THE GENESIS OF URBAN MUSIC IN ZAÏRE

by

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The introduction of foreign musical instruments in Africa by explorers, missionaries and armed forces, before and after the colonial period, brought changes to the musical expression of newly founded urban centers and launched a series of challenges to the African for the quest of a musical identity. In some urban centers, foreign musical elements (instruments, dances, harmonic implications, etc.) brought the decline and denigration of traditional musical genres as well as changes in the world view of the African musician *vis-à-vis* his own music. In Zaïre, the installation of radio stations and recording industries gave rise to an urban musical expression which fed on traditional music for its content, and relied heavily on foreign musical instruments as a medium of interpretation. The organization of the newly created musical expression was governed by norms of aesthetics peculiar to the new urban centers.

This phase of the history of urban music in Zaïre lasted from the 1930s to the end of 1965. Politically, 1965 marked the end of the First Republic which began June 30, 1960, and ushered in the Second Republic identified with the advent of Mobutu Sese Seko as the head of the state on May 20, 1965. Musically, 1965 denotes the end of the formative period stylistically referred to as *tango ya ba-Wendo* (the era of the Wendos). The formative period of the urban music in Zaïre, characterized by the strong influence of the Cuban *rumba* on the *maringa*, was known by the stage name of one of its most prolific composers, guitar players and singers, Antoine Kolosoy "Wendo." In the 1970s this period was referred to in radio and television programs devoted to music from this era as *bankolo miziki* (the owners of the music).

Elsewhere,[1] I have discussed the socio-economic role played by foreign companies in the creation of urban centers in Zaïre during the formative years of the nation. To shed light on the genesis of this musical expression, the present essay will delve into: A: The rise of urban centers with emphasis on the impact of West Africans on musical and social activities during the creation of Kinshasa; B: the advent of radio stations in the nation and their role in the dissemination of foreign musical expressions that contributed to the definition of the national urban style; and C: the role of recording industries in the training of local musicians and the promotion of the national music style. These extra-musical activities are not only significant in the understanding of the genesis of the urban music in Zaïre but, as pointed out by Peter Manual[2] and Chris Stapleton,[3] they constitute conditions *sine qua non* for the development of an urban musical style.

A. The creation of Kinshasa

Prior to the Berlin Conference (Nov. 15, 1884 - Feb. 26, 1885) called by the Belgian government to discuss, among other points, the freedom of commerce and navigation in the Congo basin,[4] thirty-three commercial companies were already established in the area that would be declared the Free State of the Congo. Within a thirty year span (1876-1906), especially after the discovery of copper in the Shaba province,[5] this number increased to fifty-seven functioning companies. Some major companies operating in the

area during this period included the Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Congo, founded in 1889 to build a railroad between Kinshasa and Matadi,[6] the Société Anonyme Belge pour le Commerce du Haut Congo, which exploited the rubber and ivory in the upper region of the country; the Compagnie du Congo (1891), involved in several commercial activities; La Compagnie des Chemins de Fer du Congo Supérieur aux Grands Lacs Africains (1902), responsible for the building of railroads between Stanleyville (Kisangani) and Ponthierville and between Kindu and Kongolo; and La Compagnie du Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga (B.C.K.), founded by Jean Jadot in 1906, to transport minerals extracted by his companies, the Union Minière du Haut Katanga (known today as GECAMINES, La Générale des Carrières et des Mines) and the Forminière, also founded in 1906.

These companies encountered a manpower shortage within the first few years of operation. To remedy this discrepancy, their recruitment was extended far beyond the national boundaries with the importation of workers from as far away as China and the Antilles. As early as 1891, for example, foreign migrant workers were imported by the Chemin de Fer du Congo. In his twenty-fifth anniversary speech, M. Philipson, president of the Chemin de Fer du Congo writes:

> "In the ten-week period from November 15, 1891 to February 1, 1892, we lost fourteen percent of our staff. By June 30, 1892, after a year and half, death had taken nine hundred men. The number of sick was in proportion; those who could work were demoralized, and rioted frequently. In one boat load, we were obliged to send back a large number of sick representing thirteen percent of our total staff.... In these conditions, recruitments on the occidental coast of Africa, where blacks had lost their fear [respect for white authority], became very difficult. It was necessary to hire black workers from the Antilles and from Macao, Chinese who could not stand to work under Congolese climate." (Philipson cited in Cornevin, 1972: 61-62)

The manpower shortage also affected the Union Minière du Haut Katanga well after its first productive year in 1913. This company, which drew its workers primarily from the Kasai and Shaba areas, was compelled to look elsewhere on the continent for workers. "During fifteen years, from 1911 to 1926, workers hired by Union Minière were furnished primarily by the recruiting organizations Robert Williams and Company, and Yule and Company operating in Rhodesia.... By 1927, the majority of the workers were from Rhodesia, reaching a total of 80,000 men" (Union Minière, 1956: 216-217).

From within the Congo (Zaïre), it became necessary at times to apply an involuntary form of recruitment to satisfy the shortage of manpower. This abuse of the recruitment policy by companies concerned only in meeting their labor needs became a common practice between 1910 and 1922. Therefore, the government was compelled to create several watchdog agencies to coordinate recruitment for the enterprises and to monitor the improvement of living conditions and the training of the Congolese workers by the respective hiring companies.[7] However, this attempt by the government was in vain. In 1925, a new commission was appointed by the government "to impose some basic rules of humanity in the recruitment process. It became illegal to recruit more than 25% of the total adult males available from a single ethnic group. Within this proportion, only 10% could be sent to work outside their area of origin" (Cornevin, 1966: 210). This recruitment rule did not apply to voluntary workers who preferred working for companies in their immediate areas of origin, or sought employment in prestigious and

prominent companies in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi.[8]

Until 1929, when the 'Stabilization Policy' was adopted for the first time by the Union Minière du Haut Katanga, most workers were migrants hired for only three months at a time. This seasonal condition changed in 1929 to a period of three years during which workers could be accompanied by their families and reside in workers' camps. The application of the 'stabilization policy' helped to crystallize the foundation of detribalized centers, not only in Shaba with the Union Minière, but also in Kinshasa and other regions where companies were willing to adopt it. The population of detribalized centers was then composed of members of different nationalities and ethnic groups. In Kinshasa, for example, there was a concentration of West Africans, hired by foreign companies to perform office jobs.[9] Bemba Sylvain writes:

> "In Brazza as in Léo (Kinshasa), West Africans were attracted by the installation of the first Dutch and Belgian factories in which they fulfilled the desirable and coveted function of bookkeepers. However, they did not come alone, and, as says the Bible, they came accompanied with their maid servants, their asses, their cattle, but also with their music, and with their culture. From the increase in the country of these born bookkeepers, came a colony of "haoussa," a generic name behind which one can distinguish Nigerians, Senegalese, Mauritanians, Ivorians, etc." (Bemba, 1984:55)

The concentration of West Africans brought changes to social and musical activities in Kinshasa. In an editorial published in the *Zaïre Hebdomadaire* (3, 5 Aug, 1974), the author summarized the impact of the presence of West Africans on the musical scene of Kinshasa in these terms: "Kinshasa was full of foreigners who came to live there for various reasons. To recreate the rhythms of their countries and to entertain themselves, they gathered some evenings to sing. These activities are what the Kinois[10] will begin to imitate." Socially, the Association des Originaires du Cameroun, du Dahomey et du Togo (CAM.DA.TO.), also known as the 'Coastmen', for which the main objective was mutual assistance (financial, moral, or otherwise) among its members in times of need, provided a model for Zaïrean social groups that began to spring up in 1939. To cut the cost of entertainment required at events such as weddings, baptisms, the closing of a mourning period, etc. organized by the association on behalf of its members, each social group maintained a musical ensemble.

Unlike their West African models which made no gender difference, the Zaïrean social groups accepted only male members from the same region who spoke the same language. The 'L'Harmonie Kinoise' and the 'Odéon Kinois', modelled after the 'Coastmen' and 'Club Americain', each had a musical ensemble of the same name. Comhaire-Sylvain summarizes this phenomenon in these terms: "*L'Harmonie Kinoise* which was created in 1940 and owned the best orchestra in Kinshasa complete with brass, woodwind, and stringed instruments, was satisfied with the organization of their manifestations by spouses of its members. Their rival group, the *Odéon Kinois*, on the other hand, had recruited female members." (Comhaire-Sylvain, 1968: 48). The all-male social group practice in Kinshasa ended in 1943 with the creation of the 'Diamant', the first all-ladies social organization.[11]

The brass band tradition which flourished in Kinshasa in conjunction with these social groups from the 1930s to the end of the 1940s and their repertoire resulted from the the combination of the imitation of West African and European musical practices. The

adaptation of the Ghanaian "high life" and European waltzes and polkas by the Zaïrean musicians provided them an opportunity to learn the techniques of playing the violin, guitar, and a variety of brass and woodwind instruments that came with the music. After mastering the techniques of these instruments through the accompaniment of West African and European tunes, Zaïrean musicians began to adapt them to traditional melodies and *maringa* tunes. A similar process of learning to play new musical instruments through the imitation of musical forms is also observed with the conga drums, maracas, claves, orchestration, and singing style from Latin America which began to overshadow the brass tradition in the late 1940s.

Brass bands' repertoires were not limited to one musical genre. They often included a variety of music from different traditions. Comhaire-Sylvain recalls:

> "I remember attending a festival given by the 'Odéon Kinois' in which European modern dances were interrupted by contre-dances and folk dances executed by members directed by a choreographer. Some organizations had also included dramatic activities. For example, 'La Jeune Espérance', whose orchestra had only few instruments, enjoyed a great reputation for its songs, recitations, and comedy." (Comhaire-Sylvain, 1968: 49).

The popularity of these bands among the indigenous communities became significant with the adaptation of the Ghanaian high-life in 1936,[12] and reached its apogee in the late 1940s by playing more traditional dance tunes known as *maringa*. With the dissemination of Latin American musical sounds primarily through radio broadcasts and travelling ensembles, many of the brass bands gradually faded out and ceased to exist as such by the mid 1960s. The 'Harmonie Kinoise' survived this transition by modifying to fit the new and upcoming Latin-American style which required a different instrumentation. This ensemble changed its name in 1949 to 'La Joie Kinoise', adapting itself to the new genre of orchestration from Latin America composed primarily of stringed instruments (lead guitar, rhythm guitar and double bass), a wind instrument (preferably the clarinet), and an array of percussive instruments (conga drums, maracas, güiros, and the claves rhythm sticks), under the leadership of the vocalist Kabasele Tshamala (1930-1983) best known as 'Grand Kale' which made its first official appearance in Kinshasa in 1953 as 'African Jazz.

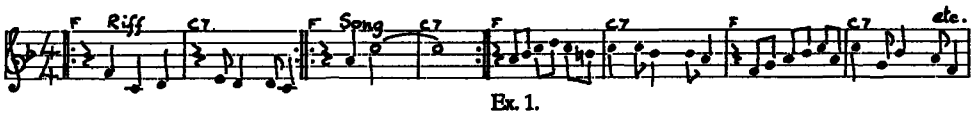
Musically, the period from 1945 to the end of the 1950s is of vital importance to the present discussion. Musical practices were shared between West African and Zaïrean musicians, while new elements from Latin America were introduced into the process of innovation and creation of the Zaïrean urban musical expression. This assertion is sustained by the naming of this entire period as *tango ya ba-Wendo*, a musical era dominated by the artistry of troubadour-like musicians singing *maringa* tunes in indigenous outdoor beer gardens (*etanda*) while accompanying themselves on traditional and/or foreign musical instruments (*likembe*, accordion, guitar, etc.) assisted by one or two musicians playing rhythmic patterns on empty bottles and a frame drum known as *patenge*.

The *tango ya ba-Wendo* period, dominated by maringa music, reached its apogee in the 1950s after the installation of recording studios in Kinshasa. In a few short years, these studios turned Kinshasa into the recording capital of Africa, attracting musicians from the neighboring countries (Angola, Congo, Zimbabwe) and from as far as Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Pauwels-Boon writes

> "After World War II (1945), an original music appeared in the Congo. This music enjoyed an enormous success in the country as well as in other African countries. Traditional rhythm mixed with that of rumba, cha-cha-cha, and bolero constitute the basis of this dance music on which are sung local texts, especially in Lingala." (Pauwels-Boon, 1968: 136-137).

The popularity of the new style of music was sustained by radio broadcasts and outdoor beer gardens now known as *bars*. The basic design of the bar required little contruction: a fenced-in lot in front of a building with a concrete square or rectangular dance floor built in the middle and raised two to three inches, around which were placed tables and chairs. The counter was operated in the main building structure. Restrooms, if any, were built at the back of the main building. Some of the more celebrated bars of the period were the Congo Bar, Oscar Kashama Bar, and Para Fifi.

From 1945 until the end of the 1960s, open bars became the meeting ground for music traditions, the crossroads of cultural activities, and laboratories for musical experiments.[13] Often, foreign tunes heard on the radio were quickly learned by rote and played at night in bars. One of the most influential tunes in the molding of Zaïrean urban musical expression during this period was "El Manisero" composed in 1939 by the Cuban Moises Simons (See Ex. 1). "El Manisero" was made popular in Kinshasa by gramophone recordings, radio broadcasts, and the traveling Cuban bands. This tune became a fixed part of the local bands' repertoire. The increase in the number of bars[14] throughout the country, coupled with the growth in number of recording studios, stimulated a parallel increase in the number of new ensembles with Latin American instrumentation. Bars provided stages shared by ensembles with a diversity of musical expressions in major cities and in small detribalized centers in the interior of the country. In these gardens one danced *agbaya*[15] and *maringa*. The latter allowed partners of the opposite sex to hold each other as they moved about the floor.



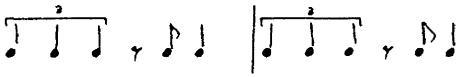
Ex. 1.

Little is known today about the rhythmic pattern of agbaya music since it lost its popularity to the *maringa* before the installation of recording companies in Kinshasa (1947). However, those who danced and witnessed the performance of *agbaya* define it as a repertoire which contains a variety of social dances performed by partners without holding each other. The term *agbaya* is also believed to be the Zaïrean mutilation of a Ghanaian (Gã/Ashanti?) word interjected during dancing in social gatherings. *Agbaya* engendered forms of regional dances characterized by the circle formation, with one or two dancers in the center of the circle demonstrating their ability while the song is sung. At the end of the refrain, or at a strong cadential point in the song, the two dancers approached each other and met at their navels accompanied by a pelvic motion. Variations of this genre of circle dance are common in ethnic repertoires around the country.

In the Kasai region among the Luba people, circle dances known as *mbenga* and *lutuku* were popular among young adults. It is difficult to determine the origin of these dances and their introduction into this region. Nevertheless, their night time perfor-

mance around the bonfire afforded young people opportunities for courting. Several variations of this genre of communal/circle dance can still be encountered in villages or are mentioned in histories of ethnic groups occupying the region which once constituted the second Kongo empire.[16] The fact that this type of dance was common in this area is corroborated by its incorporation in the early Brazilian dances of African descent, such as the *batuque* and the *samba de umbigada* (samba of the belly button), which appeared at the turn of the century.

In the late 1940's, these dances lost their popularity to the newly introduced dance known as *watshedyowi* (you have missed out), which eliminated the circle and allowed partners to approach each other during the dance with exaggerated sensual (pelvic) movements characteristic of the Luba traditional dance *mutwashi*. According to Mr. Subayi who witnessed the introduction of this dance in the Kasai region, *watshedyowi* brought changes to the traditional norms of morality among young adults in the region and prepared the stage for the *maringa* from Kinshasa.[17] Unlike the *agbaya*, the music of the *maringa* was preserved on sound recordings.[18] It reflected characteristics acquired from regional musical styles. However, regardless of the area where the music originated, the *maringa* rhythmic pattern was as follows:



Ex. 2. *Maringa* rhythmic pattern

Questions have been raised concerning the African authenticity of the *maringa*, whose popularity spread along the entire west coast of Africa from Sierra Leone to Kinshasa well before the end of the 1960s. To entertain these questions here would be beyond the scope of the present essay. Nevertheless it can be argued that this rhythmic pattern, whose origin is claimed by several African countries, could have been introduced in Africa at the turn of the century by expatriates from the Antilles who roamed the west coast of the continent in quest of adventure,[19] and/or disseminated on the west coast of Africa by the Liberian Kru sailors. Despite its origin, *maringa* was accepted as a traditional form of urban music and dance in Zaïre during World War II.

B. The role of radio stations

The earliest two radio stations to operate in Zaïre were privately owned. The first of these, the Jesuit owned and operated Radio-Léo, initiated its broadcast in Collège Albert (Kinshasa) in January, 1937. Its programs were primarily focussed on bringing Catholic culture to the European population in the country, and the evangelization of the natives. Radio-Léo maintained these broadcast objectives for the duration of its existence which ended on July 15, 1967. The second station was the secular Radio Congolia founded in Kinshasa on September 4, 1939, by the amateur radio operator J. Hourdebise and operated with the assistance of his spouse, Madeleine Demont. Mr. Hourdebise intended his radio station to serve as a medium of publicity for his commercial establishment and to maintain contact with other amateur radio operators in the country.[20] In 1948, the central government assumed the control of broadcasting to the black population introduced by the Radio Congolia in 1945. Having lost the *raison d'être* of his station, Mr. Hourdebise decided to discontinue his broadcasting activities on February 28, 1948. Radio Congo Belge (R.C.B.), the first government radio station installed in

Kinshasa on October 1, 1940, became Radio Nationale Congolaise (R.N.C.) on the independence day of the nation, June 30, 1960. The primary objective of this station was to inform the colonial population about developments of the war. Much of Radio Congolia's activities were inherited by the Radio Congo Belge pour les Africains (R.C.B.A.), also known as Radio Congo Belge pour les Indigènes (R.C.B.I.), which operated for eleven years in Kinshasa, from January 1, 1949 until July, 1960, broadcasting programs for the Africans. It was through the programming of the R.C.B.A. and its predecessor Radio Congolia that the Zaïrean population was exposed to the musical styles of other countries.

Although R.C.B.A. programs were aimed at the African population, their content was conceived by the colonial administrators who believed that the combination of classical and traditional African music was better than exposing the natives to the sound of the emerging urban music they considered mediocre and less educational. This attitude began to change gradually as the popularity of the urban musical expression increased. In 1956, the R.C.B.A. began broadcasting traditional music from other African countries on a program entitled 'L'Afrique chante pour vous', renamed 'Le monde chante pour vous' when music from the Antilles was also broadcast. "In order to meet the wishes of its listeners and to increase its ratings, R.C.B.A. developed a 'hit parade' devoted to the most requested recordings of the month" (Pauwels-Boon, 1979:122).

Discussing the role of the existing radio stations in Zaïre between 1945 and 1948, Pauwels-Boon points out the merits of Radio Congolia in these terms:

> "Seen in the context of that distant time period, the biggest merit of Radio Congolia was that of being the first in Congo to broadcast programs for the black population, distinguishing itself from five other private broadcasts which never thought of the black public.... The music on the programs was that wished by the population, Congolese modern dance music with South American rhythms rather than African traditional music." (Pauwels-Boon, 1979: 182)

The evolution of Radio Congolia's program during its eight and a half years of broadcasting to the black population reveals that it stayed longer on the air than any other station, private or public. During its air time (sixty to ninety minutes per day), about a third of the period was devoted to Congolese modern music. For its entire existence, Radio Congolia was instrumental in promoting Zaïrean urban music.

To diversify its program, Radio Congolia also broadcast songs and comic sketches taken from traditional sources. "Local groups," writes Pauwels-Boon, "which were successful in the city of Léopoldville were broadcast live in the studio. Among these street musicians were the guitar player Wendo (Antoine Kolosoy), Desaio, the orchestra 'Prince Baudouin' and local boy scout groups. Live broadcasts of bands and of their recordings were done in the same radio studio. These live broadcasts had an influence on the creation of street ensembles.[21]

The concept of urban musical ensembles, however, reached Kinshasa contemporaneously with the introduction of Latin American dance forms (*cha-cha, charanga, mambo, merengue, rumba, pachanga,* etc.) with their musical elements (rhythm, vocal production, singing style, etc.) and circum-musical practices (stage presentation, clothing, Latinization of artists' names). For more than a decade (1953-1965), the popularity of these imported musical models throughout the country was nurtured by radio broad-

casts and recording studios. Each musical form provided an expression that could be used only for a specific circumstance or need. Such forms as *cha-cha, merengue, pachanga*, were primarily used to entertain. The lyrics of most songs in these forms were written in broken Spanish imitating recorded songs by Latin American ensembles. In 1983 I had the opportunity to ask the late Lwambo Makiadi "Franco" (1939-1989) why most of his Spanish songs in the 1960s contained only two or three words. The answer was very simple. "Well, nobody understood Spanish. Nevertheless, we took a dictionary and searched for words that would sound good and we used them regardless of their true meaning."[22] Comhaire-Sylvain writes

> "Many recordings were being sold in Kinshasa in 1945. Those with success were dance music. Contrary to Spirituals which were not being sold, American jazz tunes were very much appreciated and often imitated by Congolese bands. Local composers sometimes adapted Lingala words to tunes which were enjoyed the most by the population. South American and Afro-Cuban music were also popular and several Congolese singers adorned their own works with Spanish words."

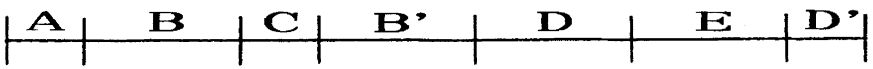
While the *cha-cha* was the preferred form for songs that made reference to joyous occasions,"[23] songs of lamentation and elegy were sung to the slow *bolero* tempo. One of the best known tunes in this category is "Liwa ya Wetchi" (Wetchi's death), in which its composer and lead guitar player, Franco, incorporates the liturgical tune of "Dies irae"[24] in the guitar interlude to underline the deep-seated feeling of sadness.

Any process of creation begins with some type of imitation. In Zaïre, the imitation of Latin American music and dance provided musicians the opportunity to learn the musical instruments which came with these forms. By the end of the first half of the 1960s, most of the imported music and dance forms became obsolete. The new trend of guitar music in Zaïre was towards a new source of inspiration – traditional Zaïrean music. The compatibility of the *rumba* to the *maringa,* which had basic movements in common, consisting of shifting body weight from one leg to the other combined with hip movements and the underlying rhythmic structure, facilitated the rumba's adaptation and its assimilation into the musical expression of urban centers.

Re-examination of the survival of the *rumba* in Zaïre raises two pertinent questions: a) was the Cuban *rumba* really adapted in Zaïre or was it simply imitated along with other forms from Cuba to facilitate the learning of the instrumentation and instruments on which they were introduced in the country? b) are the present dance variants still *rumba* or are they those of the *maringa*? After closer examination of the Cuban *rumbas* and the Zaïrean variants, it is safe to assert that what occurred in Zaïre was not the adaptation or the assimilation of the Cuban dance forms but the re-interpretation of the name *rumba*. While the music returned to the *maringa*, the name of *rumba* was maintained by the recording industries for commercial reasons.[25] After the novelty of the Latin influence had worn out, musicians looked back to *maringa* which could easily be interpreted with the newly acquired instrumentation and fitted to the traditional musical patterns and dances, instead of adhering to the straightjacket format of the music and dance patterns of the Cuban *rumba*. The new instruments provided a dimension to the *maringa* music that traditional musical instruments were unable to do. They added new harmonic possibilities and a different timbre to the music, although their function in the ensembles was at first limited to roles filled by the traditional musical instruments they

had replaced. The guitar, for example, replaced melodic instruments such as the *mbira*, the *madimba* (xylophone), and in some cases, it replaced other European instruments such as the violin and the accordion.

With the new instrumentation, the Zaïrean *rumba* (*maringa*) was appropriate and adaptable to the structure of traditional music and dance. Traditional tunes could be interpreted into the *rumba* form without significant modification of the principles of their rhythmic organization. The established model of the Zaïrean *rumba,* derived from traditional dance music and present in Cuban dance music, is still applicable today. Schematically this structure can be represented as follows: A: instrumental prelude; B: verse of the song, often presented in an abstract form; C: instrumental interlude; B': the repetition of the verse with a change in the final cadence of the section, leading into D: section -refrain-, during which details and the essence of the situation evoked in the verse are given through call-and-response between the lead singer and the chorus, often composed of two to four individuals singing in harmony; E: instrumental improvisation. This section is sometimes referred to as the *sebene* section of the composition. D': the coda section, often based on material derived from the refrain section.



Ex. 3. Schematic structure of the Zairean *rumba*

The Zaïrean *rumba* structure provided a wide range of possibilities for changes and modification in the improvisation section. In this section composers introduced new rhythmic and melodic elements which characterized a variant of the *rumba* with a new name. The following are a few of the most prominent varieties of *rumbas* which marked its evolution over the years in Zaïre: the *soukous* (1966), the *kiri-kiri* (1969), the *cavacha* (1972), the *mokonyonyon* (1977), the *engoss* and its variant *zekete-zekete* (1977-1987), the *kwasa-kwasa* (1986), the *madiaba* (1988), *mayebo* (1990), *mayeno* (1991), and *sundama* and *kintekuna* (1992).

The evolution of the *rumba* in Zaïre was and is still nurtured by the availability of rich and compatible rhythmic formulas and dance steps and body movements from respective ethnic groups of the musicians, who draw from them to serve as the basis of their creation. Such dances as the *mokonyonyon*, for example, introduced in 1977 by the singer Shungu Wembadio (Papa Wemba) and his ensemble 'Viva la Musica', contains movements from the traditional dance of his Tetela ethnic group. Similarly, the movements of the Ekonda *saccade*, introduced in Kinshasa by the singer Lita Bembo (1972) and the 'Stukas' ensemble, and those of the *sundama* popularized by the 'Swede-Swede' ensemble, not only reflect strong influences but are derived from the traditional dances of the Mongo ethnic group. The *kwasa-kwasa* dance, presented to the public in 1986 by the 'Empire Bakuba' ensemble, is reminiscent of one of the Kongo social dances. The newly introduced variant *mayeno* by the T. P. O.K. Jazz is derived from the Bantandu ethnic group in the Lower Zaïre region. In short, unlike the original *rumba* form borrowed from Latin America, the evolution of the Zaïrean *rumba* continues to be governed by a set of traditionally defined norms of aesthetics.

This phenomenon sustains my thesis that what has evolved in Zaïrean urban musical expression is not the borrowed musical material from Latin America, but the *maringa*

kept under the name of *rumba*. The Latin American *rumba*, and other forms introduced in Kinshasa in the 1940s, served as a means of learning new instruments and orchestration. Once this objective was reached, Latin forms were dropped due to their lack of flexibility and adaptability to the available traditional musical elements. The name *'rumba'* was not retained by the Zaïrean musician, but by the recording industries for commercial reasons.

C. The recording industries

The role of the recording industries in the development of urban music in Zaïre can be measured by the increasing number of musicians and musical ensembles in Kinshasa. For more than a decade (1948-1960) recording industries provided musical instruments to potential local young musicians and hired European professionals to strengthen their studios with virtuosos. These professionals were also hired by the studios to serve as instructors to young Zaïreans at the studios. Among these musicians were the saxophone player Fud Candrix of the 'Candrix Brother Band' at the Opika studios, and the organist Pilaeis at the Ngoma studios. The objective of the recording studios was to create a pool of local musicians capable of accompanying *maringa* and *rumba* dance music on the European melodic instruments. The result was an increase in the number of free-lance studio musicians who were always available to sing or accompany new compositions. Lwambo Makiadi boasts about his first guitar given to him in 1953 by Papadimitriu, the owner of the Loningisa studios.

> "During the first recording session (8/3/53) with the Watam ensemble," says Lwambo Makiadi, "Papadimitriu was filled with admiration and asked 'Where was this child? Now, I am sure we shall succeed in our recording (business)'. After the session, he (Papadimitriu) approached me and said 'Take it boy. Go with this guitar, it's yours for your personal lessons. You have talent, but do not neglect yourself because you have a great future." (Program notes "Franco and his T. P. O.K. Jazz in U.S.A. - Nov/Dec 1983")

With the advent, in Kinshasa, of the Greek-owned recording studios, Ngoma (1948), Opika (1950), Loningisa (1950), and Esengo (1957), musicians became identified with the studio where they recorded. Several of them started their careers as studio musicians playing in occasional ensembles created by musicians from the same studio. Eventually some of these ensembles gained fame through recordings and performances in open air bars which replaced the early bars. With fame they broke their ties with studios and became independent, gaining the right to record with any studio that offered a better contract. The 'O.K. Jazz' is one of these ensembles which started in Kinshasa at the Oscar Kashama Bar in Kinshasa, whence it derived the first two letters 'O.K.' of its name, not only with musicians from Loningisa, but also with the entire instrumentation belonging to this studio. The other ensemble worth mentioning here is 'La Joie Kinoise' formed in 1950 with musicians from the Opika studios which became in 1953 the 'African Jazz'.

The popularity of the newly attained musical expression grew with the advent of these musical ensembles modelled after those of the travelling Cuban ensembles such as that of the flutist, Johnny Pacheco. Beginning in 1963, new musical ensembles came into existence with the proliferation of existing groups and the increasing number of instrument players. This period of creation of new musical ensembles reached its apogee in 1974 with the apparition of several younger generation bands, namely 'Thouzaina',

'Lipua-Lipua', 'Viva la Musica', and 'Zaiko Langa Langa'.[26]

In Kinshasa, as well as in the rest of the country, the number of musical ensembles and the number of musicians grew yearly. This led to the creation of new ensembles to accommodate the rising number of musicians. By the 1960s, there were thirty musical ensembles in Kinshasa alone, containing more than three hundred musicians, most of whom attained the mastery of their art through rote, unable to read a single written note. Rhythm guitar players who provided the harmonic accompaniment were often limited to the basic chord progression, tonic- subdominant-dominant-tonic, with an occasional insertion of the dominant seventh. Rhythmically, however, musicians often extracted patterns from the traditional music of their respective origins. The lead guitar players had their own motivic formulas derived from the melodic lines upon which and around which they improvised, thus creating a diversity of individual styles often grouped into two stylistic schools. These are defined primarily by the techniques of playing the guitar with or without a plectrum, and the process of melodic treatment. The two schools became identified with the lead guitar from the 'African Jazz' ensemble, Kasanda wa Mikalayi "Dr. Nico" (1939-1985), and Lwambo Makiadi (Franco). The proliferation movement helped to strengthen these two stylistic trends with new musical ensembles electing to adapt one or the other.

Summary and conclusions

The "musique zaïroise moderne" (modern music of Zaïre), falsely referred to in Europe as *Soukous*,[27] is an artistic expression which summarizes the worldview of its people in an urban setting. It entertains and educates; sings praises to the land, its heroes, cities and rivers; and chronicles the nation's history and the accomplishments of its development. In the above discourse it has been argued that the origin of the urban musical style of Zaïre is rooted in a mixture of domestic and foreign musical materials. The introduction of these materials was made possible through the installation of radio stations and recording studios in Kinshasa by Greeks and Belgian nationals. Although they were discussed in no specific order, it should stressed that without the interaction of these related and yet diverse activities the evolution of the urban music in Zaïre would have taken a totally different stylistic trend. West African contribution to the formation of the Zaïrean urban musical style cannot be minimized. In the 1960s, for example, some of these foreign musicians made Kinshasa their permanent home and joined local bands. One of these musicans was Musekiwa Isaac 'Siki', a native of Zimbabwe who arrived in Kinshasa via Kampala (Uganda) in 1950. He made his musical debut in Kinshasa in 1951 playing saxophone and clarinet in the early 'African Jazz' ensemble. In 1957 Musekiwa entered the 'O.K. Jazz' ensemble where he played until his death in Kinshasa (April 3, 1990). Numerous other names such as Zacharie Elenga (Jhimmy), Paul Kamba, Nganga Edward (Edo), De la Lune, Antoine Mundanda, are but a small list of musicians from the Congo whose presence in the musical circle was vital to the establishment of what is known today as the "musique zaïroise moderne".

Notes

1. Kazadi wa Mukuna, 1980.
2. Popular musics of the non-Western world: an introductory survey, pp. 16-18.
3. African Rock: the pop music of a continent, pp. 11-13.
4. Encyclopédie du Congo Belge, no date: 28.

5. Cornevin, 1966: 19.

6. This work lasted nine years.

7. Robert Cornevin, Histoire du Congo Leopoldville, p.210.

8. See also Alexandre-Pyre, 1969:143.

9. Comhaire-Sylvain, 1968:49.

10. A generic name for residents of Kinshasa.

11. After W.W.II female social groups became commonplace in Kinshasa. They were known generically by the Lingala term of *muziki* (friendship). This term is not to be confused with *miziki*, a Lingala term for music.

12. Bemba, op. cit. p.180.

13. Without the bars the urban music of Zaïre could have taken a different course.

14 In 1945 there were 100 bars in Kinshasa alone. See also Comhaire-Sylvain 1968:p.39.

15. Prior to the introduction of the Cuban rumba, *agbaya* had lost its popularity to the *maringa*.

16. See Kazadi wa Mukuna: Contruibuição Bantu na música popular brasileira (1979), for the definition of the boundaries of the second Kongo empire.

17. Conversation with Mr. Subayi, Kent, Ohio, Nov. 5, 1989.

18. Some of the earliest examples of the *maringa* music that have reached us were recorded by Herbert Pepper and published in his *Anthologie de la musique africaine* (1942) and in the series of African guitar music recorded by Hugh Tracey, *Sound of Africa series*, International Library of African Music (Roodepoort), Rhodes University (1956).

19. See Cornevin in Kazadi, 1980.

20. Pauwels-Boon, 1979, p.172.

21. See Pauwels-Boon, 1979:180.

22. Personal conversation with Lwambo Makiadi in Washington, D.C., March 17, 1983.

23. Independance Cha-cha", composed by Kabasele Tshamala in 1960, celebrating the proclamation of the independence of the country by the Belgian government.

24. Liber usualis, p. 1810.

25. It was easier to sell recordings of *rumba* music than *maringa* music both in and out of the country.

26. For further discussion of this phenomenon, see my article "L'évolution de la musique urbaine au Zaïre pendant la prèmiere décénie de la Deuxième République", Aquarium (in press).

27. Soukous is the name of the 1966 rumba variant marking the second stage of the evolution of the Zairean rumba. See also Kazadi wa Mukuna, 1971, 1973, for further discussion of the various evolutionary stages of the Zairean rumba.

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