. For this reason, I suggest initially taking aspects like a drumming pattern, one at a time. This pattern could be integrated into other themes or music-dance activities.

The following is a possible learning sequence, starting at primary school level and working up to a dramatised *nyakasanga* event, possibly at secondary level.

- **Teach the song** transcribed above (or a similarly structured song), and use one of the drumming patterns (see fig. 5.17) to accompany the song.
- **Contextualize** drumming in Namibia. Questions such as the following can serve as stimuli for learner research:
  - In which areas is drumming most prevalent?
  - What different kinds of drums are found locally?

- What different names do they have in various vernaculars?
- How are drums combined into groups? For which occasions?
- What is a healing or curing?
- In which Namibian societies are healings practised most commonly?
- What are some of the differences between modern health services and traditional health services?
- Can these two traditions live side by side and interact positively? and so forth.

The level of questions should become more challenging as the age level of the learners increases. Small research tasks or projects could be given in order to encourage learners to discover information for themselves. The results can be shared by presentations and discussion. Tasks can be performed in a cooperative fashion. Members of the community can be involved where and if possible.

- Younger learners start by **chanting mnemonic patterns**, traditional as well as self-created syllables. The traditional mnemonics for *kukumwa* (plural for *sikumwa*) in the Caprivi include:

  ✗ ✗ | ✗ ✗ | ✗ ✗ | ✗ ✗ |
  tum-bwa tum - bwa tum- bwa tum- bwa (*liyala* pattern)

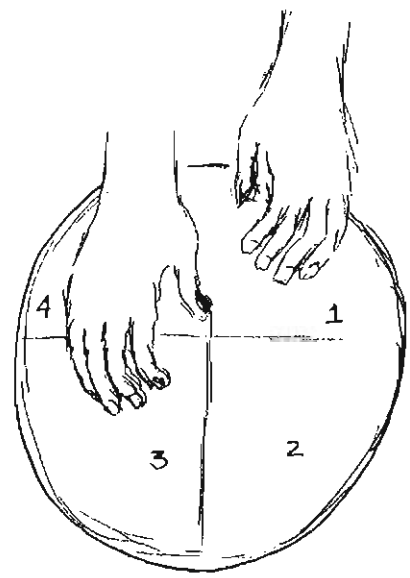
  ✗ ✗ | | ✗ | ✗ ✗ | ✗ ✗ | | ✗ |
  tum- bwa mbwa tum- bwa tum- bwa mbwa (*kayowe* pattern)

  ✗ ✗ ✗ ✗ ✗ | ✗ ✗ ✗ ✗ ✗ |
  kin- di ki dan- ga kin- di ki- dan- ga (or kidinki dinki - *nyakasanga* pattern)

  and other patterns described earlier.

- Add a **clapping** pattern to the chanting of the above mnemonics. Avoid tempo increase. Vary the activity by having some learners chant, while others clap.
- Clap patterns without chanting aloud, in other words by **using inner hearing.**
- **Introduce drums** - if possible traditional drums, with the correct vernacular names. The first drum which is learnt is the *sikumwa*. It is necessary for learners to slowly develop drumming skills, as these are not easy. Lunenge (Mans, 1997) suggests that the following are important points:

- the positioning of the hands on the drum, that is the length and angle which strike the membrane, as well as the height (range) of travel before striking the membrane, and the intensity of the strike.
- for *kaikumwa*-playing, the first hand places about half a hand on the first quarter of the membrane (on tum-). The second hand plays with a full hand on the middle of the drum (on mbwa), in the third and fourth quarters.
- the striking distance of the first (weaker) hand is about 4 to 6 centimetres, and the second (stronger) hand about 8 to 12 centimetres.
- hands should not be placed flat on the drum face, but be rounded so that the inside of the hand is hollow. The second hand makes use also of the outside curve of the palm for good sound quality.
- hands need time to toughen up to produce good sound. Lunenge advises the use of something like vaseline to prevent roughness.
- learners should be encouraged to pay attention to the way their hands are working.



- The playing of *kandili/kachakili* drums is similar, except that both hands now apply equal size (half hands) to the drumface, and the striking height is decreased as the speed of playing appears faster. The lower two quarters (1 and 4) are used when playing this drum.

- **Combine two pulse rhythms**, that is *sikumwa* and *kandili.* Ensure that the reference beats coincide, and that the sound spaces (the pulses when the drum is silent) are correctly placed. Add the combined patterns to a song.
- Teach the *mukakashi* time-line pattern.
- **Experiment with drumming timbres and hand positions**. After observing the video recording, listen for the sound of the father drum. Try to recreate some of the sounds.
- The **dance** should be learnt before the drumming patterns for the father drum are attempted. Start by teaching the basic sequence of movements. Pay attention to articulation of body parts, such as the shoulders, the pelvis, the retraction of feet, changes of weight, and so forth. The basic movements may have to be practised at a slow pace initially. As movements become familiar, the shakers and whistle can be added, perhaps by those who manage best.
- **Add the first two drums and time-line** to the dance, along with a recording if wished (although the tempo may be too rapid at first).
- It is recommended that only those showing a particular aptitude for drumming learn to play the father drum, and that this should preferably be taught over a period of time by a drummer of repute, who knows what is required. However, for a recreation of a *nyakasanga* event in the classroom, it is possible for the simplified drumming patterns transcribed to be used. The technique for *mulupa o mutuna* is similar to that of the *kandili* drum, but attempts should be made to effect timbre changes matching the dance.
- **Relate drums to other aspects of performance throughout**. Learners should perceive how communication between performers enhances the total event. For example, the *sikumwa* guides, or relates to, the clapping of hands by the singers. Similarly, the playing of the *kachakili or kandili* relates to the singing, so there must be communication (listening for) between singers and kandili. M*ulupa o mutuna* relates to and coordinates the dance, so the dancer(s) must listen to and watch this drummer, who in turn must watch and anticipate the moves of dancers.
- **Encourage improvisation** of movement actions and sequences. Encourage, by example, a form of communal improvisation, by working in twos (later threes, etc.). One learner takes the role of

movement initiator and the other must try to anticipate and match or mirror the movements of the other.

- **Explore or research** other music-dance events from the same region.
- Once all the necessary deconstruction and skills development has been done, **reconstruct** all the parts into a holistic event, inclusive of some form of dramatization of the event, role-playing, costuming, and so forth.

5.7 A COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF MOVEMENT AND MUSICAL FEATURES OF EVENTS DESCRIBED

While the discussion above refers specifically to the songs and dances transcribed, I have attempted in the table which follows, to summarise features which arise from numerous performances observed in the same genres. They have not all been transcribed here for the sake of brevity. he purpose of this summary is to provide teachers and other readers with a reference by mean of which she/he can identify various style features more or less at a glance. This table is but a starting point into which further research in Namibian performance can feed.

6 NAMIBIAN MUSIC AND DANCE AS NGOMA IN NAMIBIAN EDUCATION TODAY

The stated aim of this thesis is to explore Namibian music and dance, to gain insight into the character of different practices, and through utilising this new insight, to provide teachers and learners in schools with materials suitable for use in the new arts curriculum. This requires that guidelines for presenting such materials should be developed. I have suggested music and dance as *ngoma* as a basic approach because of its relatedness to Namibian indigenous performance practice. This led to a discussion regarding characteristics of Namibian music and dance as experienced during the course of this study, and to a presentation of materials. Hence, the main purpose of this chapter is to look at what has evolved with respect to Namibian music and dance as *ngoma*, and how this may be applied to the new arts curriculum.

The notion of Namibian music and dance as *ngoma* has been developed in chapter 3. In this chapter, I extract three main cornerstones upon which the approach of *ngoma* rests, in order to guide teachers in the structuring of their teaching-learning activities.[1] By using these cornerstones as an underpinning in formal arts education, I suggest that Namibian music and dance can be explored with greater appreciation.

In order to see how *ngoma* may be applied to the new arts curriculum, I investigate the relationship between music and dance as *ngoma* and the Namibian policy of Basic Education (discussed in chapter 2). The *ngoma* approach is then followed through to the new arts syllabi to ascertain whether it can be

1 It is easy for teachers to remember and use three basic principles or cornerstones to guide their teaching.

incorporated.[2] I do this by seeing whether the rationales, aims and contents of the new arts syllabi are related to music/dance as *ngoma*.

6.1 CORNERSTONES OF MUSIC AND DANCE AS *NGOMA*

The first cornerstone upon which this approach rests is that music and dance as *ngoma* emphasises oral-kinaesthetic ways of teaching and learning, because it relies on sufficient and direct use of movement and sound. The second is that music and dance *ngoma* emphasises communal performance. The third is that music and dance as *ngoma* seeks and provides multiple connections, relating different expressions of art to one another, and to aspects of life.

6.1.1 Music/dance as *ngoma* emphasises oral-kinaesthetic ways of teaching and learning

Music and dance are things people do. They are immediate. They relate to sound, time and space; hence much of the teaching and learning of music and dance take place in an oral-kinaesthetic way.

In the absence of written forms for remembering and preserving songs and dances, people who learn mainly by oral-kinaesthetic methods develop an inner 'data-base' or *référence mentale* consisting of the sounds and movements commonly practised in their society. This database tends to be culture-specific. Through repetition, the database is organised into culture-specific structures, called mental templates,

2 I use the term curriculum to refer to the broad arts education programme from grades 1 through 12. The term syllabus refers to the specific arts programmes and new syllabi appear as the Primary Arts Core (Grades 1 and 2); Primary Arts Core (Grades 3 and 4); Primary Arts Core and Elective Modules (Grades 5 to 7); Junior Secondary Integrated Performing Arts (Grades 8 to 10); and Junior Secondary Visual Arts (Grades 8 to 10).

pertaining to specific repertoires or performance genres.[3] Thus, even though Namibian children in a particular cultural environment may not continue to sing the exact same songs their parents sang, they are likely to continue singing songs according to the same template,[4] using similar melodies and clapping patterns with new texts.

Sound, touch and action are the direct sensory media through which music and dance are learnt in oral societies. The spoken word is rarely used to teach music and dance in oral societies, and written forms, by definition, never. Listening, imitation, and repetition occur when teaching music and dance - in the past as in the present - but there are certain implications.

Firstly, for learners in formal education to engage sufficiently with the world of sound and kinaesthesis, classroom experience should provide adequate and varied sensory experiences in terms of musical sound and bodily movement. This implies ample opportunities for listening to relevant music and the use of voice tones, rhythms, instrumental combinations, tonal systems, and observing dancing in different styles, of different qualities, and for different events. By encouraging these actions, learners are given an opportunity to develop the mental templates referred to above. Having this basis, learners can more easily become involved in creative acts, by varying, rearranging and adapting musical sounds and movements.

Secondly, teaching and learning orally and kinaesthetically rely heavily upon imitation of perceived sounds, movements, gestures and expressions, and upon sufficient repetition to fix the sound or action in the memory. It is through frequent repetitions at regular intervals that learners gradually build up the skills that allow them to perform without undue concentration on details, freeing them to concentrate on quality of performance. Traditional rote learning (imitation and repetition) in music and dance is not only indigenous to Namibia, but is a means commonly employed in music education where performance

3 The forming of mental templates was discussed in chapter 3, paragraph 3.1.1.
4 Refer back to chapter 4 in connection with musical structures.

(singing and playing) is considered important. Although it requires time for an adequate number of repetitions, the learning that results is highly effective. In oral societies, the adult community provides models for performance, on which the child may model his/her own performance through imitation. In schools the teacher, other members of the community, or peers can act as models who perform certain actions that the learner imitates. Learning by imitation can, therefore, take an indirect form – observing others and later on trying to replicate what they were doing. Alternatively, it can take a direct form where the teacher directs or guides the learner directly by placing and moving the learner's hand so as to 'feel' the correct drumming action and rhythm.

Thirdly, teaching and learning by means of oral methods imply an abundance of time, and continuity in terms of the teacher-learner relationship. An example is the 'master-apprentice' system, commonly used for the teaching of musical instruments. This requires one-to-one teaching over an extended period of time, which may have costly implications for schools. As learners move through the various grades, their teachers are replaced, thus there is seldom continuity. The time to really learn to be able to do something well is often far too limited. The lack of time and continuity may limit the efficacy of oral methods to a certain extent. Yet within these restrictions, the oral-kinaesthetic medium is highly effective for music and dance. It is, therefore, important to strike a balance between the tried and trusted methods and approaches personified by oral-kinaesthetic modes, and innovative and expansive learning through exploration and discovery. In Namibian classrooms, where teachers have to contend with large groups of learners, reliance is placed on the spoken as well as the written word. Modern teaching media also include the use of audio and video recordings, as an introduction or as a more advanced model for imitation. The use of modern technology is not in contradiction with *ngoma*, as long as sound, touch and action are central to the process.

When teaching and learning by means of direct involvement with the musical sound, the spoken word and the performed movement, there is a two-way flow of information that includes sound and feelings. This occurs between adult and child, teacher and learner, or child and child. In a formal teaching situation the adult usually initiates the flow of information, but this need not always be the case. Learners may initiate it by asking questions. Fundamental to the process is keeping the flow of information open. This implies a trusting relationship where individuals (teachers and learners) treat one another with respect and dignity.

Although I have emphasised oral-kinaesthetic ways of learning, this does not mean to imply that no attention need be given to written forms. In the modern classroom, written forms (that is language, and musical and dance notations) can enhance the understanding, recording and creating of music and dance. Moreover, written forms can help learners formulate ideas, solve problems, enhance discussion, and alleviate some of the problems that teachers experience with large classes. The emphasis, however, should remain on sound and movement. This includes sound and movement via recorded (audio-visual) means as well as making and listening to live music, and observing and performing live dance.

6.1.2 Music/dance as *ngoma* emphasises communal performance in the classroom.

One of the main differences between the western system of music and dance education, and the spirit of *ngoma*, is the shift of emphasis from individual performance to the synergy of group performance. This does not imply that individual excellence is of no consequence in *ngoma*. On the contrary, excellence in terms of balance, clarity of purpose, precision and originality are valued, but within the context of improving the performance of the whole group. Performers gain identity through their cohesion and merger with others.[5] Hence, performance as *ngoma* demands the ability to function in a complex

5 Small (1984: 208) maintains that societies in the west wish to restore a lost communality of performance, and gives examples of composers who try to do this by, for example, placing performers among the audience, or involving the audience directly in the performance. This can be seen in Xenakis's Terretektorh and Berio's Passaggio.

interactive environment in harmony with other individuals. The Namibian performance events I have described cannot happen without communal participation. This makes them useful vehicles for retaining or restoring communal spirit.

Bringing about closer involvement amongst members of the group may be one of the reasons that so many Namibian dances take place in a circle formation, where all are equal and participants have visual contact with one another. One performer trying to outshine the group is in contradiction to *ngoma.* Thompson (1974: 2) agrees, saying that when the applause mounts, the smile (of the performer) dies down, and more attention is paid to the footwork. He refers to the "levels of perfected social interaction" in which an arrogant dancer is confronted with decreasing drums and hand claps, while a good leader brings out the "full and explicit mode of choral response" (*ibid.*: 27). Similarly, one particular aspect of performance, for example the drumming, or the dance, or the masks, or the singing, is never emphasised over another in performance. The principles of equity and balance are, therefore, in a most practical way, brought to the fore in this kind of performance.

Communal performance has also contributed to the song forms that predominate in Namibia, namely songs involving call and response, mostly with a cyclic structure. The leader's call reminds all participants of the melody and words of the song and even allows newcomers to join in easily. The cyclic structure also encourages freedom of participation and provides continuity that allows participants to dance, sing, clap, and even move away and return as wished. Songs are imminently suitable for classroom use, as they are easily learnt and remembered. By adding other aspects of performance (dance and instruments) the teacher can adjust the level of challenge, making one song adaptable to various levels of schooling.

I have shown that Namibian children participate in community performance from an early age. Consequently, when children enter school, they are generally not shy to perform communally. Teachers need to tap into this background reservoir of performance confidence and ability before it evaporates in

the face of the formal schooling system. Despite the emphasis on participation, performance involvement should take place without undue pressure. Nobody can be forced to dance and then perform successfully.

In most Namibian communities performances take place in a supportive and encouraging environment. Questions and comments inform performers in terms of the quality of their performance. This may include comments by means of vocal sounds (see *ondjongo* description in chapter 5) and indications of appreciation. A supportive teaching-learning atmosphere that approximates this situation can also be created in the classroom. In such a supportive atmosphere learners feel free to explore new modes of expression, and to discover for themselves the ways in which sound, movement, and expression are combined into music and dance. Because education as *ngoma* encourages participation by all involved, one of the tasks of the teacher is to encourage learners to explore individual abilities and interests which will improve the group performance within the supportive framework of a communal performance. Consider dance improvisations, drumming, other instrumental parts, (re)creating contextual background through ornamentation, masks, and so on. Communal spirit (communitas) can be enhanced by linking performance to discussion, negotiation, decision-making and problem solving which go hand in hand with creative group activities. Input, either collective or individual, is required from learners, so that decisions can be taken in terms of the outcomes or solutions to problems.

Certain events may appear to negate the communality of performance, for example gender exclusions. Most Namibian dances show some kind of gender separation, some very strictly, others less so. This includes wonderful events such as *tcòqmà, omupembe, ongandeka,* and the playing of certain instruments. Drumming is unacceptable for girls in certain regions, while in other regions it is common practice. Certain versions of the Namibian pluriarc are reserved for either men or women in certain areas. Yet, although *oudano* or *outjina* are traditionally women's dances, it is not unheard of for a man to join in and be accepted. Therefore, I suggest that where possible, these events should be clarified with members of the community who traditionally practise the event. The teacher needs to establish what the accepted

practice is and inform learners about the background. It is possible to continue the practice either with or without traditional exclusions. Alternatively, having noted the exclusion, one could set about producing a non-exclusive version of the instrument or adaptation of the dance. An educational compromise may be established, as long as the original practitioners agree, and learners are made aware of the history and use of the instruments.

6.1.3 Music /dance as *ngoma* provides holistic connections

To bring about the holism of *ngoma* requires the removal of artificial boundaries between the different arts in formal education. I discussed the integrated nature of music and dance performance in Namibia at length. Indigenous Namibian performance has been shown to involve instruments, singing, dance, dramatic aspects such as special clothing and atmospheric effects, ornamentation and design, spiritual beliefs, affirmation of power structures, and so on.

> [T]he integration of all these artistic and social concerns into a single unified event is the essential inspiration of an African musical performance. In the depth of this integration, we can recognize the expression of a profoundly humanistic sensibility and one of the great artistic achievements of humankind. (Chernoff, 1979: 87)

Certainly this presents a challenge for both teachers and learners. By exploring the multiple connections among the arts, and between arts and life, intellectual challenge is experienced. This can occur in many ways and at any age or level.

The performance of one of the cultural events described in chapter 5 is in and of itself holistic. This is demonstrated by the actions involved in preparing a class performance of *ondjongo*, namely:

- learning and performing the singing, the clapping, the dance-game;
- creating a performance setting which reflects a general understanding of Ovahimba culture and its history;

- designing and making the costuming (a recreation or abstraction of traditional dress);
- preparing for a performance through the learning processes of discussion, planning, negotiating, rehearsing, and committing to memory.

Because Namibian performance traditions are conceptualised holistically, they are pre-eminently suited to exploring inter-arts connections. Although emphasis is placed on the connections among the arts, in practice learning will almost certainly take place in and through only one art form at certain times. One example is learning a new song or dance, requiring time spent on the music alone or the movements alone. What is to be avoided, however, is the partitioning of music and dance and other art forms, treating them as though there is only a tenuous relationship. In music and dance as *ngoma* the emphasis is on the exploration of natural connections and ties, which once unlocked, provide learners with a great variety of experiential possibilities, bringing the arts closer to life.

With these cornerstones forming a basic foundation, let us look at links between them and the principles encapsulated in the Namibian Basic Education policy.

6.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC/DANCE AS *NGOMA* AND THE PRINCIPLES OF NAMIBIAN BASIC EDUCATION

The Namibian Basic Education[6] policy is founded upon the principles of expanded and equal access, democracy and learner-centeredness, and requires that education must have a Namibian character. To what extent are there affinities between the principles of Basic Education and music and dance as *ngoma*? In the paragraphs that follow I consider how music and dance as *ngoma* relates to Basic Education.

6 This is published as a formal policy. I therefore use capitals.

6.2.1 The principle of equal access in relation to music and dance as *ngoma*

The principle of expanded and equal access in Basic Education applies to Namibian education as a whole, which includes arts education. Whereas arts education in the past was reserved for the 'talented' few and those who were able to afford tuition, arts education in schools in Namibia today is aimed at all learners, from primary level, where it is compulsory, through to junior secondary levels (from grades 1 through 10). Thus, selection and prior entry qualifications no longer play a role in formal arts education. Every learner will experience aspects of music, dance, drama and the visual and plastic arts.

How does music and dance as *ngoma* relate to the principle of equal access?

Music and dance education as *ngoma* is aimed at educating all learners, not a special or elite group. Arising from indigenous performance where communal participation is typical, music and dance as *ngoma* involves all learners in making music and dance. One may take a Namibian music/dance event described in chapter 5 as an example. While there are some specialised performance roles, everybody is involved in the total experience. All learners are encouraged to perform according to their interests and abilities, and may be directed towards areas in which they excel. All learners are involved in the experience of planning, creating, performing, appraising, and discussing. This means that the principle of equal access is satisfied not only in terms of access to the arts programme, but also in terms of access to the performance. The contribution of each participant enhances the performance. Music and dance as *ngoma* is inclusive, not exclusive.

6.2.2 The principle of learner-centeredness in relation to music and dance as *ngoma*

The new Namibian Basic Education is based on the needs of the learner first and foremost. Education centred on the learner implies that teaching will not hold the subject or the person of the teacher central,

but will place the emphasis firmly on the needs of the learners. In chapter 2 there is reference to the intellectual, moral, social, vocational, and economic values that education offers the learner. However, as Elliott (1995: 298, 299) points out, there is often a gap between the stated ideals of education and the realities of schooling. Whereas educational ideals may emphasise a balanced education of the whole child, schools for various reasons, tend to emphasise academic education and vocational training. The arts provide a balance to vocational aims because they centre upon qualities of expression, involvement, exploring, discovering, and enjoying, with learners taking an active part in their own education. A learner centred programme stresses the learning actions that each child undertakes, encouraging teachers to listen and look more carefully at what learners actually do.

Therefore, all the new Namibian syllabi are formulated in terms of the competencies that learners need to develop in the various learning areas. The processes of learning, as well as the manifested products of their learning, are important. Because process is considered important, Namibian guidelines on assessment recommend regular, continuous assessment. Both formal and informal assessment should be focused on the ongoing development of learner competencies, and the diagnosis and correction of possible problems. The teacher's role in this approach is that of a facilitator rather than the expert who knows everything. The teacher is expected to stimulate, question, advise, direct, focus and help.

Basic Education sees the learner as a person in relation to others, one who is situated within particular learning contexts, made up of school, family and society. Therefore, learner-centred education is located in a specific social context and the development of social skills is considered important. According to Herbert Read "the purpose of a reform of the system of education is not to produce more works of art, but better persons and better societies" (quoted in Small, 1984: 218). Thus a learner-centred curriculum promotes self-growth and contributes to the intellectual, physical, emotional and social empowerment of the learner. Teaching actions are centred in the development of competencies and understandings appropriate to the learner's age-level. Goals relating to individual development should, nevertheless, bear a direct relation to overall goals of socialisation.

Music and dance as *ngoma* is learner-centred in a number of ways. It is learner-centred firstly, because learners are actively engaged with sound and movement through performance. Through music and dance as *ngoma*, learners explore sound and movement, they discover solutions to problems, they appraise performances, they respond in personal ways, communicate with others and create new performances. This means that learners are not merely objects of instruction, but active agents exploring the world of experience around them. The learning is active in that it involves the learner in decisions and actions through performance; productive by leading to new information being generated and new music and dance being created; effective through repetition which commits learning material to long term memory; and transformative because it effects lasting changes in terms of abilities, skills and understandings. Making music and dance effectively has a transformative effect on the learner.

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Secondly, it is learner-centred because learners experience self-growth through the enjoyment of challenging experiences. Enjoyment arises from "unusual investment of our conscious powers" (Elliott, 1995: 115) in terms of optimal experiences where challenge and abilities are well matched. Through music and dance as *ngoma* learners develop a range of performance competencies. Challenges range from songs that are relatively simple to a complete performance event with music, dance, instruments, costumes, and atmospheric requirements. This experiential kind of education explores processes of growth, play and imagination, expressing, knowing and understanding self and environment. It remembers and celebrates cultural origins, but also explores new forms of cultural expression. It facilitates a creative spirit able to relate well to self and to others. Through the processes of engaging with music and dance (making or doing it), and through the inner response and appraisal of their own and others' work, learners can enhance their awareness and imaginative capacities. If life goals include happiness, health, enjoyment, self-growth, self-knowledge, wisdom, freedom, fellowship, self-esteem (Beck cited by Elliott, 1995: 308), then I believe that music and dance as *ngoma* can greatly contribute to these goals. Teachers need to consider how best to provide enjoyable yet challenging experiences in class at all levels, primary through secondary. This requires a pleasant classroom atmosphere with interesting

and challenging materials and methods. Through the communality of Namibian music/dance events, situations which create anxiety or frustration because the challenge is too great, or boredom because the challenge is too little, are less likely to occur.

Thirdly, learners are involved in education of the whole person - physical, intellectual, emotional, and social. The performance of music and dance as *ngoma* involves physical knowing-in-action (Elliott, 1995: 54), expression of personal responses, and communication with others within a context of communal participation. In this way the process of educating the whole child is enhanced, illuminated and expanded. Music and dance as *ngoma* centres upon the learner in his/her cultural, social, economic, political and spiritual context, preparing learners for social interaction and their future adult roles in society. Social aims in terms of music education are not foreign in the African musical practice. Chernoff underlines this by writing that "music's explicit purpose, in the various ways it might be defined by Africans, is, essentially, socialisation" (Chernoff, 1979:154). Because music and dance as *ngoma* centres on learners in their contexts, it results in knowledge, skills and attitudes which can be applied outside of schools, which can easily be expanded into further exploration and study, and which leaves lasting positive results for life. The focus moves away from 'subject discipline' to what learners know, understand and can do.

The teacher's role in music and dance as *ngoma* needs further description. Because it focuses on learners and their learning processes, the teacher of music and dance as ngoma becomes a person who co-ordinates learning resources, and knows "when to intervene in the learning process and when to stay out of the way" (Small, 1984: 225). The teacher plans, guides, supports and assesses the learner. This includes the planning of learning experiences that are challenging yet attainable; the selection of materials that stimulate interest and enjoyment; and the planning of learning sequences that move from simple to more complex, from known to unknown. The teacher guides learners in ways that encourage them to explore and experiment with sound and movement and directs them towards sources of information and inspiration, such as an expert musician in the community. The teacher creates a positive, nurturing

classroom atmosphere where teacher and learners respect one another and where learners are supported in their attempts to experiment and improvise. The teacher assesses progress continuously. This enhances the learning process. In Namibian communities of the past, adults corrected youngsters' performance on the spot, and provided continuous feedback by means of comments, shouts, ululations, and other means. In music and dance as *ngoma* the same immediate and regular assessment can be applied.

6.2.3 Curriculum requirements of Basic Education in relation to music and dance as *ngoma*

The development of new curricula in all subject areas required the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture to set certain requirements. Thus all curricula are expected to conform to the requirements of sequence, coherence and consistency; relevance; breadth as well as depth; and balance. I discuss each of these requirements briefly in order to establish how music and dance as *ngoma* relates to them.

6.2.3.1 Sequence, coherence and consistency

As referred to in 6.2.2, in Basic Education the processes of learning as well as the manifested products of learning are important. Educational processes require attention to sequence, coherence and consistency. This refers to curriculum planning and design as well as teaching method. The Namibian education policy requires that the sequence of learning experiences be related to the development of the learner, and to a logical-sequential exposition of the subject matter. This means that learning experiences and content must be consistent with expectations at each level, and levels must progress to the next in a coherent way. Continuity, flow and inter-relatedness are required within the learning experience, between subject areas, and between phases. There ought to be connections between knowing and applying.

Seen across the twelve plus years of schooling, the Namibian formal arts curriculum is planned in phases rather than years or grades. There are four phases: lower primary four years; upper primary three years; junior secondary three years; and senior secondary two to three years. These phases correspond loosely to general developmental or maturational stages. Because learning in and through the arts involves processes that relate to maturation, curriculum structure by phase contributes to coherence and sequence. At primary levels relatively more time is spent on exploring and discovering and the development of basic skills and competencies. Later learners spend more time performing, honing their skills, questioning and seeking information which they are expected to apply again in performance.[7]

How does music and dance as *ngoma* relate to the requirements of sequence, coherence and consistency?

Through music and dance as *ngoma,* the developmental aspects of learners and their skills as well as aspects of the performance are sequenced from simple to more complex, building ever further on what already exists. Thus, learners may begin by learning to clap certain rhythmic patterns. Following this they transfer the patterns to drumming actions, first singly and then in combinations. Dance skills are developed from simple, natural movements such as walking, stamping, hopping, and skipping in different directions, different tempos and to different rhythmic patterns. Dance movements are 'played' in pattern combinations, like those one finds in Ju/'hoan melon games or children's *oudano*. From there the skills can be applied to more complex situations combining the making of music and dance, using different songs and instruments. Therefore, the knowledge acquired is applied through the execution of progressively more challenging performance tasks. This provides coherence. Teachers need to know at least one Namibian music/dance well enough to be able to sequence it in the form of learning actions. Alternatively, teachers can use community experts or published materials.

7 See chapter 2 for details on phases.

In music and dance as *ngoma* there is consistency in the way fundamental values of participation and sharing guide the processes of learning. These values are embedded in the actions and experiences in which learners engage and the importance of relationships among performers.

There is also consistency in the way that music/dance as *ngoma* acknowledges links among the different art forms, and exposes relationships between different learning areas or subjects. For example the contextualisation of a Namibian music/dance event includes information about history, geography, language, politics, and religion of a group of people. Exploring such links within similar time frames creates a greater coherence and consistency across the broad curriculum. In addition, music and dance as *ngoma* acknowledges the links between old and new, and between the arts and life. Care must be taken not to interpret music/dance as *ngoma* as involving only 'old' or traditional musics or dances. The *ngoma* approach can be applied to diverse styles of music and dance. Content can be adapted according to the requirements of the school and its particular regional context. Teachers and learners can explore and perform the old as well as the new. They can perform and appraise music and dance belonging to their own culture and to the culture of others, referred to earlier as intercultural exchange. What remains important, however, is that the teacher selects content and methods in such a way that they relate to the maturation level of learners, and that this is done consistently throughout the period of formal schooling.[8]

6.2.3.2 Relevance

Namibian Basic Education stresses the importance of relevance in terms of content, method and approach. A relevant education meets both the present and the future needs of the learner. Learners have to feel that what they learn is meaningful. Relevant education means that learners develop competencies and understandings that are transferable in a variety of real life situations. Content and methods should be

8 Provision would probably have to be made outside of the general schooling situation for more in-depth specialised teaching in either music or dance. In private or conservatoire situations an adapted form of an apprenticeship system could be applied successfully, whether based on written forms or oral modes of teaching. This could apply equally to teaching of western culture's violin playing or Namibian culture's drum playing.

practical, interesting, stimulating, and valued by the learners. Small maintains that we need to ensure that what we wish to teach is what the learners wish to learn (Small, 1984: 121). Thus we need to ask the questions, "what is worth knowing?" and "what is worth doing?" (*ibid.*: 213). To be relevant, the wider population must be taken into consideration, so that contents do not only reflect a dominant culture, but the cultural capital of the whole class and nation. This reflects the official ideology of "enhancing Namibian cultural identity through cultural expression" referred to in chapter 2.

In music and dance as *ngoma* the selection of content arises from the cultures of the learners, not an imposed foreign culture. The cultural capital of the learners is utilised to give meaning to what they learn. Hence, content is culturally relevant and contributes to the development of a Namibian cultural identity. By making use of the cultural practices from which the learner emerges, the teacher can draw from the learner's experience and can ensure that there is a connection between content and learner. Namibian children's song and games are a starting point for younger learners, progressing to more adult or mixed-age events and modern urban music/dance for older learners. Having affirmed the cultural background of learners, music and dance as *ngoma* progresses to a wider variety of cultural practices, always maintaining a sense of holism through the contextualisation of musical events. In this way, learners develop a sense of history, heritage and direction.

Education is made relevant through music and dance as *ngoma* because it contributes to the social and personal development of learners. In indigenous Namibian education, prior to formal schooling, learning through music and dance was directed primarily towards everyday life and had direct applicability. Performance created a framework through which individuals could relate to one another. In performance and in the texts of songs, messages relating to societal structures, values and beliefs were communicated and maintained. It was through the practice of music and dance, along with language, kinship and lifestyle, that people distinguished themselves from one another, and thus developed a particular cultural identity. The purpose and functions of music and dance within the social context were larger than just a

performance. In similar ways music and dance as *ngoma* can contribute to learners' socialisation and cultural identity through performance. Learners can discover more about themselves in the context of the peer group because music and dance provides a conduit through which they discover how to express feelings in a mode that is socially acceptable.

In performance, one develops an understanding of one's place in a larger social context. Cultural events such as *ondjongo* or *epera* represent a microcosm of society at large. A performance would involve learners with disparate abilities, interests, backgrounds and needs. This approximates the community in town or village where an event may include old and young, rich and poor, powerful and weak, skilled and unskilled. The classroom performance, therefore, provides a mode of exploration and expression by means of which the learners experience society at large. I argue that this relation of person to self and society makes education relevant and prepares learners for the future.

6.2.3.3 Breadth and depth

Namibian Basic Education aims to provide a broad education, yet one that contains enough depth to satisfy the demands of modern society. Breath of curriculum means that learners will encounter a wide variety of learning experiences which enables them to maximise opportunities for self-realisation through schooling. A broad curriculum includes all facets of the learner's life, such as social, religious and moral aspects, arts, sports, academic and vocational areas of study. Within the arts, a broad curriculum will include all the arts. With reference to performance, breadth implies that every learner will have the opportunity to sing, to play instruments, move to music, listen to and observe performances, and engage creatively with sound and movement. The selection of processes and content makes provision for a variety of interests and aptitudes, and provides learners with a broad base of knowledge from which to proceed through life.

In Basic Education the question of sufficient curriculum depth can be seen as a continuous process over several years. Learners are required to investigate each area of learning with enough depth to be able to understand the significance of things, to gain a measure of insight into the learning area, and to perceive how matters are connected. Learning content and study levels are to provide learners with the opportunity to explore areas of specific interest. To achieve depth of study learners need to develop competencies in the subject area. In music and dance, therefore, learners are required to perform progressively more challenging musical and movement tasks. Depth of curriculum requires time to learn to do something well, and to 'research' and investigate aspects of the learning area.

Within the Namibian formal arts curriculum, the early emphasis is on general, basic competency development. The factor of depth gains importance in the higher grades. Thus, in terms of curriculum structure, there is a shift in emphasis from educating the learner through music and dance, towards more specialised knowledge, understandings and skills in music and dance at higher levels. To this effect, the Namibian curriculum provides for a general core of basic arts experiences common to all learners from grades 1 through 4. Upper primary learners (grades 5 through 7) elect more in-depth modules in addition to a decreasing core.[9] At secondary level, when Integrated Performing Arts becomes a pre-vocational examination subject area, there is a further increase towards learning in depth.

Turning now to music and dance as *ngoma*, I suggest that music and dance as *ngoma* is broad firstly because of its holism which explores the multiple connections between arts and life. This relates to community-based indigenous Namibian education where breadth of learning was common practice in a very practical sense. While aimed mainly at the acquisition of practical competencies and specialised knowledge related to group survival, informal education in the past included knowledge and skills pertaining to weather, agriculture, housekeeping, religion, community welfare, folklore, history, music, dance and crafts.[10] Music and dance as *ngoma* also links the learning process to the context of the

9 Refer back to chapter 2, Figure 2.6.
10 See Epskamp (1992), Tay (1989), and others for descriptions.

learner's life and environment. The *ngoma* approach should become an integral part of broad, general education because it facilitates links to many facets of the learner's life.

Secondly, music and dance as *ngoma* utilises a wide range of learning actions. The broad scope of music and dance as *ngoma* means a variety of learning actions are involved. They include:

- *performing*, for example singing, playing, dancing;
- *appraising*, for example listening, observing, evaluating;
- *creating*, by means of composing, improvising and choreographing;
- *communicating* verbally through responses and sharing of thoughts, and through performance;
- *organising*, that is arranging and conducting music, directing dance, planning a performance, etc.

In practice, music and dance actions are forms of intellectual expression. They involve procedural knowledge[11] and propositional knowledge[12] in formal, informal, intuitive and supervisory forms (Elliott, 1995: 96 - 101). Referring specifically to music (although this applies to dance as well), Elliott states it is both a *form* of knowledge and a *source* of knowledge. He sees music as both a noun (music) and a verb (to music or musicing) (Elliott, 1991 (b): 23 - 24). Music and dance as *ngoma* is located in communal performance which principally utilises procedural knowledge. However, because of the links with other arts and life to which I referred earlier, music and dance as ngoma also makes provision for the acquisition of propositional knowledge. Ensuring that the curriculum makes provision for both these forms of knowledge, provides for breadth.

Because the emphasis is placed on several modes through which learning takes place, there are opportunities to explore and demonstrate different interests and abilities. Provided learners are involved in performing all of the above, the learning will conform to the requirement of breadth.

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11 Elliott (1995) describes procedural knowledge as 'knowing-how-to' - an ability exercised successfully. This does not necessarily require the ability to explain how to. Knowing how implies an understanding of principles underpinning successful actions and the ability to carry this over into future situations.

12 Elliott (1995) describes propositional knowledge as 'knowing-that' - a form of knowledge supported by logical reasoning which tends to be demonstrated verbally by explaining.

Thirdly, music and dance as *ngoma* is broad because it reflects the diversity of Namibian cultures and reaches out to include the musics and dances of other times and places at appropriate age levels. By facilitating contact with, and appreciation of a range of cultures with their musics and dance, the curriculum provides a broad base of music and dance experience.

Music and dance as *ngoma* is able to provide for depth of study in the development of special skills, and the creation of a performance platform where these skills may be displayed. Thus, there are opportunities for learners to explore areas of special interest and to develop special skills in the performance of music/dance events. Examples include learning to play drums or other instruments; becoming an expert dancer; investigating the role of a spiritual healer, trance-induction or the history of performance events; leading dance rituals; organising or directing a performance; and creating songs or dances. To facilitate learning in-depth adequate time should be set aside for learning to do things properly, getting the movements of a dance just right, or playing an instrument with the correct rhythm and tone quality.

6.2.3.4 Balance

The term balance in Basic Education refers to 'proportional attention' being given to areas of study and different ways of learning. The general curriculum includes academic, pre-vocational, moral-spiritual, social, physical and aesthetic learning areas. Hence, provision is made for the diversity of human intellectual expressions. No single form of knowledge or expressiveness is ostensibly elevated to a level of importance higher than other forms. This is in line with Howard Gardner's (1983) theory that we all possess 'multiple intelligences'. These various forms of intelligence – linguistic, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, mathematical, inter- and intrapersonal, and visual have come to be widely accepted. Gardner stresses the autonomy of the various 'intelligences', illustrating that each, as part of the human intellectual palette, ought to be addressed in ways appropriate to the particular form of intelligence. Thus according to Gardner, bodily-kinaesthetic abilities and musical procedures are as important as linguistic and mathematical abilities. The inference is firstly that time and attention given to the arts should be in

balance with other school subjects, and secondly, that there should be balance within and among the arts as well. This means equitable time sharing among music, dance, drama, and visual arts.

At present, the arts are included in the core curriculum of Basic Education. On the surface, therefore, it appears as though the arts are in balance with other school subjects. In practice, however, this area still tends to be neglected as general education emphasises sciences and vocational subjects.

In arts education as *ngoma* time and proportionate attention is given to all the arts, although I focus on music and dance. One way to retain balance is making use of indigenous performance genres. Within a music/dance performance as *ngoma*, there is balance since no aspect of performance is emphasised over another. Thus the singing, the dance, the drums, the masks, the comments, and whatever else may be involved enable balance to be maintained.

Furthermore, music and dance as *ngoma* provides opportunities for a balanced intellectual development through the involvement of the musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial and personal intelligences. Listening, anticipating, communicating, adjusting body to sound and imagery are integrally woven into the broad performance, each in balance with the other. Through performing and creating, and through responding to and communicating about performance, a balance is provided between cognition and affect.

From the above I conclude that the affinities between Basic Education and music and dance as *ngoma* are profound. The inclusion of music and dance as *ngoma* can enhance and extend the ways in which Basic Education aims at reform. In addition, the approach of music and dance as *ngoma* meets the requirements set for the Basic Education curricula. Given these affinities, it now remains to look at the syllabi of the new Namibian arts curriculum. Taking the new Namibian arts syllabi as a departure point, I show the extent to which they relate to music and dance as *ngoma*, and as an example I provide a thematic unit

through which music and dance as *ngoma* may be implemented within the structure of the primary syllabus.

6.3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MUSIC AND DANCE AS *NGOMA* THROUGH THE NEW ARTS SYLLABI

A general trend of the educational reform is a cut back on time allocated to the learning area of arts. This factor was directly responsible for the fact that the arts, at primary level, were thrown together into one subject grouping. Syllabus committees were instructed that the syllabi should conform to the requirements described above, and that they should reflect Namibian cultural practices. The result was that syllabus designers were compelled to identify the most essential and basic competencies involved in doing or making arts in Namibia and elsewhere. Subsequently, issues of integrated and combined arts were raised, discussed, and formulated into the present syllabi for the arts covering schooling from grades 1 through 10. I suggest that rather than merely combining or integrating for the sake of time, implementation of the new syllabi could be enhanced if based on and guided by the cornerstones of *ngoma*. In the following paragraphs I intend to show that music/dance as *ngoma*, using Namibian materials such as those that I have described, are compatible with the new syllabi as well as current writings of respected educators.

6.3.1 Music/dance as *ngoma* and the new Namibian arts syllabi[13]

Having been instrumental in the development of the new Namibian arts syllabi, I brought the newly formed idea of *ngoma* to the process. The intention was to facilitate discussion and planning which focused on a Namibian approach, rather than the more obvious subject-bound approaches. Others in the

13 Although the arts curriculum includes Visual Arts both at junior and senior secondary levels, I focus only on the Performing Arts

subject committees contributed to the notion of *ngoma*, adding different perspectives arising from their experiences in Namibian cultures. The notion of *ngoma* thus began to influence the way the syllabi were being constructed. In the following paragraphs I focus on the new primary syllabi.

In the Upper Primary phase (grades 5 to 7) there are two components to the syllabus - the Arts Core which all learners are expected to complete, and the Elective Modules where there is a choice of in-depth work in a selected arts area. The Arts Core is an extension of the basic competencies of Lower Primary. The time allocated to the Arts Core decreases from grade 5 to 7, while time allocated to the Elective Modules increases.[14]

The Elective Modules syllabus is designed to be as flexible as possible in application, in order to accommodate the needs of resourced as well as less resourced schools. The selection of modules may all be from one area of arts (e.g. Visual Art) or, depending on staff and materials at a particular school, different modules may be selected from different arts areas (e.g. Music and Dance and Visual Art). The guiding principle is that an equal number of Elective Modules should be covered in a particular year of study in all schools. Modules are arranged in levels of increasing difficulty, from level 1 to 3. This syllabus further states that

> A distinction should be made between learning *in* and learning *through* the arts. Learning *in* the arts implies the development of expertise and skills within the specific subject area, while learning *through* the arts implies that the main focus is on the holistic development of the learner, on personal and social development, or on the theme which relates to areas outside or among the arts. In principle these are complementary ways of learning, and this syllabus attempts to make provision for learning both *in and through* the arts. (MBEC, Elective Modules in the Arts, Draft 1996 (b): 4)

Again, the reference is made to holism, to personal and social development, and to relations among the arts and other areas. In chapter 3 I also referred to the way music and dance were used in indigenous

14 See diagram on p.73, chapter 2.

education systems of the past to socialise young people. This implies educating through the arts - an approach that becomes increasingly relevant when we are thinking about arts education for all, within a school context. This syllabus maintains that it focuses on "developing the visual, the bodily-kinesthetic, the musical and the personal intelligences" and that it "is unique among the school subjects in that it includes both propositional and procedural knowing" (*ibid.*: 7).

The Lower Primary Arts Core syllabus, grades 1 to 4, also supports a music and dance as *ngoma* approach.[15] The rationale of the grade 3 and 4 syllabus states:

> Arts promote the balanced growth, socialisation and development of creative ability of a learner. The subject area is a means through which the processes of unfolding, stimulating and capturing the learner's imagination and self expression take place. Through this subject area learners explore their inner selves, their environment, and make discoveries about communication through arts media... The syllabus of the Primary Arts Core aims at introducing the basic concepts of the arts without losing sight of the interconnectedness of activities, in developing a spirit of inquiry and experimentation, fostering skills of observation and creativity and reinforcing work in other areas of the curriculum. The Core syllabus provides a broad experience-based arts curriculum. (Ministry of Basic Education & Culture, 1997: 1).

The references to the promotion of socialisation and interconnectedness, among others, can be seen as an educational background in which a *ngoma* approach can reside. This syllabus "promotes cultural awareness and appreciation" and aims "to introduce the various mediums of music, dance, drama and visual art as a way of knowing and learning." *(ibid.)*.

From the above, one can see that the general philosophy of music and dance as *ngoma* is congruent with the new Namibian arts syllabi, because these syllabi support the notion of direct engagement with sound and movement, communal performance and interconnectedness. It remains to look in more detail at syllabus structures, to see how music and dance as *ngoma* may be implemented.

15 Ministry of Basic Education & Culture, Syllabus, Arts, Grades 1 and 2 (1995), and 3 and 4 (1997).

The basic departure points of the arts syllabi are the domains or learning actions. These learning actions are used throughout the primary syllabi,[16] although there is more emphasis on responding and communicating in the upper primary syllabus. Learning actions are further defined in terms of learning objectives ("the learner will...") and competencies ("the learner will be able to..."). The learning objectives clarify and guide the teacher in terms of the range of activities which will be covered in the course of the programme, while the competencies help the teacher to determine exactly what the required knowledge and skills outcomes should be.

Let us look at the Grade 5 to 7 Primary Arts Core syllabus as an example (see Addendum 8.4 for details). The main domains or learning actions are:

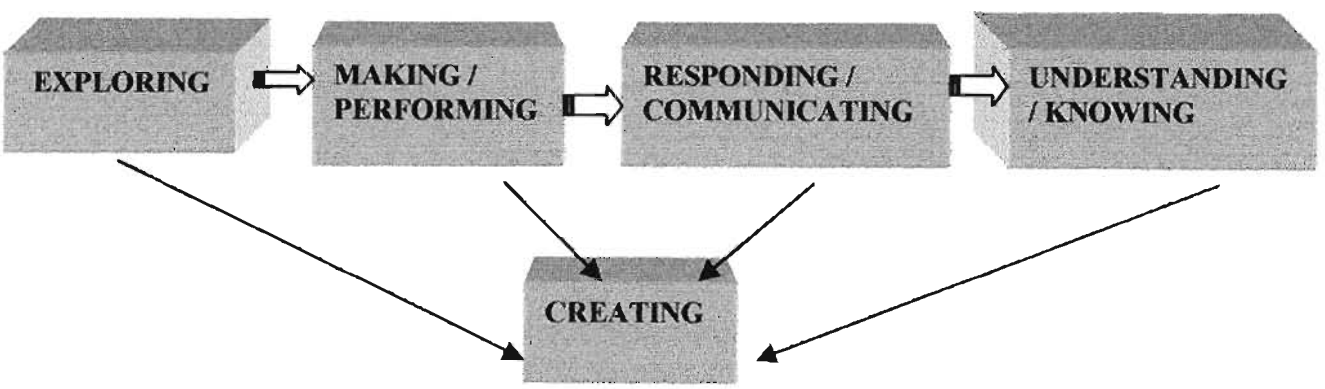

FIGURE 6.1 DIAGRAM OF LEARNING ACTIONS

Let us look at these learning actions in more detail, in order to be better able to see the extent to which music and dance as *ngoma* may be implemented through these learning actions. I also determine the extent to which the learning actions relate to current thoughts of respected music educators, particularly Elliott (1995), because of the 'praxial' or doing nature of his approach to music education.

16 Similar learning actions guide the structure of the junior secondary syllabus.

6.3.1.1 Exploring

Although the syllabus diagram above refers only to exploring, the syllabus objectives and competencies relating to this domain include both exploring and discovering. Exploration is normally followed by discovery of some kind. Exploring refers to the process of making contact with, handling, touching, and hearing aspects of sound and movement in ways that may or may not be new to the learner. Learners are led to search for, discover, and describe in their own ways the qualities of given sound and movement materials and experiences. An example from the syllabus states that learners will "investigate and explore moods and dynamics in voice tone", and that they will "discover timbre (tone colour) by experimenting with sounds of different instruments and their combinations" and "explore force and time in body movements" (MBEC, 1996 (a): 4,5).

Learners discover answers for themselves. The teacher poses problems for learners to solve, ensuring that activities are not too strongly teacher-directed. The outcomes of exploratory activities are rarely completely predictable, but reside in the individual contexts of learners, teacher, school and culture. The primary syllabus progresses in a fashion that leads in a natural way from exploring into performing, which is more directed with outcomes that are more predictable.

Because music and dance as *ngoma* encourages direct engagement with sound and movement, there is ample opportunity for exploration and discovery of patterns inherent to learners' own culture and that of others. The learning accomplished through exploration and discovery often has great impact and is well retained in the memory. Discovering, for example, how length, diameter and tension affect the pitch and quality of sound through the manipulation of strings on a bow or drums leaves a far stronger impression than being told the facts. Similarly, exploring and discovering space and direction in relation to one's body by means of imagining oneself in a box and touching different sides with different parts of the body is more imaginative, intense and effective than being told what is front, side, up, down, and diagonal.

Explorative learning leads learners in a very natural way to discover the connections between arts and life that are so basic to the *ngoma* approach. For example, when they look around at patterns in their environment, they discover repetition and variation. This knowledge can be applied in music, in dance, in art. They experience in a real sense that the arts are a reflection of their environment.

6.3.1.2 Performing [17]

Learning to know and understand music and dance must involve performing. There are two sides to the act of performing - the performance itself, and the appraisal of a performance. I discuss performing first.

The grade 5 to 7 syllabus requires the following kinds of performing among others: learners will "Learn and perform dance-songs from a variety of cultures"; and learners will be able to: "perform alone or with others (as is appropriate) dance-songs learnt from the teacher, from an expert in the community, from a video, or from a class-mate"; and learners will be able to "discuss and recreate the performance context so that it approximates the original context, meaning and values"; and "perform songs from the past as well as the present" (MBEC, 1996 (a): 5). The emphasis in the lower primary syllabus is on the description of basic performance competencies, while that of upper primary is on the extension and development of music and dance performance skills, along with those required in the other arts.

I now consider the act of performing as extracted from Elliott (1995). The necessary ingredients for a performance are the performers themselves (dancers, singers, instrumentalists) and the knowledge that determines and informs the intentions of the performers, for instance, knowledge of relevant traditions and standards of the music/dance practice. A performance further requires the sounds and movements upon which performers act in relation to their knowledge. It requires instruments (musical instruments, voices, bodies), and it requires the actions of performing, the product of performance, and the context

17 The diagram (Figure 6.1) shows both making and performing. The making aspect refers mostly to visual arts.

(physical, cultural, and social) in which the performance is interpreted, performed or improvised (Elliott, 1995: 50).

According to Elliott, deciding and selecting 'how-to' perform demands that a variety of options be considered and judgements made. "In musical performing, thought and action are interwoven like themes in a fugue. Intention not only governs action, it accompanies action." (Elliott, 1991(b): 25). Knowledge is thus manifested practically in the musical or dance actions themselves, and involves both procedural and propositional knowledge. Elliott describes performances as "quintessential examples of cognition in action because they require a performer to match a detailed cognitive representation of an auditory event with an equally complex mental plan of action" (*ibid.*: 29). Purposes are formulated and actions are continually deployed, directed and adjusted, and compared with traditions and standards of practice. In other words these learning actions take place in relation to the individual enculturated mental template of how the music should sound.

Actions are non-verbal forms of thinking and knowing, which are further informed by verbal knowledge (knowing-that). Therefore, reading or hearing about the dance or event or about history or technique, may contribute to the understanding a performer has about his or her own performance, although it cannot replace performance. Because performance is knowing and thoughtful, it must be one of the basic learning actions organising the curriculum.

The above understanding of performance applies equally to Namibian music and dance traditions and to western concert performances. In music and dance as *ngoma* one has the same components to performance: performers; knowledge; actions; instruments; and context. The ways in which these are brought together will, however, have a Namibian flavour when Namibian performance events are used. In indigenous educational traditions the ways of knowing brought about through music and dance, were considered indispensable. The actions and ways of knowing that are inherent to Namibian musicing and

dancing are the same ones manifested in other performance genres, that is knowing how-to and knowing that - both located in a particular cultural context.

Education as *ngoma* tries to find where the power of performance lies.[18] It encourages the performer to 'centre' - concentrate, feel, imagine, transport oneself into another dimension if possible. The character of Namibian music and dance encourages and supports this through repetitive singing and drumming patterns and through intensity of performance. Music and dance as *ngoma* finds power through the synergy of communal performance – involving general participation and a supportive atmosphere in which different levels or 'standards' of performance are accepted. An excellent performer nevertheless commands respect. Such an individual performs with concentration and discipline. The Kiswahili word *sikia* refers to a sensing with one's whole being - the ability to hear, pay attention, notice, understand, heed, obey - mostly through the sense of hearing, but also through the use of all other senses except taste. *Ngoma* requires *sikia*. While the syllabus only outlines the minimum competencies expected of learners, music and dance as *ngoma* provides a performance framework through which the parameters of learners' experience can be expanded.

The appraising side of performing involves listening to music and observing dance. Observing refers not only to the extraneous act of looking, but also 'watchfulness' in terms of own body-in-space and time, being observant. Like performing, listening is described by Elliott (1995: 80 - 89) as thought-full in that it requires attention to select, sort, retrieve, organise and evaluate. Musical listening thus prompts us to "interpret and *construct* auditory information in relation to personal understandings and beliefs" (Elliott's italics). The acts of listening-for and watching-for (rather than mere listening-to or looking-at) implies a covert form of thinking-in-action and knowing-in-action, because listeners are mentally organising the

18 That such power exists has been amply demonstrated by the excited reaction of foreign scholars to video recordings of Namibian performance. Typical comments include surprise that that such vibrant and powerful performances are fairly common, and even more surprise that this is at present not utilised in schools. People also expressed regret at the fact that few performances of their experience retain this power. ISME World Conference, Amsterdam, 1996; ISME Commission on Music in Schools and Teacher Education, Joensuu, Finland, 1996.

sounds they hear and the movements they see in terms of their personal knowledge and cultural backgrounds. They are judging and evaluating, even constructing new understandings. This involves varying degrees of attention, awareness, comparison, classification, prediction and memory. The dancer watches-for musical cues, movements of other dancers in relation to self, the prediction of events to come, the assessment of energy expenditure, directing attention, and many other aspects, all of which are forms of thinking-in-action. These processes require the "deliberate deployment of consciousness" (*ibid.*). Both listening-for and watching-for include the acts of attending, scanning, identifying, interpreting, constructing, and comparing. I refer collectively to these processes as appraising. In the primary syllabus appraisal is incorporated in actions such as discussing, criticising, evaluating and appreciating learners' own and others' art works.

Music and dance as *ngoma* make appraisal both a beginning and a continuation point. In the *ngoma* approach one begins with the appraisal of learners' cultural capital, because the act of appraising is context-dependent. What we hear and see is largely determined by what we are used to, in other words, the cultural practice to which we are accustomed. Serafine (1988) suggests that despite the practice-specific nature of listening (and observing) there is a set of generic processes underlying listening that all people have in common.[19] She maintains that without a set of innate listening processes, human beings would not be able to produce or listen for musical sound patterns or learn to make sense of the diverse practices that exist. Among these generic processes she includes the construction of coherent patterns, chaining patterns together, making same-different comparisons, and parsing patterns into different types of textures. Appraisal occurs against the mental template of previously perceived and memorised patterns. These patterns are recalled and compared to the new input, which often includes a certain amount of repetition, or connections with the known, along with variations. As I have indicated previously, indigenous Namibian music/dance learning was based on the development of mental templates relating to

19 Although Serafine limits her discussion to music, I suggest that the cognition involved in what I call watching, is similar enough to be included in the same category.

specific categories of performance. Through music and dance as *ngoma* this method is refined by means of appraisal of characteristic performance categories and structures, aesthetic criteria and values.

Music and dance as *ngoma* appraises aesthetic values in the performances of different cultural groups, first within Namibia and later outside. This requires learners to gradually improve their ability to distinguish what constitutes a good performance. The criteria used may differ from one cultural practice to another. Because it emphasises understanding of an event within its context, music and dance as *ngoma* facilitates appraisal of a range of aesthetic values related to different cultural practices. To know, understand and value the aesthetics of a culture is to become a full member of society, one who is aware of the importance of the wellbeing of society. The involvement of members of the community, such as sages or musicians and dancers of good reputation can contribute to the success of the learning process. These members of the community are best able to carry across to learners the values and meanings of the performances.

Performing and appraising involve related but contrasting processes. Appraising involves the constructive impression of relationships; performance involves the constructive expression of relationships. Thus, only learners who perform *and* appraise possess both forms of working knowledge.

6.3.1.3 Responding and Communicating

Music and dance performances elicit responses. These responses may involve feelings about the performance, or they may infer value judgements. A learner's response may remain internalised or it may be shared with others.

Communication may mean a verbal discussion or presentation or a written form. In addition, communication may be non-verbal, by means of facial expression or gesture or performance. The act of communicating refers to asking questions, and sharing feelings, insights and understandings with others. It involves listening to and being open to the thoughts and ideas of others. To communicate something,

thoughts, ideas and feelings need to be organised in a manner that is understood by others. Responding and communicating are inter-dependent.

The new grade 5 to 7 arts syllabus refers to the following objectives and competencies regarding responding and communicating: learners will "develop confidence in their own expressive abilities" and learners will be able to " perform freely, without constraint, in ways indicating individual and communal responses"; "talk about, narrate, express opinions and defend their opinions in discussions on topics relating to arts activities and topics/themes covered". Learners will also "discuss, criticise, evaluate and appreciate their own and others' arts works" (MBEC, 1996 (a): 14).

Responding involves feelings, judgements, and making choices. These responses are shared with others through communication and performance. Affective and cognitive learning are essentially two sides of the same coin, integrally linked and interdependent. What we know affects how we feel, and what we feel influences what we are able to learn and understand. In addition, both cognition and affect relate directly to context. In the arts we tend to understand and like best what we are reasonably familiar with. A completely foreign music or dance experience may elicit a negative response - dislike, anxiety or even fear.

The importance of attention to personal responses is underlined by music educators. In order to provide enjoyment and self-growth the music and dance challenges should be balanced with the capabilities of the learners.[20] According to Elliott (1995: 114 - 120) each individual matches and interprets incoming information by attaching personal meaning and values. When experiences are congruent with our self-goals, we experience them with positive feelings and satisfaction. This congruence is what we aim for in our teaching. Elliott maintains that human beings receive enjoyment and satisfaction when challenges match and extend our abilities, liking what we are good at.

20 See earlier discussion. For more extensive discussion see Elliott, 1995: 122.

Music and dance as *ngoma* begins with the cultural practices from which the learner emerges. This provides feelings of familiarity to which the teacher brings new or slightly different forms - new songs, extended patterns, different movements. In this way learners are gradually introduced to 'new' musics and dance and by extending their knowledge, grow to appreciate and enjoy different expressions of culture. As skills develop, learners are faced with increasing challenges by means of more extensive performances. It is important that not only familiar sounds and movements be performed. The novelty we perceive in a particular musical creation or dance acts as a stimulating challenge, whether through listening, watching, or doing.

Because music and dance as *ngoma* emphasises communal performance, it provides a secure base from which learners can extend, trying to match their skills to the challenges of the performance. Opportunities are created for learners to become competent in diverse modes of communication – speaking and writing with a useful vocabulary, writing notations, playing, dancing, drawing, singing, and gesturing.

Music and dance as *ngoma* also encourages direct and open communication among performers, letting them know by means of comments, shouts and ululations how others are responding. This is an important ingredient of indigenous performance, and the quality of performance is guided and improved through interactive communication.

6.3.1.4 Understanding and knowing

Although exploring, performing, responding and communicating are all forms of knowing, the syllabus specifically refers to ways in which learners can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding competencies. The primary syllabi use verbs such as learn, memorise, know (the difference), demonstrate understanding, differentiate, and recount to qualify the competencies involved in this area.

Knowing, understanding, intuiting, analysing and responding to the surrounding world can be collectively referred to as cognition. Let us briefly consider the specific cognitive processes involved in music and dance, extracted from various writings. [21] Several interlinked cognitive processes can be identified, for example:

- transforming information from one modality to another. An example is from an auditory to a visual mode (being able to picture the music heard), from an auditory to a kinaesthetic mode (transforming music to dance); from a visual to an auditory mode (performing written notation);
- directing attention and concentrating on something (e.g. listening *for* certain things in music or looking *for* certain actions or movements in dance); [22]
- orientating oneself spatially, both in concrete terms (e.g. moving in space, knowing and finding front, back, side) and symbolic terms (telling the difference between similar rhythmic patterns such as kindinki kilindi and kilindinki dinki; or ♩. ♩. ♩ and ♩ ♩. ♩.)
- processing memory contents, both short term and long term. Long term memory only occurs when adequate repetitions of short term memory items have occurred. One example is the use of mnemonic verbalisations before the playing of drumming patterns like kitiki dinki, and repeating the mnemonic and the drumming action until the sound has been stored in long term memory;
- forming automatisms. Examples are the performance of drumming patterns stored in long term memory, or subconsciously making use of a cultural musical template to guide performance, placing limbs in culturally acceptable manners, etc. The forming of automatisms only occurs after many repetitions, when the action develops into involuntary associations and skills;
- thinking. This involves actively wrestling with and forming an understanding of the structure of a concept, making associative connections between concepts, prior knowledge and new information,

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21 For more complete descriptions of the various cognitive and integrative processes see Luria (1973); Du Preez & Steenkamp (1980); Albrecht (1980); the various works by and about Jerome Bruner's theories; Sloboda (1985); Serafine (1988); Gardner (1983); various works by Csikszentmihalyi.

22 The reticular formation in the brain stem functions in a two-way relationship with the frontal cortex in order to maintain the level of wakefulness and cortical energy. It is directed at will by the individual.

leading to new understandings. Thinking includes thinking-in-action processes involved in performing;

- turning concrete experience into abstract concepts. An example is that after learning to do the shoulder movements in *nyakasanga*, one develops an inner understanding of how the term *makumbi* (shoulders) refers to specific kinds of shoulder movements and shoulder ornamentations, as well as the meaning and value it has in a ceremony, and the dance and music in which it belongs;

It is through these processes that concepts are formed, related and connected to one another, and finally integrated into one's inner self. These processes require active input from the learner who has to direct attention, think, transform information, and form automatisms. Repetition and intensity of the learning experience play important roles in the quality of the final cognitive product.

Music and dance as *ngoma* provides opportunities for these cognitive processes to be developed in the classroom. This may be seen in the first instance in the examples I used above to illustrate the cognitive processes. There is thinking and understanding embedded in the processes of the performance of music and dance. I use an example from a *ngoma*-based class to illustrate the point. A class is asked to chant and then clap an *epera* rhythmic pattern given by the teacher in the form of a mnemonic such as *pundu*. Learners direct their attention to the teacher's sounds. The auditory sound of the teacher's words is briefly memorised and then transformed by learners into spoken sounds, a process which required inner verification in terms of the sequence of the sounds (orientation). This is repeated, thus enhancing the memory process. The pattern is then transformed again into a kinaesthetic mode and clapped while the inner verification process continues to monitor the performance. Through repetition the clapping pattern can be formed into an automatism and stored in long-term memory. It is likely to be memorised with the association of the mnemonic pattern, which promotes recall.

6.3.1.5 Creating

Creating is a vital aspect of any art. Creating in the classroom involves generating ideas, sounds, movements, either through improvising, or putting together sound and movement through a planned composition and/or choreographic design in ways that are new and original to the learner. These are clearly learning actions which challenge the learner to identify, initiate, plan, express, experiment, combine, adapt and connect the known (the making of music and dance) and use it to move into the unknown.

The primary arts syllabi include: the learner will "create rhythms and melodies"; "improvise dance movements"; "arrange given dance movements into new sequences"; "improvise a short complementary voice part to a given or known song" (MBEC, 1996 (a): 12 - 14). The junior secondary syllabus uses similar verbs to define the act of creating, but with an expansion of the level of skill required. This syllabus therefore includes composing, choreographing, arranging, refining and recording as well as improvising (MBEC, 1996 (c): 13).

Creating is a vital component of the arts, and doing so involves a variety of cognitive and affective processes in a most imaginative and original way. Small writes:

> As the creative act is at the centre of all artistic activity, so we place creative activity firmly at the centre of musical education, from which all other, more traditional activities radiate, fed by the work of creation and in turn feeding back into it: compositional skills, notation (as and if needed), listening, performing, study of the work of other musicians of many periods, styles and cultures. (Small, 1984: 213)

The view of creative activity as a core activity in arts education is expanded by Small into a powerful description of the creative act:

> [T]he real power of art lies not in listening to or looking at the finished work; it lies in the act of creation itself. In the process of artistic creation the creator engages his whole self; his reason and intention, together with the most ruthless self-criticism and realistic assessment of a situation all come into play. He sets himself a goal ... and sets out to achieve it ... delighting in the features of the new terrain that he is discovering for himself. He is working to the extent of *his* (author's italics) own powers, not those of someone else ... making his own models of possible alternative realities and futures. (*ibid:* 218).

While there are many ways to approach creating in the classroom, music and dance as *ngoma* approaches this learning action from an African perspective. In the context of Namibian performance traditions, creating is always rooted in the known. Creating begins by exploring and learning familiar forms and patterns, and then exploiting them by means of variation or improvisation, to create a different form. The notion of creating as 'explore and exploit' (discussed in chapter 4) is therefore basic to indigenous learning. The person uses the mental template relating to a particular song or dance and initiates changes that are obvious to persons who share the template. These changes may be fleeting, for in the next performance new variations may be created or improvised. Consequently, the creative action in the classroom should emerge from an initial acquisition of knowledge, which is then developed into new forms. Creating in music and dance as *ngoma* does thus not begin by making something totally new out of nothing.

Creativity in music and dance as *ngoma* can be expressed performing certain patterns or works in new and interesting ways. Decisions are taken in terms of who plays what and how; who is in the background and who in the foreground; how loud or soft, how fast or slow; or what we shall wear. Creating involves asking questions, solving problems, making decisions and taking responsibility for them, and following the actions through to their conclusions. It is only once this creative process has been communicated to others, by means of performance or presentation (written or spoken), that the process is complete.

To summarise, music and dance as *ngoma* has been shown to be a medium through which the learning actions called for in the Namibian primary arts syllabus may be implemented. These learning actions themselves display a connectedness that reflects the holistic spirit of *ngoma*. Each of the learning actions is linked to the other, and learning is enhanced through multiple links. Creating is linked to performance; performance is appraised and discussed. This in turn leads to improved performance based on exploration

and discovery of alternative performing actions. Experiences are communicated to the group.[23] These processes are found in indigenous Namibian performances as well, making it possible to incorporate the materials in chapter 5 in the syllabus. The arts syllabi do not instruct teachers in terms of day to day planning, nor do they prescribe a 'scheme of work'. It is, however, suggested that teaching be structured around thematic units. As one example of how this may be done, I provide a thematic unit through which music and dance as *ngoma* may be implemented.

6.3.1 Planning a programme of music and dance as *ngoma* in the new arts curriculum

As a general guideline the music and dance programme should ensure that continuity is facilitated, and that the connections and relatedness among learning areas (or subjects) are opened up in a natural and fluid manner. By using materials and planning learning experiences that relate to the lives, interests and developmental levels of learners, events in the classroom can provide enjoyment and contribute to self-growth and social development. The learner's progress should be assessed continuously, with regular feedback between teacher and learner.

In both the primary and junior secondary grades of the Namibian arts curricula it is suggested that teachers organise the teaching-learning activities and the development of learners' competencies around thematic units as basic programming instruments. This has certain advantages above a subject-based programming instrument, primarily in its connection to aspects of life and inter-connectedness among learning areas and activities. This is in line with music and dance as *ngoma*.

In the lower primary phase (grades 1 and 2) certain specific themes are suggested, so as to relate this syllabus to other learning areas such as language. Themes are: Friends; Sounds / Colours / Shapes around

23 In Addendum 8.5 I have prepared a diagram indicating connections.

us; Water; Weather; Time of Day and Night; Foods We Eat; A World of Homes; People in my Neighbourhood; My Environment; My Culture; Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow (MBEC, Arts Syllabus Grades 1 and 2, 1996). The focus of certain themes becomes more appropriate when one remembers that this syllabus is inclusive of all the arts. The other primary syllabi do not suggest specific themes. Such information is considered additional to the syllabus and will appear in the form of a primary teachers' resource book in 1998.

The theme suggestions for the lower primary phase encourage younger learners to relate to their home and social and physical environment. By this means one hopes that the teaching and learning that result from the implementation of this syllabus avoids what Small (1984: 3) refers to as "knowledge as abstraction, existing 'out there', independent of the experience of the knower". By placing emphasis on learners' experiences of the world around them and their lives outside the school, learning as abstract knowledge only, can be avoided.

Below I provide an outline of a thematic unit which may be used at upper primary level as an elective module. It could, however, be successfully adapted for other age levels, and in a simplified form, also be used in the primary arts core. It is structured around the basic learning actions that were described and encourages explorative learning and competency development relating to the learner's life. Relevant topics relating to the theme can be used to organise, sequence and create coherence of learning content and experiences. This thematic unit encourages a holistic approach, thus supporting the spirit of *ngoma*. It is based on Namibian cultural practice, and emphasises diverse connections and communal performance. It can be related to other learning areas, such as social studies. The theme could be extended to include different topics - 'Dance in Celebrations', or 'Dance in the City', or 'Traditional Ritual Dances'. Teachers would need to find learning materials according to the selected topic. Sources could include a Namibian teachers' resource book, other Namibian publications, community experts, learners, libraries, or even the

Internet. The dances mentioned under 'topics' are all suitable Namibian dances. Some of them have been transcribed in chapter 5.

This theme would be implemented over about six weeks, using ninety minutes of arts time per week in class, and giving certain tasks to be completed after class. Time indications below are relative.

THEME: NAMIBIAN DANCE

<u>Topics</u> may include or be selected from the following:

Dances for children (*aksieliedjies*, *oudano*, etc.)

Dances and seasons (dry season dance, harvest dance, *epera,* etc.)

Dance-games in Namibia (e.g. Ju/'hoan melon and rope games, *ondjongo*, *ongandeka* for boys, *oudano*, *volkspele*, or others)

Warm-ups should be used before every dance session to build up competencies in terms of body strength, suppleness and memory (locomotor and axial) progressively. This should include isolations and contractions e.g. roll of hips, pelvic contraction with/without a contracted knee.

Problem-solving

Week 1

Select one of the three topics given above. Learners explore and gather information about the context, i.e. (1) geographical region, (2) most common language of the area, (3) history of the dance (old/new). Collect photographs and pictures or drawings of a dance or an area.

Questions to be answered may include:

Where does this dance come from? Do you know its name? Is the climate in the area of the performers hot or cold, wet or dry, mountainous or flat? What language do they speak? What are the languages of their neighbours? What are some of the characteristics of the language? Who performs the dance in its original context? What music accompanies the dance? Why are they dancing? Are there any important materials that accompany the dance, e.g. special skirts, drums, shakers, a melon, a rope, masks, tail-switch, etc.? Learners make notes or drawings of these materials or collect pictures for later use.

Learners listen for, identify, and imitate (learn) basic clapping patterns as clapped by the teacher. Basic patterns would include regular claps in twos and threes. These are combined into a dochmiac pattern consisting of ♩. ♩. ♩ Learners are divided into groups for *clapping sequences* where people do not all clap the same pattern.

Learners create journals for the theme (group or individual). They enter all the information they have gathered. This should include pictures of the dance or people who perform it, or the area in which it is performed. Learners are asked to "Write something about your experiences while working on this theme - your feelings, what you struggle with, or amusing incidents. Include all drawings and plans and notations." The teacher's evaluations of the work will be entered in the journal. The journal work is an ongoing task throughout the theme.

Week 2

Repeat the different clapping sequences. Discuss: Does this dance have instrumental accompaniment ?
If so, (e.g. drums) *teach the drumming rhythm patterns* for the dance through the appropriate mnemonic, e.g. pun-du pun-du and machakili machakili if they are doing *epera* (see pp. 221, 295, 302, 306 for further examples). Begin to *teach the dance*, starting with the song. Learners can *imitate an expert* in the dance - either a classmate, teacher, a member of the community, or video if available. Encourage active listening by asking questions such as "How many different voice parts does this song have? Are there any special parts?"

Learners discover typical arm positions and movements, for example if doing *epera* or *ongandeka*, note the arms raised like 'cattle horns', or how arms swing in *ondjongo*.

Week 3

If transcriptions are available, learners are taught to read *a written form* of the song and dance. They identify the meaning of various musical symbols (Refer only to those which are appropriate to the material studied) for example: ⊀ ⊀ | ⊀ ∅ (begin here); ○ (right foot basic movement); ● (left foot basic movement); □ (right foot stamp); ■ (left foot stamp); ↖ (foot or knee lift left) ; ⤡ (arms crossed over chest); etc.

Identify the focus of the dance – is it on feet, on shoulders, on arms, on ground? What are typical facial expressions? Learners discuss what this may mean.

Movement sequences are practiced - at a slower pace at first if necessary. Ensure that learners experiencing problems are given help. Learners can appraise others' performance and make suggestion about how a performance may be corrected or improved?

Learners identify the starting position and the ending position of the dance (if appropriate).

Week 4

Learners create new mnemonic and drumming patterns which would also fit the dance, e.g. kon - kolo or kon-kon-kolo or tum-bada-tum or kinkin-dilikin or any suitable sound.
Learners improvise new movements, but appropriate to the style of the dance. Discuss which ones work best and why? They can experiment with collective improvisation, working in pairs for about 8 beats per pair.

Discuss the modality or ground design of the dance - do participants form a circle, a semi-circle, or a straight line? Do individuals perform in the centre while others sing and clap, or does the whole line move? Are there solo parts? What meaning does this convey, in your opinion? Why? Ask the opinion of an older person who knows the dance well.

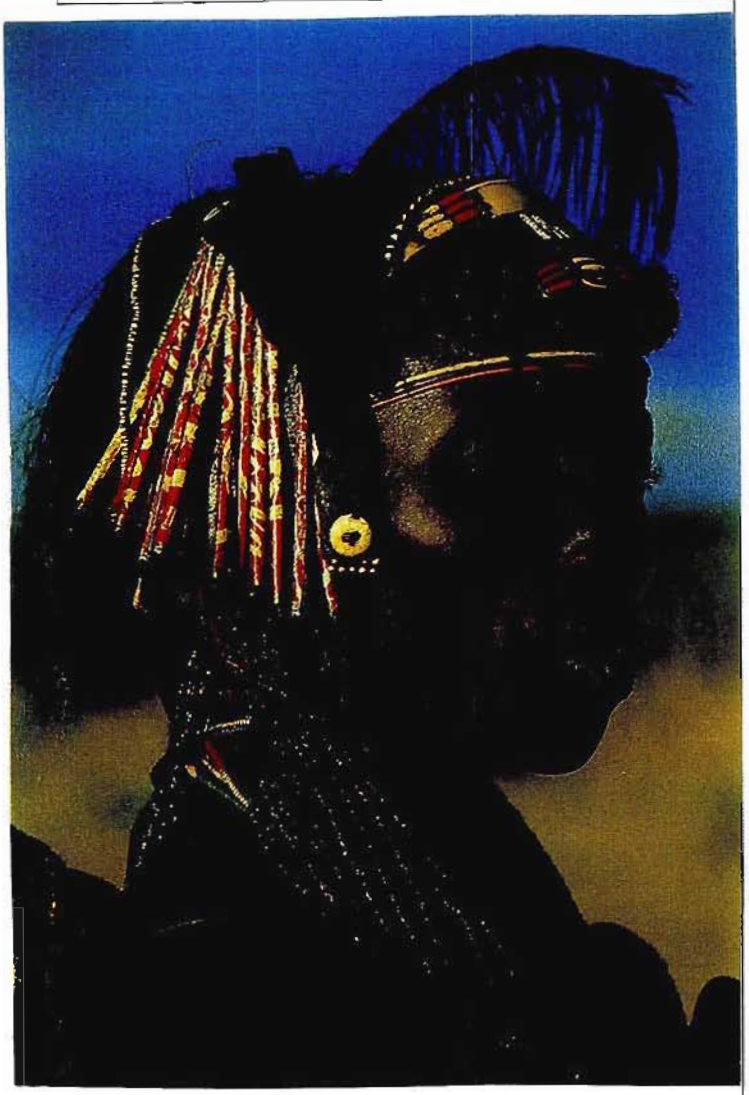
Week 5

Learners draw a visual representation of the modality of the dance, using lines and arrows or other suitable signs (see possible examples on pp. 203 and 227). They may wish to discuss this in groups first.

Learners create a graphic representation or notation for the most important movements. This may be done in colour. Patterns may be drawn of repeated components. Patterns may be chained together, using different colours or media. The chained pattern can be performed.

'Polish' all aspects of the performance, singing, clapping, drumming, solo parts, group parts, etc. through accurate repetition. Learners should use appropriate facial expressions to *interpret* roles or characters that may appear. Take time to enable learners to do things properly. Learners *evaluate* their own and others' performance. They *discuss and compare* evaluations. This is entered into their journals.

Week 6



Learners design and prepare 'costumes' or required material traits identified earlier, for a *performance*. Use old and found materials where possible, such as used in the head dress of a woman from the Kunene region in the photograph below.

Discuss what would be an appropriate atmosphere to create for the performance/event. How could this be achieved? Learners find ways to recreate atmosphere in whichever way seems most suitable - darkening the area or using lights, a make-believe fire, sound, or props.

(Photograph by T. Pupkewitz)

Learners design and send out invitations to the performance – for example to parents, other learners and teachers, elders in the community, etc.

Learners *stage the performance*, applying the planning and preparation which has preceded it.

Learners write a short report on the theme for inclusion in their journals, describing what they liked best and what they liked least; which new things they learnt; what was difficult and what was easy; and what suggestions they would make for next time.

Display in class interesting and original examples of all written work, drawings, invitations, and material traits.

6.3.2 Methodological suggestions

The success of music/dance as *ngoma*, like any other form of teaching, is located in effective planning and teaching, mutual respect, participation and co-operation in the course of performance. Failure to regard these fundamentals could result in a 'tokenist' form of cultural teaching, which would impact negatively on the value and integrity of the original cultural forms.

I have shown that teaching in the spirit of *ngoma* relates to today's classroom. To extract methodological implications from the foregoing discussion and thematic unit, a few basic points are stressed.

- Emphasis is constantly placed upon learners making music and doing dance;
- Diverse competencies may be developed by means of identification and knowledge of patterns (rhythmic, tonal, movement, structural). This lies at the base of music and dance education because Namibian music and dance are structured around patterns;
- Progress goes from the discovery of initial basic patterns (exploring, imitating and repeating), to improvising and varying or exploiting patterns, to the creation of original patterns or combinations. Where appropriate, patterns should be taught by means of traditional or self-created mnemonics;
- Identify musical structures such as time-lines and cycles to guide understanding and performance;
- Synthesis of constituent parts back into a whole should take place through performance after having worked on specific music and dance structures;
- Explore the inter-relationships among arts and other aspects of life through meaningful experiences;
- Place music/dance events within a context, relating to time, geography, society, meaning, and material and non-materials traits;
- Experience communal performance and the aesthetics of *communitas*. Use of the hocket technique is an admirable way of doing this – each learner's performance only gains meaning in relation to the whole;

- Utilise the processes of learning that occur through the processes of various performances, not only the final performance product;
- Involve community musicians in class work or performance where possible. Remember that this is likely to have financial implications;
- Encourage appraisals of own work and the work of others, and thereby improve the quality of performance;
- Emphasise inner experience by encouraging learners to listen to and observe the self – 'let music and dance make you a better person'.

Before music and dance as *ngoma* can be implemented, workshops for teachers need to be held. In such workshops understanding and competencies in terms of the suggested approach, methods and materials need to be developed in such a way that teachers are able to facilitate implementation of the programme selected. Teachers need to experience at first hand the notion of music and dance as *ngoma*, utilising Namibian performance events. They need to become involved in designing thematic units and in accessing information among people in their communities. Teachers themselves have to develop confidence in knowing that the teaching and learning of Namibian culture(s) are relevant, valid and worthwhile. Then music and dance as *ngoma* as an approach to arts education can work.

To this is added the reminder that enjoyment should remain an inherent aspect of music and dance as *ngoma*. As "each achievement generates its own enthusiasms, its own confidence" the skills will develop as they are needed (Small, 1984: 213).

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research into local performance genres is urgent. The research needs to cover a wider range of language and cultural groups.

Future research on Namibian musics and dance can provide breadth of information by means of general descriptions of character, and of specific circumstances relating to execution of performance, participants, distinctive traits, music instruments. Research projects should also include in-depth studies in terms of the meanings underlying the diverse performance genres, and their connections with past and present, people's systems of classifying their music and dance repertoires or events, and in-depth analysis of different rhythms, vocal and instrumental parts, and movements. Tonal systems, and instrument tuning and construction methods need to be investigated.

An international bibliographical and discographical survey of all Namibian music and dance research presently in existence can provide background as well as possible contacts with other researchers. Through fieldwork recordings, interviews, observations and subsequent analysis, a classification can be made which describes how people themselves categorise their performance, for example, songs for girls, songs for hunting or healing.

Where possible, people who are conversant in a language should do the research. In all cases the vernacular terms relating to all genres of performance are vital to understanding the meaning. Therefore linguistic support for music and dance research is important. It would greatly contribute to the value of future studies of Namibian music and dance if they were related to historic studies, tracing the development and decline of certain performance genres, styles, and meaning through links with migrations, historic events and contact with other groups.

Aside from supporting general archival purposes, the above will contribute directly to the availability of data (recordings and publications) from which a selection can be made for the preparation of good teaching-learning materials. While this thesis has suggested a way of transcribing and describing Namibian music and dance, much still remains to be done in increasing the number of genres and events recorded and transcribed, and the number of songs transcribed for a particular genre or event. Namibian teachers in future should have no reason to avoid the teaching of indigenous music and dance for lack of materials.

6.5 FINAL COMMENTS

I set out to explore Namibian music and dance to enhance the education of children in Namibia. In the process, I discovered a wealth of Namibian performance arts previously unknown to me, the spectrum in fact unknown to many inhabitants, and never used before in education. It is my hope that this research will prompt the inclusion of indigenous music and dance in the present arts education programmes.

From my personal investigations and fieldwork, I have discovered that Namibian music and dance have many qualities that characterise and distinguish them from music and dance in neighbouring countries. At the same time, there are qualities that are found quite widely in southern Africa. One of these qualities of music and dance is its origin as an integral part of the daily lives of many people. Music and dance in the past had value and importance. However, this integration of performance into daily life is receding as people's lives become more and more westernised and urbanised. This impacts directly upon the holistic spirit of performance – that of *ngoma*. Under the pressure of urban life, husbands and wives working for salaries, children receiving their education mostly at schools, the devaluation of people's perception of the wisdom that comes with age, life itself becomes fragmented and compartmentalised. Music and dance are devalued and become fringe activities or commodities.

In chapter 1 reference was made to Small's views on the effect that western ideologies and 'development' have had on culture and society in many parts of the world. Aesthetics, maybe different from those prevailing in westernised cultures, stand as metaphors for different world views. He proposes that the arts are a way of making us aware of the possibilities of alternative societies "whose existence is not yet" (Small, 1984: 2). Thus he refers to a potential society which no longer stands in antithesis to nature, which no longer "split(s) life into fragments isolated from one another", and which transcends the tyranny of time and future (*ibid.*: 209). Small's potential society is a society in which a person "can enjoy the present for itself, developing the life of his senses uninhibitedly". A society where knowledge "is freed from the urge to domination" and used "as an aid to living, and dying, well in our world." In such a society it would be possible for a person to find his or her "proper relation to society" and both would develop "a set of mutually enhancing functions". In essence, Small believes that in such a society the arts would once again be discovered as an essential element of living. The arts could become a way of restructuring education and society (*ibid.*: 5).

I believe that in Namibia, by approaching music and dance in the spirit of *ngoma*, using indigenous and other cultural practices, one could begin to practise real education that will contribute to learners' creativity, perception and understanding of life, cultural identity, and place and role in society. The classroom in which the arts are treated as *ngoma* may in fact become the only place where this kind of communal, connective, relevant and ultimately enjoyable learning takes place. The standards by which the success of arts education is judged are directly affected and may require substantial readjustment in terms of aesthetics. Educators need to realise that it is not what a performance looks or sounds like to them that is important, but what the performance feels like to learners. That is how the success of the learning process in *ngoma* is measured. Effectively implemented, the notion of arts education as *ngoma* in schools may, and I believe will, move us in a direction presently unexplored, as we link the wisdom of the past to modern modes of expression and to the wider world.

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8.0 ADDENDA

8.1 EVENTS IN THE OKAVANGO REGION 1993

1. Gciriku Traditional Festival
   Approximate date = June/ July (Yearly)
   Venue = Ndiyona Community Centre
   Contact Person = Martin Kanyondi Tel. 8112

2. Cultural Festival
   Approximate date = August/ September
   Venue = Ekongoro (Rundu)
   Contact Person = Gelah Katangah Tel. 335/826

3. Kafuko Culture Groups
   Type of event = Traditional Dance (harvest)
   Approximate date = 30 July 1991
   Venue = Divundu
   Contact Person = John K. Thimbunga Tel. 6103

4. Kayira-yira Culture Groups
   Type of event = Traditional Dance
   Approximate date = 13/14 August 1993
   Venue = Kayira-yira
   Contact Person = Kangowa Gabriël Tel. 33

5. Mutjokotjo Culture Groups (Kwengali ?)
   Type of event = Traditional Dance
   Approximate date = 13/14 August 1993
   Venue = Kapako
   Contact Person = Kavara Stanislaus Tel. 1402

6. Kalyangu Culture Groups
   Type of event = Traditional Dance
   Approximate date = 18 September
   Venue = Nyangana
   Contact Person = Dikuua Edmund Tel. 8212

7. Tsumkwe Culture Festival
   Approximate Date = October 1993
   Venue = Tsumkwe
   Contact Person = Principal

8.2 TRANSCRIPTION OF CONVERSATION WITH DOMINIC LUNENGE

DATE: 11 MAY 1995
AT: UNAM MUSIC & DANCE DEPARTMENT
RECORDED BY M E MANS

TOPIC - A CAPRIVIAN (VALOZI) HEALING CEREMONY
(Most of the supportive "yes" comments and ums and ahs have been left out, except where it appears that they indicate uncertainty as to terms)
M: Dominic, can you tell me whether... the only Caprivian dances that I have seen or had anything to do with have been nyakasanga, and simbayoka, siyamboka and a healing dance , uh, at night. What other dances would you say are typical of the Caprivi region?
D: The dances which are typical of the Caprivi region are the, the healing dance which is done by the African doctor and thereafter the simbayoka dance - is mostly typically Caprivian. This is special, used for the initiation ceremony, see when the ladies are now matured and from there... , because the culture in the Caprivi is a _Lozi culture, so it is most times to the other side, also to the western Zambia, which is the other -Lozi are staying there, like the siyamboka, but it is not so very much common. But it is most common to the other, (repetitions and stutters) next to, from the other border ....
M: (interjects) Yes, the socalled Barotseland.
D: Yes, Baloziland.
M: Um, when you say healing, a healing dance, isn't that nyakasanga anyway? Or is nyakasanga a dance by a healer, or not?
D: Nyakasanga is a healing dance, because you would find that the, um, the African doctor... because what happens in Africa you see, the doctor would be doing the performing, the African doctor the performing part, and then the healing part, and then the divining part. So nyakasanga is also the healing, the healing dance, because it is also one like, uh, like advertisement, so that people they come together, those who are sick. So if it is happening in the vicinity, then all the neighbour villages, they have to come together. Then those people they are assisting the, um, in the, in the dance, and also clapping hands, and also some playing drums. And also, like sometimes people are sick, they come there for divining and also looking for, ... for medicine to the African doctor heal them.
So it is a big thing, so they come together. So once the party will be held, to keep those people. Because you see... you're going to have to keep those people together. Now everybody is busy ... that the men will be sitting around the fire there, then the women will be helping very much in the singing, and some very young ladies dancing with the African doctor. And then at, sort of the young guys, will be helping very much at the drums. Because they change, because it .. (unclear) .. on for the whole night .
M: OK, so.. so a lot of young men know the drumming patterns?
D: Ja, there are a lot of young men they know the drumming patterns, because what happens, they find maybe, before it was every village they would have some drums. So, when the people are together, they would be playing the drums ... so they're playing drums everytime ... so everytime they would be specializing, in the evening, or ... specially in the evening. Because you would find the young guys, the young people, come together ..(unclear).., before it was, the ...which is now... places like ....(unclear)..so they would come together and they would play. Because you see the .., then the young ladies, they are mostly singers and dancers. So they, then the young men, they are mostly the musicians, so everybody come to participate in the musicians playing drums and so forth. So it is staying .. uh ..specially when you're starting like .. learning on.. the.. something like ... on this big plate ... I remember when I was still young that I would learn there.. and some others things we have we carry water. I should lend there something also called the drums.

M: I see, so, so any kind of an implement that would make a nice sound, you can practice on..?
D: (agrees) You can practice on.
M: And.. ah.. young boys, do they choose which drum they want to play? or do you start with one and work your way through to the father drum, or ... or do you decide which one you want to learn, or ...
D: It's a ... people, they do decide which one they want to do. It's like, mostly you would find, mostly like people they will start with the sikumwa, because the sikumwa is the simplest playing, then after that, someone would come down to this kandili..., yes, and then from there, once you have known these two drums, then I will go the the father drum... yes.
M: And..ah.. the African doctor, is it always a man, or not?
D: No, not always a man. It is both, both sexes.
M: Because I have been to a healing one night that was done by a woman, but they said she was not so good yet, and ... she would start and do the divining, and then if the problem was not solved by the next day, then the big healer would come... So I wasn't sure ..so if she dances .. no, she didn't actually dance, what I saw. But if she does, would she also do..would it also be nyakasanga, or...?
D: Well you see, there are many dances like in the divining, you would find the nyakasanga, there's the liyala, there's the kayowe...
M: Give me all those names,.. nyakasanga, and then.. ah..can you spell the second one?
D: Ja. L i y a l a
M: (repeats for correction)
D: Then the other dance is a kayowe
M: (repeats) Kayo.. with a Y?
D: Eeh, Y O
M: (repeats)
D: W e
M: (repeats) . Uhuh?
D: So, this is the, uh, the three dances of the , the African doctor. So what happens is the every doctor is having the speciality dance, which is he, or she, who is good into that. Ja.
M: I see. OK. So, if, if a doctor is good at liyala, then that would be the one that this doctor mostly does.
D: Ja, because you see, you would find that, mostly the dance, mostly that.. what they do, those people is, you find like in the evening, some other people come there, because they are ... (blank space on tape) a third person who is doing like him, which we call it, we call him in our language is sish(i)ambi. Is called sish(i)ambi. (written as pronounced)
M: And is that like an assistant?
D: Ja that is the assistant.
M: And how do you spell sish(i)ambi?
D: It's s i ... s h a ... m b ... it's m b i
M: (repeats the word as spelt) sishambi
D: You see, now the sishambi will .. mostly will do the ... the performing, during, in the evening. Ja, you see, while the people, they are still coming...so that, everybody ...because you see, then it is because of that lot of noise and the drums, so all the neighbours, people who are ready, then they have to come quickly that they .. the ceremony is nearby. So he will perform almost, maybe even until something like ten-to-eleven. Then the African doctor is still sleeping, then once he comes in - you see then he will come in, then the mat is put there, then he sits down. The sishambi is still performing. Then after that he lies down, he puts on the sishambi (skirt), because you see the sishambi (assistant) is having his own costume, then the African doctor will put on the costume, then after that, the sishambi now have to stop. Now the African doctor now will come in, then before he comes in then there will be some announcement, then he's talking to people - that he, um, that like .."Dominic Lunenge, you have called me to see what is the problem which is there. So what I need is cooperation, with you people, and I'll donate someone who will be acting as a mediator which is a pex? person who is talking with the African doctor, who is answering all the questions concerning when now he is doing now the divining - the divining now. It'll be a particular

one person who is someone who is sick and he... who will give the orders that he don't care if there are some witches around - they can try do their best. But he.. him, because at the top, you see now when they come to witch him. You see, because you would find like the ... something like they use...like um ... something like a cooking pot ...something that they will tap, because you see like we eat this food, which is this, what do we call it in English...um... you see the stamping stick, then there is the ....
M: Oh yes, yes, the..um... mortar.
D: Yes the mortar. So what happens is ... that doctor will turn that mortar, so once he is turning, he's turning the.. um...he's turning now the senses of the witches. He 's put this upside down.
M: Oh I see, yes...
D:So that they can't witch him - everything will be turning in the ..um.. in ... that turning stick...will turn it, will put it all on , do everything. So after the announcement and everything, then he says, then the spokesperson say
"OK, whatever ... we should do what we called to you here. We are ready, if there is a problem, tomorrow morning we are going to give you a cow. It is ready there. So what we need you to tell us is who is witching ...uh... X, who is sick."
Then he also announces that all the people who are having some problems they are ready to come, they will be coming one by one, to bring money, and then he will do that divining. And he also announce thet... the very strong African doctor will announce that people who are having problems, they may hear their names being called in. So if they are called in, they should come. Then after the announcements, now he starts. Then he .... then he will start now the performing, and then starting from most of the ... and then the (unknown) will be now in the song. Because the songs there, the songs which he is going to sing, is the songs concerning the divining. Concerning that person who is sick and also what concerning about those people who have come, concerning the village itself - the life, health of the people who are living there, concerning the strong witches in the arounded areas, that particular area. So that those are the songs will be best there - those will be the themes of the African doctor.
M: Yes, I see.
D: Then, after that...um... then there will be...then after will be now stage by stages - things that he will speak like small things, small things, start dividing like those people that have come, to others who are having small things with sickness, to start with the ... then he also goes with the ... but the performing part, he is doing it, but not so very strong.
M: Oh, he still holds back ..?
D: Ja, holds back. Now he's got there, 'cause when it's now after midnight, something like now, people they are tired, now they need to sleep.It is now there, that the African doctor now will performing more - that is the performing part now - to keep the people that they should not go to sleep. (Pause for emphasis) He's going now to perform more, and now the divining, the divining now, now he's doing more. To keep the people not to go to sleep. And you see, people they will be there - one, they want to watch the performance; second, they want to hear everything, because now, he's going now to do everything. Then they will do it now, now it's perform perform well... now it's almost now... twelve. Now he's now done, eveything up to the story-line is already there given all in the divining, all the people have danced, now what is that... if that someone is being witched....now easy to (a)..point the particular person who is witching the sick person.
So... perform, perform now, it's now, like now already sunrise, something like, maybe like eight, nine ...eh... the spokesperson will be something like now ... how do you call it in English?
Uh...to be like now, you ..uh....we call it <u>bedje</u>.
M: Ibedje?
D: <u>Bedje</u>
M: Oh, just <u>bedje</u>.
D: Ja, <u>bedje</u>.
M: B e d j e?
D: Yes, ja

M: Or B e d y e? Be .. with a j..
D: With a j.
It's now like... now... it... those people, the spokesperson say " The cow is ready". He will send the young men, then they will bring the cow. And then they can make cord somewhere there and tie it - there. And say you see "The cow is there, now we want you now to point the witch." You see, now that... the African doctor now have to make a sign, whether if he dies or what.
M: I see, and that... making that sign, is that bedje?
D: Ja, you see, that bedje.Because now, those people who have called the African doctor, they say " We will want to see the witch - here is your cow. So you should show us, the one who is witching the X who is sick."
Then the African doctor see, then it ..... during the .. the... that ... during when he is performing, when he is doing the divining, he's ..uh.. now he start the...the.. story-line. He have seen who is uh... who is witching, and the uh .. power that uh..that...the witch .. will be more trouble. And he will be called inside in the, uh... because people they are just around, he will be called inside. Then he is questioned now. Because they start, because he can stand there so long, called inside. Then he now start now the...the background of that... of that witch. How and then he will start now the question, the... the... starting with the person who got the medicine, to give hime the...the witch. Now he starting asking the people even around: "You didn't saw ..uh..a doctor ...uh... a African doctor called so-so, on this year." Then all the people who saw that, no they will answer: "No, we saw him." Ja. "While this person is sick?" "Ah, we don't think so." Then ... uh ...while this ... then if he took the medicine maybe somewhere maybe at the Johannesburg or where, then they will give the story-line - up to everything - until that... until that person ...once he have finished the ...the history, why he took all the.. all those witches, now we have come now to the...now to the person who is sick. When he started to becoming sick, what happened, then if the person can't talk that he's just laying there in the...in the house, then there are some people who um...who are looking after, who know what happened. You see, then the African doctor then will be questioning: "You didn't see something like this?" "No" Something like this when it happened that sometimes they can refuse, but you try other way to convince them.
So if you think the story-line is there to those people who are taking care of the sick, and the story-line to the...to the witches, until when they will meet.
M: Ah!
D: So, so when it is now sunrise, the people now they know. The (shishi) maybe the other person they were witching this one. So it...now...it now...when point know the particular person is this one. Sometimes you will notice, you'll see, because you will also see..if the stress is too tense that it will bring problem ... in the village. Then he will not point.
M: I see.
D: Ja, if ...if he sees, then he will just going to say "but I know" if he will just put it in the other way... in the indirect way.
M: I see. To let the person know he knows, but without mentioning...
D: Yes, he put it in the indirect way, and people they will... they will able the one who is witching is this one - this is the witch.
M: I see.
D: Ja. And if it is so strong then he can explain the people he is witching....the ...the..the one who passed away... then they see...when you see...when they also doing history, then he will call people that person killed, in his lifetime, or a lifetime poeple passed. So everything now will be revealed. And that witch, now will be everything just, everything will be open. then then once now they are through, with the divining and performing, now there...now the people, who have called the African doctor, now they...now they will do ... now they ask now the healing. Should that African doctor able to heal, or what. Then if he can, then he can say or try. If he can't do it, then he will say, maybe train other people to do the healing, or point to the other African doctor he knows, that this... maybe.. doctor so-so..he can try. Now if he can, he will say "No, I will try." Then they are now they are going now to negotiate when everything is

over. Now, they are going now to negotiate about the...the healing and so forth. That is the African doctor who goes mostly the now the divining and so forth. Then there are some other African doctors who mostly go for healing and performing. They are not good in the divining.
M: Yes, yes.
D: Mostly like the other sickness...
M: So they specialize.
D: Ja, they are specialized.
M: Ja.
D: Ja, then those will just do performing and healing, so in divining they are not strong.
M: Yes, because that takes a special kind of a person.
D: A special kind of a person, and he really have to go to ... because it is something like school.
M: Mmmm, yes, to learn how to do it..
D: To learn how to do it, and really how to go to the stronghold of medicine.
M: Yes. Also I think you need a very special kind of memory and thinking ability, to bring this whole history out, and to bring these lines together. That takes a .... that also takes a very clever person.
D: Yes, because you see...
M: But I think healers... healers need to be people with a .. with special hands.. in a way ... or don't you think? They need to have the heart ..
D: Yes
M: ..to .. to heal
D: Ja, you see... because you see it depends with the African doctor, because you find that those who divine most, they don't touch some... those people who are sick.
M: Yes, yes I can imagine that
D: Ja, but you find that people who are doing the healing is his assistants... assistants - the people who know just ..him just give them directions people just take this type of tree, the root of this, this, this,... and then those people do it
M: Uh-huh, he wouldn't do it himself. Yes, because probably he can also pick up spirits if he touches people.
D: Yes..
M: Or.. or I don't know, lose some of his power or...or what..
D: What happens, you see, because the African doctor, once he is in that process, he is not allowed to... because those people they do eat the human flesh...If that African doctor would eat the human flesh, then he can't touch a sick person.
M: I see...
D: Once he touches that sick person have to die
M: I see... huh!
D: So he...he also eat the flesh which these people the witches cook, then he don't sick people, he's only...um...the assistant.
M: And now to find human flesh to eat, would he...would he..uh..would that be witches that he is maybe...
D: Ja, witches.. witches,,, because it is something which is done in the darkness, that we don't know what's going on...
M: And Dominic, do you...a lot of people that I've spoken to in.. um...well - lot of people ... some people that I've spoken to in Caprivi, it seems some of the younger people say no...they don't believe in the powers of the African doctors anymore, they go to church. And...uh... they don't believe this, they believe in Western doctors. Other people say, well I go to church, but I also think the African doctor is also powerful, I go to him too. Um... what... what do you think is the general feeling about..about traditional doctors?
D; Um...because these things goes to some beliefs... and the.. and if the person believes in the Western, then he will not believe in the African...the other thing which he have seen is the African. And, brought up in that society, there's no other way you can neglect the African doctor. Because it is our life... it's part and

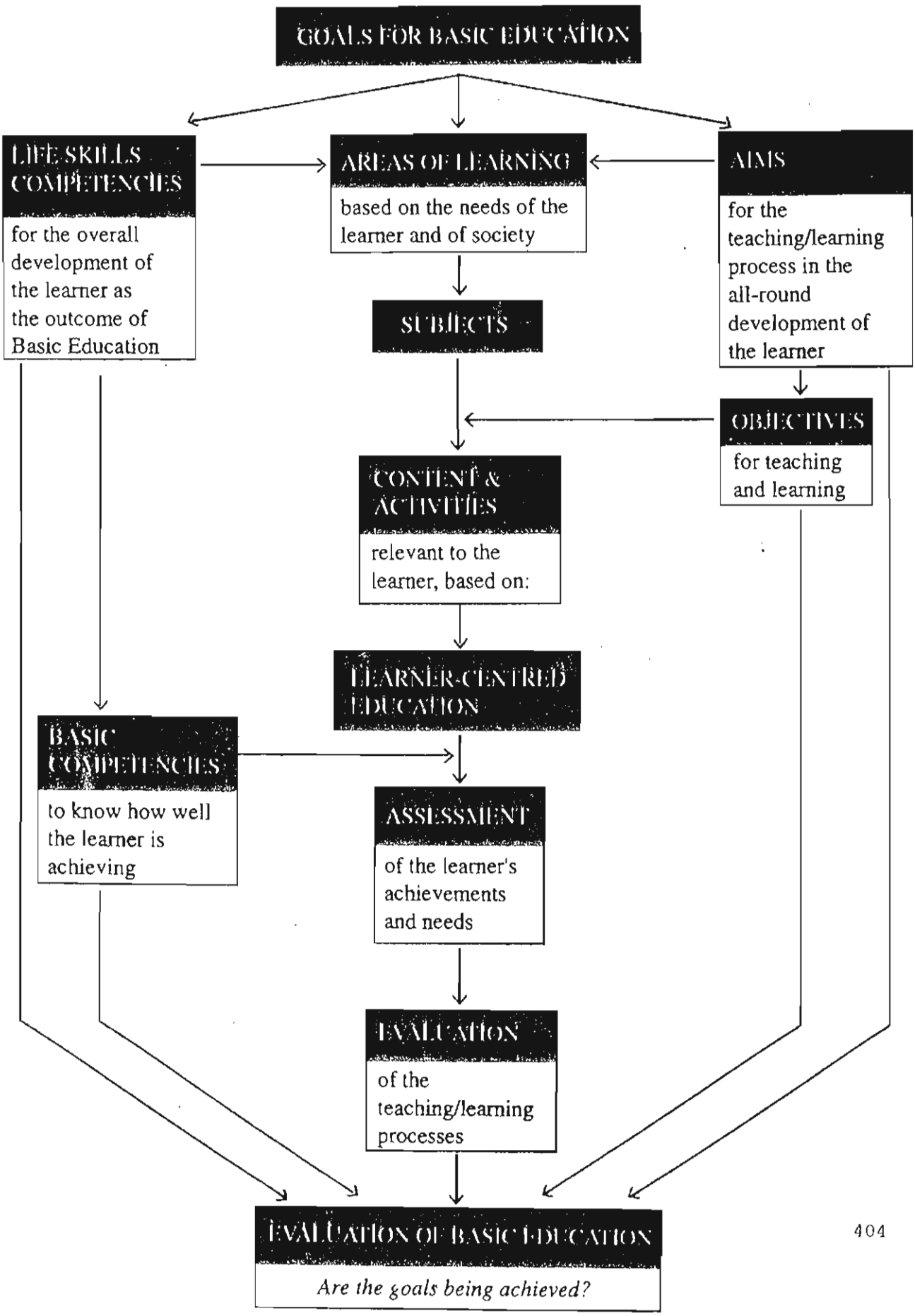
parcel of the spirit of those people. And where we are living is... those people witches they are there. They are living, they are living human beings. And it does not mean if we are Christians they will stop witching us.
M: Quite. Yes. No I can understand that. I think I have a witch living next door to me to.
(Both laugh)
D: Which means we have to take both of them...
M: Yes.
D: You see, the African doctor .... I can go to the modern doctor, I am having a sickness ...but I can't get anything, and you say "I am not healed", so what should I do? I should go to the other doctor.
M: Yes. When...there're many things that are spiritual sicknesses.
D: Yes.
M: You can't take pills for them.
D: You find because in the other countries like the independent African countries you would find at the hospitals - you would find even African doctors they are there. Usually if the disease can't be healed in this modern doctor, they will transfer the disease into the African doctor (sic).
M: I see.
D: They are also... they are also health workers.
M: That makes sense. Although at a hospital, can they work so well? Because isn't it so that it's also the power of the people there, who're singing, and the drums, and.. and all that, that help the healer to do his work? If he's at a hospital and... can he .. can he work so well?
D: He can try to work so well, but... he is more powerful at the village. More powerful at the village, because you would find everybody is involved.....everybody is involved, and...and then he would do his divining. Because some other treating's easier to treat secretly. Because you see, he can be anywhere, but concerning like healing... now it's... some other people they do not see that African doctor. Because what happens is what the person who is witching you knows the... the.. you are here, then he will go to talk, then they will negotiate.
M: I see, yes, yes, yes, of course.
D: They go back there, then they negotiate "no this no that.."
M: I'll pay you more...?
D: I'll pay you more. Like this, like this.
M: Mmmm.
This friend of mine who's working among the Ju/hoansi people at Tsumkwe, the Saan people, they also have their healings, but they have it even when somebody is not sick. But they have it in..um..to prevent illness and to prevent bad spirits from entering the community. So apparently they do this very regularly, but with them it seems that any of the men can be the healer. They don't take special training. So they sing certain music, and they clap, and then the men go into trance. And then, by the sweat that they work up, because they go very tight, and by pulling their whole bodies tight they send themselves into trance - with the singing. And.. um... then when they start shaking and sweating and so on, then they use the sweat to touch people. And that for them again keeps the community healthy. But sometimes the bad spirits also come there and then they must must now really have a... what they say a curing - healing, you know. But otherwise they have this... which is also more like a divining in a sense. But for them it's preventitive medicine. Would you say that in the Caprivi among the Valozi there's also preventitive healings, or...?
D; Yeah, there's the preventitive healings. What happens to prevent disease is.. you go to the African doctor and you tell no, I want to prevent that they not witch me. Then what happens, then he'll give you... sometimes they use their needle. They call it... they call it... in Silozi they call it kufundela.
M: Kufundela
D: Ja, kufundela. it's ...kufundela is something like...if this is a person, so you don't like even if this is your house, you are going out, so you don't like anybody to go in. So the person who will go in will find some problem. So you will take with your feet, then you will make like, something like this..(shows circle).. then he will close.

M: I see..?
D: Ja. So this something, the kufundela.
M: That circle?
D: Yes, so make that circle, you are in it, so anything which goes here it will find some problem - which is going into the circle. So they are doing the kufundela. Sometimes they will take the needle - the African doctor will take the needle, or anything - then he will put round the chest. Then after putting around the chest, then he will take some medicine, then he put around... in the ...
M: Yes... in the little holes?
D: In that holes.So what happens, then he can use a wrapping, just putting around the chest, then he put some medicine. So what happens if you are putting that prevention medicine - if someone is witching you, if he's so strong, you can dream that you are fighting that person - that witch. So what happens the following morning, because he witched you some, you, you're supposed to be sick. Then he will be sick. Because you see, when you are dreaming, then if you.. because you are dreaming fighting...because you can be also that he felt that you are strong.
M; I see, yes, OK.
D: So because you see, you are strong than what he witched you, he can talk to you. The it came back to him. For him to be healed he will need you to come and be present to him. Then the thing will be over. So if you don't come, then he have to die. Or go and look for some other people, some African doctor to heal him.
Some ...the way again.. this preventing for healing..this is, you are prevented like that. So when you are being witched, you will find like here the...here where the thing is, you will feel like... what is it.... what do you call it in English....it's ..... you will find that like here around in that cloth that you are feeling pain and you are ...um... it's...the pain and the itching.
M: Inflamed? It's like feeling hot?
D; Ja like heating (sic)
M; Hurting...ah-ha, ok..
D: Ja, hurting. Then you going out, you go around, somebody witched you, then it can't go through.
M: I see.
D: Ja.
M: Yes.
D: So that are the other prevention which I know. Helpi preventing the death. Sometimes that person will not sick, he will just feel the heating and the itching. Because that itch scratch, it will become protection.
M: I see. You say itching actually..? You want to scratch?
D: Yes, yes, yes. You feel around the... where they put the medicine. Because that is itching, then you realize, oh, there is some witching, and you won't catch it.
M: Won't it itch anyway if it is healing? I mean, say, if I don't know what I'm doing, and I make a lot of little pinpricks with a needle .... an when it heals, won't it itch anyway?
D: It can itch anyway, but its also like, that business, it always is heating when there is witching.The itch is itching because of the substance strength, and this itching is fighting that thing out. That you know, it can't go into this body.
M: I see, yes.
D: And some other prevention, the prevention which can work, when it arises, so that....some other people they call it.... they call it.... that type of .... I forget it but I will remember it..... so what they are doing, that person will take that medicine and will put it there, so once he is dead, that medicine going to work.
M: Oh!
D: Yes. But now, the people they come, they think he is dead, that medicine is going to work. What will happen is, the person who witched you, have to die soon. The witch have to die.
M: I see.
D: .....

M: So, just to make sure I understand that rightly, you get a medicine. Umm, and that will cause the witch to die....
D: What happens is, the fear arises. You go to the African doctor and you say "I want some prevention." And he say "OK". And he will say "Prevent that everybody?" and you will say "No, everybody who is going to witch me - he have to die too."
M: I see.
D: Then the African doctor, he will took the razor and he will put the medicine. And what happens, once now you are dead, then the ghost, then they will come and they will trouble the witch.
M: I see. Now I understand.
D: The medicine which attack the witch, they call them muryanavo.
M; Muryanavo - rya with a y?
D: Yes. A b
M: A b, oh, muryanabo.
D: So, if the medicine is so strong, you find the man, after the witch is dead, you find the people involved, because the other witches have to die, and sometimes the even family of the witch die.
M: Hm! Sjoe.
D: They start dying, so when they go to some African doctor he will come and close them. After that man, when he comes to those people, when the ghost comes then to those people.
M: Sjoe, so that's a very serious kind of prevention.
D: Yes, that is very serious. In fact there is some other serious,...what is the name, they call that name.... a type of prevention.... that is not found very much commonly. But just in one kind of doctor, African doctor. That thing is whilst he dies, if there is some person who is going to witch him, then what happens is, if there no doctor....
M: Yes, many people will die.
D: Many people will die, cattle will die, chickens, even furnitures they break. So the whole village, there is nothing going to be left there. So they are very serious preventions.
M: Yes, and very powerful people.
D: Very powerful people.

Dominic demonstrates drumming patterns for sikumwa and kandili drums.
D: Drums, they are in categories. You find the drum which is a war drum. You can only hit it when there is war. Only! And the drum, you only hit it when the chief has passed away.
M: And that's a different drum to the war drum?
D: Yes. Different. And you will find, there are some drums for the chief, which you can't find in the village. This is when the chief is walking, because its so like .. when he goes to visit, then he have to walk a distance.
M: I see.
D: Then they have to play that music for him. This type of drums. Then they have to play, they put it, (demonstrates) they play two, I just forget the name...
M: I see, so it hangs in front of you around the waist., so you play two sides.
D: And you play two sides.
M: So it's got a skin on both sides?
D: Ja. its got a skin on both sides. So those are the types of drums for the chief
.....
Drums also help to call the spirits. And they also help to someone who is lost in the forest. Then in the night, the evening, and in the morning at three o' clock, then they will drum. Then if they are near, then they will hear, then they will go this way. So the drums more multi use for the African.

8.3 A MAP OF THE CURRICULUM BY ROGER AVENSTRUP



8.4 AN EXTRACT FROM THE SYLLABUS FOR ARTS CORE, UPPER PRIMARY LEVEL, GRADES 5 - 7 MINISTRY OF BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE, NAMIBIA.

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

UPPER PRIMARY PHASE

ARTS SYLLABUS

GRADES 5 - 7

GRADE 5 - 1997
GRADE 6 - 1998
GRADE 7 - 1999

5. LEARNING CONTENT

DOMAINS	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	BASIC COMPETENCIES
	Learners will:	**Learners should be able to:**
Grade 5 **EXPLORING**	Investigate and explore moods and dynamics in voice tone	• use degrees of loudness and softness and balance in song
	Explore body language	• demonstrate/mime in groups and/or individually, various typical ways in which the body expresses meanings
	Discover directions in space through body movement	• demonstrate changes in direction and changes in tempo through rhythmic movement patterns including diagonals
	Explore shapes and patterns in the environment	• experiment in a structured way with cover patterns and border patterns • investigate and discover pattern relationships and meaning in the environment
	Explore colours	• explore tints and shades, contrasting and complementary colours, warm and cold colours
Grade 6 **EXPLORING**	Investigate and explore moods and dynamics in voice tone	• experiment through performance with vocal colour and dynamics, and discover how they affect the interpretation of songs
	Explore expressions and body language	• mime/demonstrate mannerisms of famous people
	Explore force and time in body movements	• demonstrate difference between heavy and light movements, sustained and sudden movements
	Explore shapes and patterns in the environment	• experiment in a structured way with unit patterns, e.g. Gothic or rose window patterns
	Explore aspects of design	• experiment with, and demonstrate options in terms of focal point in drawings or pictures
	Explore colours	• discover and differentiate between values and tones

Grade 7 **EXPLORING**	Explore force, time, flow and space in body movements	• demonstrate simple combinations, e.g. heavy-sustained, heavy-sudden, light-sustained, light-sudden, smooth, jerky, free, high, low, etc.
	Explore aspects of design	• experiment, in a structured way, with perspective in drawings
	Explore sound qualities	• discover timbre (tone colour) by experimenting with sounds of different instruments and their combinations
Grade 5 **MAKING/PERFORMANCE**	Sing with others, a varied repertoire	• demonstrate through performance, the ability to sing with correct pitch, rhythm and tempo, and appropriate breath control • refine their vocal sound and tone colours according to the requirements of the music • perform songs with appropriate body movements • perform songs with rhythmic clapping in more complex combined patterns • perform songs with simple percussion (melodic and non-melodic instruments) • perform songs in unison and two or three parts in their own and other languages • perform songs from the past as well as the present
	Learn and perform dance-songs from a variety of cultures	• perform alone or with others (as is appropriate) dance-songs learnt from the teacher, from an expert in the community, from a video, or from a class-mate • discuss and recreate the performance context so that it approximates the original context, meaning and values

	Imitate and characterize, alone or in groups	• demonstrate imitation by performing progressively more challenging mirror activities accurately • perform characterizations of people and animals which depict not only external but internal (character) aspects and stylizations
	Act or dramatize	• play-act characters from appropriate stories • assume roles that exhibit an appropriate level of concentration
	Use his/her body with increasing skill	• demonstrate progressive dancing skill in terms maintaining tempo and coordination • combine locomotor and axial movements into short dance sequences • demonstrate contrasting states: tension and relaxation of whole body or parts (arms, legs, hands, feet, neck, face) • demonstrate contrasting states of stillness and movement, fast and slow movements, heavy and light movements, high and low movements
	Draw, print, paint	• combine techniques of drawing, printing and pasting and make, complete and present a group project • use with increasing skill different drawing and painting materials
	Play musical instruments	• perform with progressive skill and accuracy simple instrumental works, e.g. in percussion • accompany songs and dances with ostinato or more extended instrumental patterns • demonstrate progressive ability to perform with others with accuracy and sensitivity

Grade 6 **MAKING/PERFORMING**	Sing a varied repertoire	• demonstrate increasing control in terms of pitch, voice quality, rhythmic accuracy, tempo, breath control and expression • perform progressively more challenging song/dances • perform songs with progressively more challenging accompaniments - clapping and simple instruments - from different Namibian/other cultures
	Perform characterizations	• develop and express characters of selected people by discussion and performance
	Act or dramatize	• portray characters (from the community) and their relationships • maintain a role for a short period of time without losing concentration or the characterization
	Use his/her body with increasing skill	• demonstrate progressive strength and flexibility in terms of body • demonstrate ability to move with increasing speed and agility • translate a simple visual pattern into movement
	Draw, print, paint	• use with increasing skill different drawing an painting materials
	Play musical instruments	• perform with progressive skill and accuracy simple instrumental works • demonstrate progressive ability to perform with other with accuracy and sensitivity

Grade 7 **MAKING/PERFORMING**	Sing a varied repertoire	• demonstrate through performance, the ability to perform increasingly challenging songs, with good control and quality, from an increasingly varied background. This should include call and response, part-singing (up to 4 where boys' voices have deepened) and unison singing, as well as songs for boys' and girls' voices alone.
	Perform characterizations	• develop and perform characters from short stories
	Act or dramatize	• perform roles in simple plays (or parts of plays) in the classroom • maintain an appropriate level of concentration in their role-playing
	Dance to music	• demonstrate through group (or individual) performance, the ability to express the musical content or style in dance movements
	Play musical instruments	• perform with progressive skill and accuracy simple instrumental works • demonstrate progressive ability to perform with other with accuracy and sensitivity
	Draw, print, paint	• use with increasing skill different drawing and painting materials.
Grade 5 **KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING**	Learn a variety of new songs	• demonstrate their knowledge of at least five new songs each year through performance
	Be introduced to basic elements of drama	• demonstrate through performance and discussion, their understanding of the importance of rhythm and timing, voice production, projection and articulation
	Be introduced to dance elements	• attentively observe, discuss and describe their understanding of effort (force), time and space in simple dance movements

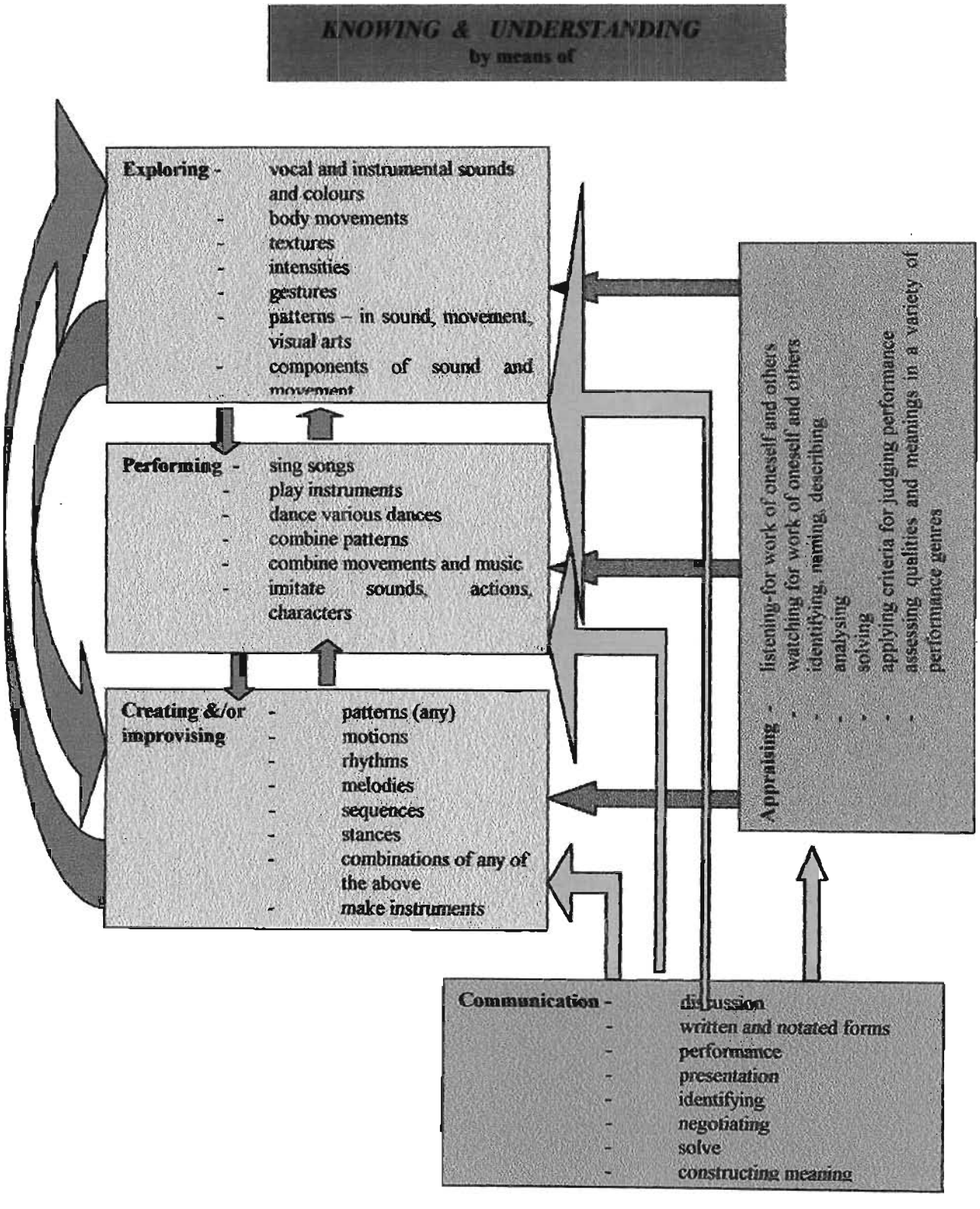
	Memorize movement sequences	• demonstrate increasing ability in memorizing of movement sequences through performance - at least a whole section or unit of music, e.g. complete short song or one verse or section
	Know tints and shades, contrasting and complementary colours, warm and cold colours	• demonstrate knowledge of colours by naming the different complementary colours • demonstrate understanding of colours by mixing to obtain new colours • use their knowledge in two- or three dimensional work
	Know the difference between materials, techniques and processes	• differentiate, know and understand the possibilities and qualities of materials and techniques
	Develop their knowledge about and in the arts by means of directed listening activities	• identify, name and describe qualities in the music they listen to, e.g. tempo, beat, patterns, high-low, instrumental timbres, phrases • demonstrate understanding of the above elements through movements; through drawings or graphic notation; through re-arranging of given information or notation • listen to and recount a short story in their own words, thereby demonstrating their understanding of character, tension, plot development, etc. • recount, repeat and discuss aspects of a play or music video (where possible) • draw, paint, paste impressions of a story or song or dance • talk about their responses and impressions and feelings

	Develop their knowledge in and about the arts by directed appraisals	• listen to, respond to and discuss aspects of music, dance and drama in ceremonies, television programmes, and other recordings • look at, respond to and discuss aspects of pictures and or forms (paintings, advertisements, drawings, sculptures, monuments, etc.)
	Develop their vocabularies in the different arts areas	• know, understand and use appropriately the basic terminology relating to the activities performed. These should include those listed previously, as well as new terms which arise from activities. See list of term in the Annexure.
	Understand the importance of caring for materials and equipment	• demonstrate their understanding by cleaning equipment and handling, sharing and storing it correctly
Grade 5 **CREATING**	Create rhythms and melodies	• complete unfinished rhythmic patterns • complete unfinished melodic patterns • arrange musical patterns, using repetition, variation and contrast
	Create stories	• make up a story with a clear beginning, climax, and unwinding (dénouement) in groups or alone • mime a story
	Improvise dance/movement sequences	• make up and perform, describe or draw a sequence of movements in different directions, force or tempos • arrange given dance movements into new sequences

	Create original pictures	• demonstrate a measure of personal originality in creating pictures expressing their experiences and imagination • begin to identify their own creative style
	Construct, form, shape materials to create original objects	• create, shape, weave and form objects using clay, wire, wool, string, etc. in individual and original ways
	Create a 'production' with others	• improvise, arrange and perform ideas, stories, movements characters, ceremonies, etc. This may include verbal presentation of ideas or an exhibition of works. The ideas should however emanate creatively from the learners
Grade 6 **CREATING**	Create rhythms and melodies	• make up, alone or with others, a tune to fit a short poem or text
	Improvise dance/movement sequences	• make up a series of movements to fit given music
	Create original pictures	• demonstrate a measure of originality in creating pictures expressing their experiences and imagination and beginning to identify their own creative style
	Construct, form, shape materials to create original objects	• create, shape, weave and form objects using clay, wire, wool, string, etc. in individual and original ways
	Create a 'product' with others	• improvise, arrange and perform ideas, stories, movements characters, ceremonies, etc. This may include verbal presentation of ideas or an exhibition of works. The ideas should however emanate creatively from the learners
Grade 7 **CREATING**	Improvise musically	• improvise, vocally on melodic percussion or other instruments, a short melody in any style • improvise a short complementary voice part to a given or known song

	Improvise dance/movement sequences	• improvise a dance based on an idea or story
	Create original pictures	• demonstrate a measure of originality in creating pictures expressing their experiences and imagination • begin to identify their own creative style
	Paste different materials to create a collage	• create original collages by means of mixed media
	Construct original objects	• create objects using various materials and techniques
	Create a 'production'	• use or create a story-line for a short dramatic, musical or dance production
	Create an exhibition	• select a theme and create and exhibit work to illustrate the theme
Grade 5, 6, and 7 **COMMUNICATION AND RESPONDING**	**Throughout the learning activities learners will:** Develop confidence in their own expressive abilities	• perform freely, without undue constraint, in ways indicating individual and communal responses • explain, discuss and defend their two and three-dimensional works • talk about, narrate, express opinions and defend their opinions in discussions on topics relating to arts activities and topics/themes covered
	Communicate with the arts as an international form of human endeavour	• discuss, criticize, evaluate and appreciate their own and others' arts works (at a level commensurate with their developmental level) in: a) a local context (grade 5) b) in a wider context, including other nations (grade 6) c) of a variety of times and places (grades 6 and 7)

8.5 LINKS BETWEEN LEARNING ACTIONS



LINKS BETWEEN LEARNING ACTIONS / PROCESSES

9.0 ORTHOGRAPHY AND GLOSSARY

9.1 NOTES ON ORTHOGRAPHY USED

GENERAL:

In the past decade, along with many political and social changes in Namibia, many orthographical changes have been taking place. Whereas in the past, adventurers, 'discoverers', missionaries, teachers, and almost everybody who wished, decided upon their own versions of transforming Namibia's spoken languages into written forms. In the past decade there has been far more consultation with cultural insiders, mother-tongue-speakers, linguists and scholars in order to try and establish official and accepted written forms of indigenous languages. This process is by no means complete. Dictionaries are being written. The Khoekhoegowab dictionary project of the University of Namibia has been in process for several years, with a special computer programme having been developed to write the voice inflections into the words. There is still much disagreement on factors like the symbols to be used for certain sounds, for example tji, shi, ci, chi, all for the same sound. At present the trend seems to be for mother tongue language committees to select the version they feel most comfortable with.

I shall point out a few general uses here which are inconsistent with practices in other parts of southern Africa.

- Khoe is used rather than Khoi. The reason being pronunciation. The word was originally sounded as two syllables, like kho-we (o as in Eng. fall, we as in Eng. vet). It does not end on an i (or ee) sound.
- Saan instead of San (see notes below). Although there is not agreement on this spelling yet, the proper pronunciation is a two-a sound. This should be written as a, but the symbol is not available on most word processing packages, thus Saan gives a better indication of sound. The spelling San is however still widely used.[1]
- Although Kubik[2] refers to the use of 'tj' as missionary-imposed spelling, Otjiherero-speakers have (in committee) decided that this is the spelling they prefer.[3] In the Caprivi however, an area which has had more contact with Portuguese and English speakers than the central area, the preference is for the use of a c or a ch.

Some general notes follow on the spellings I have used.[4]

1 Personal communications, W. Haacke, African Languages Department, University of Namibia.
2 See Kubik, 1993.
3 Haacke, as above.
4 The Department of African Languages at the University of Namibia have kindly assisted in this task, also Ervast Mtota of NIED.

A BANTU LANGUAGES

Spellings used for Bantu languages derive from official documents. This applies to the following languages:

- The eight groups of Ambo languages i.e. Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Oshikwaludhi, Oshikwambi, Oshinkolonkadhi, Oshimbalantu, Oshieunda, Oshingandjera
- Otjiherero (including -Himba, -Zemba)
- Thimbukushu
- Rukwangali
- Setswana.

Spellings in Silozi, Sambyu, Rugciriku, Sifwe, Yei, Subhia and Ikwahani are used as they appear in sources.

Consonants:

b	in Silozi a b appearing within a word is usually pronouced as a v, as in the word *kulobala*
c	in Rukwangali, Rugciriku, Thimbukushu and Sambyu the c is pronounced with a dental click, as in the name Gciriku
dj	pronounced "j" as in joy, appears in the word *ondjongo* (meaning a dance-game)
tj	in -Herero this appears with a sharper sound than that above, similar to "ch" in chase
ty	in -Kwanyama this is pronounced like the "tj" above, as in *oshitya* (meaning word)
t	in Otjiherero and Otjizemba, for example, in certain words pronounced with tongue between teeth, e.g. *katiti* (meaning small), sometimes written phonetically as t̪
j	in -Tswana is softened like "y" in yes
h	in -Ndonga is pronounced in the throat like "ch" in loch, or "g" in Afrikaans, as in the word *ohango*. According to Norborg (1987) an "h" is also aspirated in -Kwanyama when following other consonants, e.g. mh, nh, ngh, and in -Tswana e.g. kh, ph, th, tlh, tsh
y	in -Herero languages pronounced like the "y" in yes
x	in -Kwanyama pronounced in the throat as in the example above, as in the word *okaxumba* (musical instrument) or the name Ndixulifwa
g	in -Tswana pronounced in the throat as in the example above, as in the soundword *kgo*
g	in other languages softened to sound like an English "g" in go, as in the name Gariseb
ng	generally pronounced as two separate consonants as in Kongo, or *ondjongo*
ng'	in -Lozi pronounced in the throat against the soft palate, as in the word *kang'ombyo* (musical instrument). Also written as ñ or η
th	in -Ndonga and -Mbukushu are pronounced like the English "th" in thing

dh	pronounced "th" with a slight sounding of the d, as in the word *uudhano* (meaning a dance-game)
z	in -Herero pronounced like the English "th" in there, as in the name Zeze, but in -Ndonga, Kwangali and Sambyu pronounced as "s"
sh	in -Kwanyama, -Ndonga, -Mbukushu pronounced like the English "sh", as in the language name Oshindonga
š	in -Tswana pronounced as "sh"
tsw	in -Tswana pronounced as "chua". Compare to old name for Botswana - Bechuanaland

Vowels:

a	pronounced as in the Afrikaans 'kat'
e	pronounced as in English 'get'
i	pronounced as in English 'in'
ô	used in -Tswana, pronounced as a long "o" like in 'ought'
o	similar to the sound above, but shorter, as in the name Oshikoto
u	pronounced as in the English 'full', but a little more forward and closed

B KHOESAAN LANGUAGES

The official title of the language spoken mainly by Damara and Nama people in Namibia is Khoekhoegowab. (decided upon by a committee comprised of mother tongue speakers and linguists). The shorter Khoekhoe is also accepted. Also referred to in various sources as Khoikhoi, Khoisan, Nama-Damara.

The languages spoken by Namibian Saan people are usually included in this group. The accepted term for people sometimes referred to as 'Bushmen' in Namibia is San or Saan, although Biesele refers to a decision taken by the Ju/'hoan People's Organisation who have rejected the word 'San' and seek to ennoble the "previously pejorative term 'Bushman'" (Biesele in Skotnes, 1996: 338). Thus both the term and the pronunciation are uncertain at present. The latter spelling, Saan, although not accepted by all, is used because of pronunciation. The "a" is pronounced as a double vowel, almost like aha. If the single a is used, it should be written as a. Namibian Saan and those living around the borders of Namibia speak language that are usually grouped together as !Kung. The people themselves however prefer their languages to be specified. I therefore usually refer to Ju/'hoansi or ≠Xomani or whichever is appropriate, as terminology often differs.

The languages in this group make extensive used of clicks, ingressant consonant phonemes, bilateral fricative phonemes, post-alveolar affricative phonemes, voiceless post-alveolar affricative phonemes, and ingressive

voiceless consonants. Added to this complexity, is the fact that the languages are tonal, making use of voice inflections to give meaning to the words. Thus the same word, inflected with a different tonality, will gain a different meaning.

While I do not go into detail here, some of the more common sounds and spellings will be explained.

Consonants:

b	usually pronounced as "b" (especially at the end of a word), but occasionally as "w"
c	pronounced palatally as "ch" as in the German 'ich'
dz	pronounced "j" as in the English 'joy'
g	softened as in the English 'go', as in the name Gawanas
w	often closed like a "v" in English 'vice', as in the name Awarab
x	pronounced in the throat like an Afrikaans "g" or English "ch" in 'loch', as in the word *axab*
š	pronounced as "sh"
j	in Ju/'hoan pronounced as a soft sound, like the French 'jeté'. In some older documentation the name of the people is written starting with Z

Vowels:

aa or a	long a, sounding like aha
o	pronounced as a pressed o
a, e, i	as in the Bantu languages above
u	as in the English 'full' or 'rude', as in Urugu'ames

hoan as in Ju/'hoan is pronounced nasally, but the "n" at the end is swallowed, not pronounced

Other signs used:

/	this is used for the dental click, which is produced by placing the tip of the tongue against the back of the upper front teeth and pulling away with a fricative sound
//	lateral click, produced by pressing the front part of the tongue against the alveolar ridge on the roof of the mouth, keeping it there, and pulling away from the lateral (side) teeth with a click
≠	alveolar click, produced by pressing the front part of the tongue against the alveolar ridge and drawing it sharply downwards
!	palatal click, produced by pressing the tip of the tongue against the back alveolar ridge, where the hard area meets the soft palate, and snapping sharply down
~	nasalization of a vowel

' glottal stop

: glottal stop

9.2 GLOSSARY

Vernacular	Language	Description
aksieliedjies	Afrikaans	action songs – group song with movements
//'am-yi	Khoekhoe	wooden concussion plaques for rhythmic accompaniment
/geis	Khoekhoe	"old' dance to welcome hunters, also associated with spiritual healings. Orthography according to Haacke (1996) and P. Namiseb (1997).
/gais	Khoekhoe	clay pot drum (possibly incorrect spelling, as this drum was used in the performance of the above dance. This orthography in article by R-L Hoffmeyr)
/ho tzi	Ju/'hoansi	song after the first two hunts of male and female eland
bedje	Silozi	sign or pointing out of bewitched person
dimbo	Thimbukushu	to sing and to dance
dipera	Thimbukushu	celebratory or festive dance
divare	Thimbukushu	healing dance/ceremony
efundula (leengoma)	Oshikwanyama	traditional 'marriage' or transformation ceremony for girls
egala	Oshindonga	head dress or hat
elumba	Otjizemba	unbraced, scraped, mouth-resonated musical bow (women)
engomba	Rukwangali	snake-eater bird used as symbol in epera
epando	Otjihimba	metal-studded belt for women
epera	Rukwangali	celebratory or festive dance
erembe	Otjihimba	head dress for women
etenda lyaandonga	Oshindonga	men's leaping dance with sticks
hangiza	Otjiherero	to begin dancing
iikungungu	Oshindonga	neighbours help one another, teamwork for tilling the soil
iiyimbo yoohango	Oshindonga	wedding songs
inbura	Otjiherero	to begin singing
kaholoholo	Silozi	unbraced, scraped, mouth-resonated musical bow (men)
kandili	Silozi	'son' drum
kang'ombyo	Silozi	gourd-resonated lamellophone
kayowe	Silozi	third phase of spiritual healing
konsertliedjies	Afrikaans	concert songs – group song with story and movements
kuta	Silozi	Masubhia chief's village
langarm	Afrikaans	long arm – couples dance
lipera		celebratory or festive dance
liyala	Silozi	second phase of spiritual healing – the divination
makisi	Luvale	masquerades
makumbi	Silozi	shoulder actions and fittings
mashamba	Silozi	hip/pelvis actions and skirt
mayimbwe	Sisambyu	healing dance, also refers to hip movements in dance
mugoro	Rukwangali	fibre used in creating hair extensions and braids
mukakashi	Silozi	stick beaten upon outer surface of drum
mukanda	Chokwe	initiation school among Kongwela, Chokwe, etc. people

mukumwelo	Silozi	the 'way' or sound of a particular musical genre
mulupa	Silozi	drums
mulupa o mutuna	Silozi	'father' drum
n!ang tzísì	Ju/'hoansi	girl's menarcheal ceremony
n/om tzísì	Ju/'hoansi	Large repertoire of songs, including those before and after eland and oryx hunts, the first two hunts of male and female eland, lullabies, and individual and group curing songs
namalwa	Silozi	friction drum
Namastap	Afrikaans	style of dance specific to Nama and Damara people
ndingo	Thimbukushu	lamellophone for younger men
ngoma	various/Bantu language	see chapter 3 for discussion – many meanings
nkurugoma	Rukwangali	'deep voice' drum
nkindjo	Rukwangali	'small voice' drum
nkinzo	Rukwangali	'small voice' drum
nonkiti	Rukwangali	leg rattles worn in epera
nyakasanga	Silozi	first phase of spiritual healing
odelela	Oshindonga	traditional wear for -Ndonga women
ohango	Oshindonga	traditional 'marriage' or transformation ceremony for girls
ohiva	Otjiherero	small horn worn around neck
okaana	Oshikwanyama	used for mother-child songs, when child is tired, lullabyes
okambulumbumbwa	Oshikwanyama	braced, gourd-resonated musical bow
okudanauka	Oshikwanyama	playing (like in oudano)
okudhana	Oshikwanyama	dancing / dancers
okuruo	Otjiherero	sacred hearth
okusela	Otjizemba	leaping dance for men, with whooping sounds
okuxua	Oshikwanyama	threshing songs
omahango	Oshikwanyama	millet, part of staple diet
omakamba	Otjihimba	leaping dance for men, with whooping sounds, at boy's birth
omambo wo vakaendu	Otjihimba	women's song texts
omambo wo varumendu	Otjihimba	men's song texts
omakola	Oshikwanyama	scraped idiophone consisting of two large gourds connected by a notched bow
omapiitho	Oshindonga	birthing ceremony and songs
omatemo	Oshikwanyama	iron concussion plaques used as musical instruments
omutjopa	Otjizemba	dance-game
ombanda	Otjihimba	leather skirts
ombuja	Otjihimba	men's hair covering or cap
ombuku	Otjihimba	men's leather apron
omihanga	Oshindonga	beads/ornamentation on traditional red skirt
omburumbumba	Otjizemba	braced, gourd-resonated musical bow
omuhiva	Otjiherero	dance for men
omupembe	Oshingandjera	leaping dance for young men, over heads of others
ondatu	Otjihimba	single plait of Himba youths
ondendele	Otjizemba	braced, mouth-resonated musical bow
ondengura	Otjihimba	heavy circular necklace for women
ondjokonona	Oshikwanyama	oral history
ondjongo	Otjihimba	social dance-game, mixed genders
ondoro	Otjihimba	ululating at girl's birth
ongandeka	Otjihimba	young men's dance, with 'fighting' or slapping actions
ongoma (pl. eengoma)	Oshindonga	drum (s)
ongovela	Oshindonga	songs/poetry for cattle
onyoka	Oshindonga	beads worn around neck
oruheke	Otjihimba	leather apron, back section, worn by women
oruhira	Otjihimba	leather apron worn by small girls, also used for the front

		apron of women
orupera	Otjihimba	leather cloak
oruzo	Otjihimba	taboos related to patri-clan
oshiimbo	Oshikwanyama	(songs for) singing together
oshiimbo sheendina	Oshikwanyama	work songs for hoeing
otjiambura	Otjihimba	back apron for women
otjihumba	Otjihimba	five-stringed pluriarc
otjipirangi	Otjiherero	plank attached to foot for concussion on earth
otjisandji	Otjizemba	gourd-resonated lamellophone
oudano	Oshikwanyama	dance-game for children, adolescents and women
oudano wovamati	Oshikwanyama	dance game for men
outa	Otjihimba	braced, mouth-resonated musical bow
outjina	Otjiherero	women's dance
rupeto	Rukwangali	horns of cattle - symbolism of epera arm movements
shiperu	Rugciriku	celebratory or festive dance
siperu	Sisambyu	celebratory or festive dance - "shoulder dance"
sikumwa	Silozi	'mother' drum
silimba	Silozi	gourd-resonated xylophone
simbayoka	Silozi	girl's coming-out ceremony and dance
singalangala	Silozi	special headdress worn by healer
siyamboka	Silozi	social festive dance at simbayoka
tcòqmà	Ju/'hoansi	boys' initiation ceremony and music/dance
thisandji	Thimbukushu	lamellophone for older men
toyi-toyi		dance-march associated with freedom fighters' processions
tundanda		initiates of mukanda schools
uudhano	Oshindonga	dance-game for children, adolescents and women
yitorondondwa	Rukwangali	harvest of beans or 'eating of new fruits'
yikandiso	Thimbukushu	wooden concussion plaques as a musical instrument