

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: RODERIC KNIGHT, School of Music, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195, U.S.A.

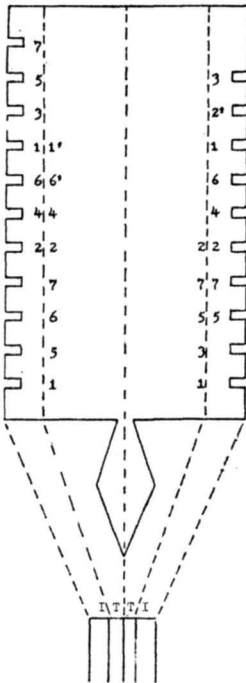
In continuing my own work with the notation and tablature for the kora which I described in the 1971 issue of *African Music*, I have made some improvements that I would like to pass on to your readers. The first is regarding the notation. One of the principal reasons the two-stave notation shown on page 30 was proposed was to enable upper and lower parts in the music to be clearly indicated. But often the music is not divided into two distinct parts. In such cases this notation can be misleading. To maintain the clarity of two staves without the necessity of implying two parts, I have drawn inspiration from Andrew Tracey's mbira tablature using a single centre beam to which all notes are connected (see *African Music*, Vol. IV, no. 4 (1970), pp. 37-61).

The notation becomes a pulse-unit notation, with only the initiation of the sound shown and "empty" pulses marked by a cross-hatch on the beam. The system is not incompatible with other indications of duration however, such as a dotted note or an open note head for a sustained pitch. In conjunction with this change I use the treble and bass clefs rather than the combination suggested before. The range of the instrument fits best on this familiar format. As a general rule, the pitches below and including middle C are shown on the lower staff, the others on the upper staff. But where a clearly recognizable melody in the lower register extends above middle C a pitch or two, the rule is easily modified to allow those notes to be shown on the lower staff as well. Thus two parts *can* be shown with this notation, but they are not inevitably implied as they were in the two-stave notation originally proposed. The "tuning signature" is placed to the left of the staves, referring to both of them as a unit (see example below).

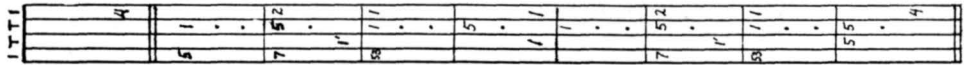
The second change applies to the tablature, making it possible to show whether the thumb or index finger plucks the string, a detail not shown in the original system. This is accomplished by labeling the columns I T T I from left to right, referring to the left index and thumb, and the right thumb and index, in that order. The diagram on the left illustrates which numbers will appear in each column, and to which string on the instrument they refer. Note that since the numbers in each column are not limited to a specific octave as they were in the original system, two of those played by the left thumb and one played by the right index must be marked with a prime (') to distinguish them from pitches an octave or two lower in the same column. When the left thumb pitches 1' and 6' are played by the left index, they do not bear the prime mark, since there is no duplication of numbers in that column. The use of the prime is deemed a small disadvantage in view of the benefits gained. This diagram replaces the one on page 31 of the article, and the new tablature is always identified by the letters I T T I at the top. (Please refer to the bridge diagram on page 27 of the article for the exact octave designations for the pitch numbers shown here.)

An example of the new tablature aligned with the new notation is given below. I feel that they do a better job of representing the style and technique of the instrument than those originally devised.

A final addendum: The title of my M.A. thesis was omitted from the footnote on page 24. It is "An analytical study of music for the *kora*, a West African harp lute", University of California, Los Angeles, 1968.



Application of the I T T I tablature to the bridge of the kora. (This diagram replaces that in Fig. 6, p. 31, in the last number of this journal.)



Kelefa, in I T T I tablature aligned with the new staff notation (cf. Fig. 5, p. 30 and Fig. 7, p. 32, of the last number of this journal.)

From: REV. A. M. JONES, 52 Warwick Road, St. Albans, Herts., England.

This letter concerns my "Studies in African Music" – 2 vols. Oxford University Press, 1959 – the second volume of which consists entirely of transcriptions.

It has come to my notice that students would like to *bear* what the transcriptions sound like. The first person to raise this point was Professor George List of Indiana University.

The result is this: I have made a tape recording of most of the contents of Volume 2, together with comments by me, and page references so that students can follow the recordings on the score. This tape is now lodged with:

The Folklore Institute,
Indiana University,
Bloomington,
Indiana 47401, U.S.A.

In their library, the tape reference is:

71-309-F. Africa, Ghana, Ewe. School of Oriental and African Studies and
Reverend A. M. Jones. Demonstration tape 213.

It occurs to me that other people using my book would like to know about this tape, and maybe seek to obtain a copy of it. They should write to Professor George List, Director of the Folklore Institute at the above address.

From: Rev. Fr. PAUL VAN THIEL W.F., Kisubi, Uganda.

Herewith I wish to inform you that I have completed my research project on the Music Terminology of ten different Bantu dialects of tribes living in Ankole, West Uganda.

Meanwhile useful discussions and pleasant cooperation with some important offices and organisations in Kampala led to interesting results. In consultation with the National Research Council, the Cultural Research Committee, the Department of Music, Dance and Drama at Makerere and especially the Uganda Museum, it has been arranged now that I'll carry out another research project in Uganda on the Royal Drums of the Former Kingdoms of Uganda. This field study is sponsored by the Cultural Research Committee.

As all field work and research activities are restricted in Ankole and other districts for reasons of security, I'll return to The Netherlands within a few days. During my stay in Holland I hope to be able to get my manuscript ready soon and to get it printed and published.

It is of course a great pity that so much field and research work of so many researchers is delayed now because of the political situation around the border of Tanzania. This unpleasant situation may last some time. And meanwhile aged people who are willing and able to give all kinds of precious information continue to die.

Herewith I wish to request you to send any correspondence to my address in Holland: Veenlantstraat 2, Schiedam, The Netherlands.

From Dr. GERHARD KUBIK, Thalheimergerasse 48/40, A-1160, Vienna, Austria.

Dear Sir,

It appears to me that there has been some misunderstanding among readers of *African Music*, Vol IV, No. 4, 1970, as to the purpose and meaning of Peter Cooke's article "Ganda xylophone music: another approach". I personally do not feel that there is any antagonism between us, on the contrary, I appreciate Peter Cooke's contribution as one of the most valuable on Kiganda xylophone music written so far. I would also like to draw the attention of readers to the fact that Peter Cooke and I were discussing the original version of his paper before publication. He was kind enough to send me his manuscript for comments.

For the sake of clarification I would be glad if you published in *African Music* this letter to you and my reply to Peter Cooke, dated March 24th, 1970.

(Letter to PETER COOKE from Dr. GERHARD KUBIK)

I have just arrived in Vienna from a four month lecture tour to West Africa, and I found your article in the letter-box this morning.

This is an excellent piece of work. It contributes greatly to our knowledge of the Kiganda musical system and I feel that both our works supplement each other very well. I particularly like your transcriptions on pages 16, 21 and 23. It is a pity that when we met in Kyambogo it was for a very short time and I had no opportunity of calling on you again in because of my quick departure from the area. I can highly recommend your article for publication and think that it should be included in the 1970 *African Music* journal.

As to the contents of your paper I have a few comments:

1. You complain on p. 19: "It would be useful for instance if in Kubik's transcriptions he indicated the sources of each . . ." I have looked up my notes and give you now the information required:
 - (a) All amadinda compositions were collected from royal musicians except Nos. 10 and 16 which were collected from two Basoga visitors to the Uganda Museum whom I met in 1960.
 - (b) Among the akadinda the following were collected from royal musicians: Nos. 51-3, 55-61, 64-9, 71-2, 74-6, 92-102. The following were collected from Salama musicians: Nos. 54, 62-3, 70, 73, 77-91.
2. Your remarks on p. 30: "I doubt if any musicologists could use Kubik's 102 transcriptions for anything more than superficial musicological analysis, unless they had — as I was fortunate to have — a number of recordings of songs of the same name, some of them sung by the same musicians with whom Kubik studied."

If you had written to me before writing your article I could have sent you the voice parts for a good number of these compositions, recorded by the *very* same musicians. I quite agree with you that "data on instrumental pieces is incomplete unless when recording and learning those pieces one collects at the same time from the self-same musicians the sung versions they associate with them." This is exactly what I have done whenever possible. We now have some 450 items from Buganda preserved in the Vienna Archives, a complete list of which I hope to publish in the Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological Research.

On many occasions I asked Muyinda and others to sing the "nuclear theme" while playing xylophones or other instruments in order to find out how voice and instrumental parts go together. In addition there are my recordings of the harp versions, fiddle versions etc. In fact I had the intention to deal with the representation of the songs on the various instruments in the way you are doing it in my paper on "Composition techniques . . ." But the article was getting *too long!* It is the longest ever published in *African Music*. So I decided to limit myself to *one aspect* of the whole question at first. Originally I had transcriptions of *voice part, amadinda* and *akadinda* versions of three more tunes in the article: "Ennyana ekutudde", "Baliserekerera . . ." and "Omunyoro atunda nandere". But I left it out, the article was getting too long. I also wanted to include a complete transcription of voice and harp for "Olutalo olw'e Nsinsi". An extract is to be found in my paper "Aufbau und Struktur der Amadinda-Musik von Buganda", which I wrote in 1968 for the Festschrift of Prof. Walter Graf.

Another reason why I have hesitated for long to publish the voice parts of my xylophone recordings is the simple fact that I have not yet been able to get hold of a Muganda who would transcribe the words for me from the tapes in reasonable Luganda orthography. This is plenty of work, of course. And I would have to employ a man for at least three months to transcribe the texts of all my recordings.

3. You are probably very right in your transcription on p. 21 and your critical remarks about my Fig. 6. If the relation between voice, amadinda and akadinda notes in "Ssematimba . . ." is really as you indicate, my idea of stretched and compressed single phrases will have to be abandoned altogether.

Have you got recordings of someone singing the voice part (a) to the amadinda notes, (b) to the akadinda notes? Unfortunately I do not possess recordings for this particular tune, otherwise I would probably not have misplaced the two lines as in Fig. 26. I am very grateful to you for this discovery because it simplifies things considerably. I will have a check on it when going next to Uganda.

4. I am missing in your reference list the works of Lois Anderson. She has written one article in *African Arts* and her doctorate thesis. I saw her thesis at the University of Legon, Ghana, where there is a copy.

5. As to the concept of "harmony" in Kiganda music, I feel you take the word too literally. *Everybody* knows that concepts of harmony in the strict sense "belong more to other cultures than to the Ganda people." (p. 25). I am using the term in a *very wide* sense in my paper, which is obvious if you carefully read the fourth paragraph on p. 31.

The delight in certain consecutive passages that sound consonant can hardly be neglected. Of course, it is true that the appearance of the vocal "nuclear theme" and of expected inherent note-patterns are the principal criteria watched for by the musicians when combining their instrumental parts. But they *also* like the pleasant sound resulting from the predominance of fourths following one another *melodically*. You say yourself that Ganda might "dislike the dissonant overlapping effect that the use of seconds might produce" (p. 26). That's it! When using terms such as "dissonant" are you not automatically indicating that Baganda appreciate the opposite of it, which is consonant? (One who knows what is bitter must have heard about sweet).

Though your explanation that "these ancillary notes serve principally to clarify the verbal structure of the 'nuclear theme'" is perfectly true it is likely that both our explanations supplement each other. Maybe it is the word "harmony" you dislike so much (I can abandon it if you give me a better term). But you have to remember here that I am expressing myself in a foreign language. Andrew Tracey has had a hell of a job correcting the English of my article. So it is possible that some of the terms and some of the expressions I am using evoke different associations in an English-speaking person than in me.

My thanks for your very worthwhile contribution. Yours etc . . .

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

A. B. CHILIVUMBO, Dr.: Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi, Limbe, Malawi.

THOMAS JOHNSTON: Graduate of the Trinity College of Music, London, California State University at Hayward, California State University at Fullerton and the University of the Witwatersrand; his Ph.D. thesis for the latter concerned the music of the Shangana-Tsonga. He has been a professional musician. He is currently teaching anthropological courses on Africa at Western Washington State College, Bellingham, Washington 98225, U.S.A. and is planning musical field work in Botswana.

A. M. JONES: Former missionary for many years in Zambia, now retired in England. Until recently held the chair in African music at S.O.A.S., London University. Well-known for his many works on African music, especially for his proposition of African polyrhythm, and for his controversial "Africa and Indonesia", a study of the musical and other similarities between the two countries, to which his present article may be regarded as an addendum.

GERHARD KUBIK, Dr.: Austrian musicologist and indefatigable researcher in many parts of West, Central and Southern Africa over the last fourteen years; is responsible for some basic discoveries regarding African music theory; recently received Doctorate at Vienna University.

J.-S. LAURENTY: Docteur en Sciences Anthropologiques, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium.

DENNIS MURPHY: Teaches music and musical instrument making at Goddard College, Plainfield, Vermont 05667, U.S.A.

G. T. NURSE, Dr.: Medical officer and linguist, at present at the S.A. Institute for Medical Research, Johannesburg.

HEWITT PANTALEONI: Teaches Western, non-Western and folk music at the State University College, Oneonta, New York 13820, U.S.A. Has recently started a course in African Music. He holds the A.B., A.M. and A.M.T. degrees from Harvard University and the Ph.D. degree from Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He is presently co-chairman of the North-East Chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology and has done field work in Ghana.

ANDREW TRACEY: Musicologist of International Library of African Music; Editor of "African Music."