

FORENSIC MUSICOLOGY FOR AFRICAN MUSICOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The paper attempts to use the scientific study of the systematic and historical components of the musical artifacts of a place in realising and illuminating the African musical elements as embedded in the various African musical genres within, among and across the various cultures in Africa, as located in African art music compositions. The main methodologies used for this study were library and field methods. It was discovered that the musical elements embedded in the various musical genre have the potential of projecting African identity through the African art musical practices. In conclusion, the musical elements embedded in the various music types of the various cultures in Africa should be carefully realised and utilised in the African art music composition for African identity.

INTRODUCTION

African identity can be found in the various facets of life among the African people. It is clear that foreign ideologies and concepts have created a lot of influences on the various cultures in Africa. Music, which is an aspect of the various cultures in Africa, had been found to have been influenced by such foreign ideologies and concepts. These influences have generated great impact on the various cultures of the African people causing the culture to be modified. It is the seeming modification process experienced by the culture of the African people and the African identity itself that are the centre of the stage of the maintenance, continuity and survival of the various cultures of the African people. It is the survival of the various cultures of the African people and the experiences of the various peoples from the various cultures in Africa that would exhibit and/or portray the African identity.

The community demands that man does what is acceptable by the people of any particular community, allowing man to be seen as a product of the culture. A people within a particular culture area that make the culture since the activities of people within that particular culture area have the potential to modify the culture. Any culture has various components. The components of the culture differ significantly from other components. These varied components had since caused the culture to be complex. The complexity of each culture to the other is therefore *german* to the relative complexity among the various components of the

culture. Culture is a product of the activity of the people within any particular culture area. The folk music, traditional music types of the various African people have the potential of contributing greatly in the survival, continuity and maintenance of African identity.

Concepts

Forensic musicology can be defined as the scientific study of the systematic and historical components of the musical artifacts of a place. This study considers forensic musicology as a new found discipline as it appears to have been missing in musical studies before now. It is hoped that its integration in the musical studies will expand the scope of scientific cum artistic cum technological knowledge and experiences in musical study.

Views in Forensic Musicology

Characteristically, every study has identity from which similarities and differences may be drawn. For this comparative analysis to be successful every study has peculiarities. Forensic musicology can be identified by the peculiarities discussed under the views of forensic musicology. The views of forensic musicology therefore include nature - nurture essence, historical stance, artistic ideals content ideals, cultural nuances, sociological attributes, and philosophical concern.

Nature - Nurture Essence

The nature factor holds that music is a phenomenon. This classifies music as 'an aspect of creation' that music is seen to have existed independently as component of creation. Music can be located in the cosmos; therefore, the study of the cosmos (universe) should include musical studies. Furthermore, music occupies space, moves, interacts and has rhythm. The impact of the presence of music in the community can be located in the varied behaviour patterns of music performers and composers living in any place at any given time. The nurture factor holds that music is a product of man. Therefore, it is clear that the process of making or creating music is based on experience, knowledge and belief. Considering the nature-nurture factor, music making or musical creation is seen to be influenced by individual's perception. Therefore, definition of music should include individual's perception. Music therefore, can be defined as the aesthetical organization of sound by an individual or a group of individuals based on experience, perception and belief.

Music grows and develops. As it moves, changes occur significantly. As it interacts, music strives, thrives considering its rhythmical melodic and harmonic implication essence. All these activities experienced in music have contributed in making it dynamic. And the degree of dynamic tendency of music at any particular time, and at any particular place equals the degree of change that music had witnessed at various times, at various occasions and at various places.

Historical Evidence in Forensic Musicology

The school of historical factor in forensic musicology emphasizes the clinical study of archival materials of a particular place for forensic musicological study, and the clinical study of archival materials of various places for comparative forensic musicological study. This view also emphasizes the study of musicians of a particular place for forensic musicological study, and the study of musicians of various places for comparative forensic

musicological study. Interviews on community origin, growth and development as well as social interactions, social strata, social organizations and institutions of a particular place and various places are vital musicological fabrics for forensic musicological study.

Philosophical Stance in Forensic Musicology

The philosophical factor in forensic musicology emphasises the study of the distribution of the music of a people as resulting from the migration of a people of a particular culture and the distribution of the music of people resulting from the migration of the people of different culture areas. This view also emphasizes the study similarities and differences of a music type or music types resulting from the behaviours of the individuals within a culture area and various culture areas.

Content Ideals in Forensic Musicology

In leaps or scale wise movement of notes, harmony which as far as the musical fabrics whether closely knitted or loosely linked signifies communal effort in intra and interrelationship. These help in creating sense of unity and diversity as well as conflict and conflict resolution among individuals. These go a long way in generating tolerance and peaceful co-existence among individuals in a community.

Artistic Ideals in Forensic Musicology

The composer/performer captures the musical ingredients as embedded in the various culture areas in Africa and uses same in his musical compositions to depict the particular culture area, from which the musical ingredients are drawn. Critical listening to the music, documenting such music, realising the musical elements of any musical genre of that particular culture area helps in continuity. The origin, existence of the musical types as well as the changes experienced in the music types are based on the level of adaptability of the music, and the acceptability of such music by a people.

Cultural Nuance in Forensic Musicology

Culture, which has been defined as the way of life of a people including the way of dressing, eating and construction of musical instruments are basic ingredients in the cultural life and musical practices in Africa. More precisely put, culture has asserted enormous influence on the various musical fences and practices within and among the various cultures in Africa. Therefore understanding the culture from which a particular musical genre is drawn is very essential.

Sociological Attributes in Forensic Musicology

Individual lives, community involvement among individuals in social strata, group differences and similarities with the community assert a lot of impact on the musical practices within culture and among cultures significantly. The impact of interaction among groups cannot be overemphasized since this helps in no small way in enhancing the performance practices among the various groups.

Philosophical Concern in Forensic Musicology

The concepts of the musicality of the various music types among and within cultures in Africa differ in various ways. The differences appear to have resulted in the nature of musical format among and within cultures in Africa. Despite, the differences in the various music types among and within cultures in Africa the standard at which any music type within a particular culture and among the various cultures can be identified. This standard continues to thrive relatively. Hence African musical genres can easily be noticed significantly.

Clinical Method of Realising African Identity for the African Art Music Composition

- Collation of the various indigenous African music;
- Critical listening to the African indigenous music; Transcribing the various indigenous African music;
- Studying the structural, textural and the textural components of the various indigenous African music;
- Analysing the structural textural and the textural components of the various indigenous African music;
- Applying the musical ingredients in the various indigenous African music into the African art music composition;
- Learning to play in the African indigenous musical ensembles. Practically performing African musical instruments in the African indigenous musical ensembles is necessary. This active participation is hoped to equip the music composer 'with the artistic methods of assembling the rhythmic patterns, melodic contour, harmonic organization, textural concepts, forms and the textual arrangement available in the indigenous African musical ensembles, which will be utilized in realizing the authentic indigenous African art music composition that will depict a true African identity;
- Documenting the various musical types in Africa for future use;
- Retrieving the various musical types in Africa for study and learning.

The Core Challenge

In realizing the African identity in the African art music composition, the core challenge for standard and value in African art music composition as opined by Udofia (2007) appear vital. The challenge involves the following:

- Unconscious adherence to African musical ingredients, where the composer unconsciously assembles his or her compositional ingredients such as African tunes, harmony and why thus;
- Realising and usage of the African compositional devices and techniques;
- Consideration of the African music performance advices and techniques;
- Conceptualization and realization of the textual, textural, structural and contextual characteristics of traditional (local) African music;
- Clinical examination and utilization of the functionality of African musical instrument;
- Explicit understanding, analysis and usage of African dance rhythms in the African art music composition;

- Audience participation in African art music composition; and
- Inclusion and implementation of African musical studies in the curriculum of Schools in Africa (Udofia, 2007).
- In addition to the above statements, the core challenge evolves for standard and value of African art music composition in realizing the African identity. Therefore, African music methods should also be included and implemented in the music curriculum of schools in Africa.

Individual's Perception and African Art Music Composition

The concept of perception is extremely important in understanding human behaviour. A key feature of every human being is his/her unique way of looking at things, based on their physical abilities in their intelligence and personal repertoire of values and attitudes. It is not so much what people see happening around them that is important, but rather, what they think they see happening. In other words, it is how people interpret the event going on around them that is important. They may interpret things quite wrongly according to an objective standpoint, but their reactions have to be dealt with as they are. It is useless, for example, if managers say that employees should not overreact. When employees are angry about some apparently reasonable and logical change in procedures, what the managers have to address is the feeling of the employees as well as their possible misunderstanding of the new situation. Thus the individuals we are dealing with at work operate at the feeling level as well as at rational and action levels. People feel, think and do. Perception can be defined as: 'the process of organizing, interpreting and integrating external stimuli received through the senses.' It involves the individual's mental process used in identifying and subjectively interpreting objectives, concepts and behaviours. Thus, the concept of perception appears to encapsulate a mental or cognitive activity that receives, process and interprets (rightly or wrongly) the host of external stimuli that impinge on individuals' lives.

This process usually takes place instantly - we see something and jump to same immediate conclusions about it. Phrases such as 'first impressions are often misleading! Do not jump to conclusion! This statement suggests that what we 'see' (or more correctly what we understand to have seen) is often not the truth, not the reality before us. In other words, it is not so much a question of misunderstanding reality, but merely seeing a different truth in it! So, for example, man looks out over the countryside towards the sunset, and says 'just look at that view!', and his companion says: 'Yes, it's amazing how dark it gets in the early evening at this time of the year!' Or, take two people listening to a brass band playing in the park, one restless and wanting to move on. Same stimulus, but different perceptions and different responses (Cole, 2005: 103-104).

Udofia (2009) asserted that human beings respond to musical stimuli differently. And that the differences are as a result of the significant differences in perception ' among individuals. He further expressed that individuals tend to prefer the music from the place where they are natives to the music of other people's culture.

The ways people appreciate music differ from one individual to the other significantly. And the knowledge, experience and understanding of an individual facilitate that individual's

musical appreciation. What the music composer understands to have seen or perceived as the African musical ingredients embedded in the various cultures invariably the various music types drawn from the various African culture areas have the potential of influencing his or her musical composition. Thus, the individual traits and creative ability of the music composer tend to have a huge impact on his or her musical composition.

Summary

- Human beings are found to be greatly influenced by the culture. So, human behaviour can be said to be a product of the culture.
- Culture is a product of the activities of human beings within a particular culture area;
- Music, which is an aspect of the culture of a people, has been influenced by both the activities of the people that own and/or make or create it.
- In Africa, there is cross cultural musical studies and practices as well as bi-musicality, and there is also multi-musicality;
- Despite the internal and external influences on African music, the African musical identity is not totally eroded;
- Nationalism is a strong motivation for the composition of authentic African art music;
- Inclusion of African music methods in the curriculum of schools will help in creating the awareness and sustaining interest of the African musical study and practices among people especially inculcating in them the African ideals embedded in African music types;
- African music is based on the culture of a people of a particular culture area.
- African music is also based on the activities of a people of a particular culture area.

Conclusion

There is a growing need for the conceptualisation and realisation of African idioms in the African art music composition for the purpose of African music identity (Udofia, 2007). In clearer terms, the art and practices of composing African art music should be conceived and realized by the composer with African musical idioms as tools in creating the African art music composition that will depict the true African identity.

There is need for the inclusion and adequate implementation of the study of African music methods in the curricular of schools, at least for its documentation and interest among students studying African music, and for the extension into the nuances of the creation and or making of the various African folk music types, traditional music types and the African ensemble music types. Thus, it is hoped that the cross-cultural musical studies and practices, bi-musicality as well as the African cum Western music or multi-musicality for example as in African/Asian cum Western music or African/American cum Western for distinguishable characteristics from the pure African music(s) as well as the pure African art music composition.

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