XYLOPHONE MUSIC OF UGANDA: THE EMBAIRE OF NAKIBEMBE, BUSOGA

by

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In search of xylophones[1]

BUGANDA

The *amadinda* and *akadinda* xylophone music of Buganda[2] have been well described in the past (Anderson 1968).

Good players of these xylophones now seem to be extremely scarce, and they are rarely performed in Kampala. Both instruments, although brought from villages in Buganda, formed part of a great musical tradition associated with the Kabaka's palace. After 1966, when the palace was overrun by government forces and the kingdom abolished, the royal musicians were cut off from their traditional role.

It is not clear how many of the former palace *amadinda* players still survive. Mr Kyobe, at Namaliri Trading Centre and his brothers Mr Wilson Sempira Kinonko and Mr Edward Musoke, Kikuli village, are still fine players with extensive knowledge of the *amadinda* xylophone repertoire, and the latter have been teaching their skills in Kikuli. As for the *akadinda*, P.Cooke reports (1996) that a 1987 visit found it was still being taught and played in the two villages where the palace players used to live

A xylophone which has become popular in wedding music ensembles is sometimes also known by the name *amadinda*, but this is smaller, often with only 9 keys, and is played by only a single player in a style called *ssekinomu*.Otherwise, xylophones are used at teaching institutions in Kampala, but they are rarely performed. Indeed, it is difficult to find a well-made xylophone anywhere in Kampala. There are instruments on sale, but of poor quality: they are carelessly made, mostly out of tune, and they have 15 and not 12 keys, suggesting that they are modelled on school instruments from Busoga.

WESTERN UGANDA

In Western Uganda, a few brief sorties on the east side of the Ruwenzori mountains to locate Bakonjo able to play the *endara* xylophone met with little success. Perhaps this is not surprising, since the *endara* was already reported by Wachsmann (1953) as very rare even before 1951. The rarity of *endara* nowadays among the Bakonjo may be due to suppression by missionaries in the past: the

[1] This is a report based on three field trips in Uganda to study traditional xylophone music.The first visit took place in Feb. 1996, followed up with further research in May 1996, and Jan-Jun. 1997.

2Note: Buganda and Busoga are two neighbouring regions in Uganda; Kiganda, Kisoga are the corresponding adjectives; Baganda, Basoga are the people, Muganda, Musoga when only one person, Luganda, Lusoga are their languages.By convention in these languages, the letter 'k' when combined 'ki' or 'ky' is used for a sound that is pronounced more like the 'ch' in 'chief', i.e. [tʃ] in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

instrument was formerly associated with circumcision rituals. The several *endara* reported by Kubik (1962) sound to have been rather poor specimens. Enquiries among Bakonjo around Fort Portal and Kasese suggested that currently there is no group with an established or widespread reputation. Leads which were followed found only three poor instruments in a condition of long neglect. There were unconfirmed reports of practising groups near Bwera and Bundibugyo. An instrument, out of tune but probably heptatonic, was seen in Bwera, and briefly demonstrated by two musicians. An *endara* from Bwera has previously been reported in 1967 (P. Cooke & Doornbos). The current status of *endara* xylophone among the Bakonjo deserves further investigation.

EASTERN UGANDA: BUGWERE AND BUSOGA

In contrast with the situation elsewhere in Uganda, there are many xylophone groups in the east. A few groups were found during brief visits to Bugwere. In Rwatama and Bugwere villages near to Tirinyi, groups were heard playing *embaire* xylophones in the *kinyole* style described by P. Cooke (1995). An untypical 7-key instrument called *entaala* was also found in a village near Buddaka, played in the same style as the *namaddu* (Kisoga drum-chime): the group explained that this instrument was the predecessor of *namaddu*. There was no opportunity to investigate xylophone playing of the Adhola people, neighbours of the Bagwere (Anderson 1967).

Several impressive music groups with *embaire* xylophones were located relatively easily in Iganga district, Busoga. The music groups of Siraje[3] (Namundidi village) and Kasata (Nakisenyi village) are particularly renowned. The group in Nakibembe village seems to be less well known in Iganga: however, the group was strongly recommended by Haruna Walusimbi of Nile Beat, a music and dance group based in Jinja. Unlike the *endara* of the Bakonjo, missionary intolerance does not seem to have affected the *embaire*, although the instrument may still be associated with traditional religious practices. For example, a traditional spirit healer Maganda Kifumkuli visited in Namungaruwe village, uses an *embaire* in his ceremonies (P.Cooke 1997).

Two main types of instrument called *embaire* were encountered in Busoga. A 15-key instrument played by only two musicians is performed as part of an ensemble. For example, Siraje's, Kasata's and Walusimbi's groups all feature such xylophones, together with several drums, shakers, panpipes and a tube fiddle, accompanied by dancers. But there exist larger instruments, with 20 or 21 keys, performed by as many as six players. The *embaire* of Namungaruwe, Rwatama and Bugwere villages were of this large size.

Accomplished performances of these huge xylophones are also to be found in

3The same 'Silagi' described by P. Cooke (1995): the spelling 'Siraje' is used on tape cassettes available in local markets. Siraje's and Kasata's groups with *embaire* are featured on P. Cooke's recording CD925 VDE-GALLO (1997).

Nakibembe village and in the nearby village of Nakisenyi. These instruments are sometimes accompanied by small percussion (eg shakers) and dancers, but without drums: during performance, drum parts are frequently incorporated by players using keys in the bass and topmost ranges. All the *embaire* groups visited accompanied their playing with singing. (This is in contrast to the *amadinda* and *akadinda* which in the past were not usually combined with song).

Construction of large *embaire* xylophones

Like the *amadinda*, *embaire* keys are made from *ensambiya* wood (Bignoniaceae: *Markhamia platycalyx*), and played by beating the ends of the keys with sticks from a heavier wood called *enzo* (Rutaceae: *Teclea nobilis*). *Ensambiya* wood is a pale wood, quite soft and easily carved, and relatively light in weight. (This contrasts with West African balafons and western xylophones which are usually made from dense hardwoods).

The keys are laid on felled banana stems, making an instrument which spans about 2.5m from end to end. The bass keys are large and broad but relatively thin. Wherever the instrument is played, a hole about 2 metres long and half a metre deep is first dug in the ground under the area where the bass keys will lie (the bottom ten keys of the Nakibembe instrument), to provide resonance: this chamber is sealed at the bottom end of the instrument with the base of a banana frond packed around with some of the excavated earth. Sometimes a narrow slice of banana leaf-rib is laid along each banana stem to form a pair of narrower ridges on which the keys are laid. The Nakibembe instrument uses instead long thin bundles of elephant grass. These ridges form the cushions on which the nodes of the keys rest, allowing them to vibrate freely. Keys are separated, to prevent them from touching each other (which would damp their sound by hindering their free vibration), by twigs pushed vertically into the banana stems. The thin broad slats of wood used as bass keys seem to be particularly susceptible to splitting, which ruins the key by deadening the sound: split keys are sometimes repaired with metal staples, or by binding tyre inner-tube rubber around the split key. Strips of tyre rubber are sometimes tacked to the end of some bass keys, (see photo of bass register): when struck with a beater, the rubber helps to give a better bass sound with less overtone clatter.

The instruments are tuned to a pentatonic scale, spanning four octaves. Keys are usually numbered from top to bottom of the instrument, probably reflecting the order in which they are tuned. Only the fundamental tone of each key appears to be consistently tuned: nevertheless, first harmonics of some keys are apparently also tuned. A xylophone belonging to Siraje's group had a few keys at the bass end with the first harmonic tuned to 2 octaves above the fundamental. The tuner of the Nakibembe instrument, Waiswa James, explained that he aimed to tune the first harmonics of the lowest four keys to coincide with the fundamental notes of the top four keys. By comparison, western orchestral marimbas and xylophones usually have additional harmonics tuned on the majority of their keys: all except the top register

keys have their first harmonic tuned 2 octaves above the fundamental; bass register keys often have the next harmonic tuned as well, usually to 3 octaves and a major third above the fundamental.

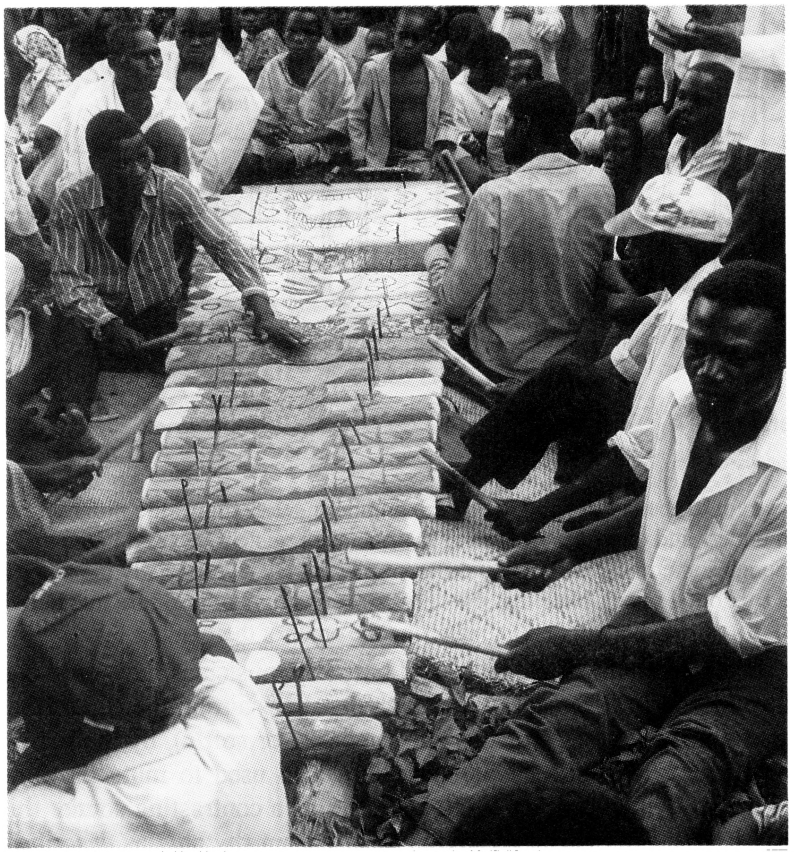
The Nakibembe *embaire* xylophone group

The xylophone group in Nakibembe village is now described in more detail.We were told that the larger *embaire* is a relatively recent introduction to Iganga district, originating with a group playing a 20-key instrument started by a man called Guloba from Bunyole, Tororo, who had settled in Iganga district. This instrument was copied around 1976 by a group of three *embaire* players (Bijje, Sande Fred and Babi Obeeko) based in Buwanga, a neighbouring village to Nakibembe: they formed a group with six players, adding the 21st key at the bottom to accommodate drum rhythms. This group in turn inspired Waiswa James Kale and Tenwa Wilson Edhuya to start the Nakibembe group.

The full group now comprises some fifteen members. In a typical performance, there are six musicians on the *embaire*, two more with *ensaasi* shakers (flat metal box rattles), one with *akoma* (a metal hoe shaft – the part left after the blade broke – struck with a nail or spanner) and one singer (*owembesi*), together with up to three dancers (*omukini*), the rest also singing the chorus or accompanying with wooden clappers. The dances are based on the traditional Kisoga *tamenhaibuga* and *irongo* dances. The group used to include *endingidi* (tube-fiddle) and *enkwanzi* (panpipes), but they are not currently performing with these. There are about 22 pieces in their current repertoire. Some pieces are for voice, others for dance. Some have two versions: a slow one for singing, a faster one for dancing.

The members of the group are mostly relatively young men. This may reflect the relatively recent origin of the group, though it was also explained that they need to be fit since they often have to travel some distance on foot to villages where they are to perform. The group was formed primarily for entertainment and to earn some income from performing. They perform on party occasions such as weddings, graduation celebrations and house-opening ceremonies, and also funerals, sometimes as far afield as Kampala. A typical performance might earn the group about 50,000 Uganda shillings (US50$) and a good meal.

The present group includes Christians and Muslims, but the members still hold strong traditional ritual beliefs associated with the instrument. For example, a chicken is sacrificed for the tuning, and a goat sacrificed to remember the spirits of ancestors and late members of the group who played the xylophone. Blood from the goat is splashed on the underside of key 15, which is considered to be the heart of the xylophone. New members have to provide a chicken for their initiation into the group, which is sacrificed before their first performance. The group also uses a reed stick with herbs inside to protect them from the witchcraft of rival groups: the stick is taken to performances, and planted in the mound of excavated earth beside the xylophone.



The *embaire* of Nakibembe village, Busoga

Their present instrument was made and decorated by one of the musicians, Rashidi Bidhampola Ngobi, and tuned by Waiswa James. It has 21 keys, the largest nearly a metre long (the bottom-most measures 92 x 26 x 4cm, the topmost 21.5 x 7.5 x 5cm). Several of the bass keys were obviously newer than the other keys, an indication of their susceptibility to wear and tear. Unlike any of the other instruments we saw, the Nakibembe *embaire* was decorated with designs in dark ink, some but not all incorporating numbers (see photos).

Playing technique

The six musicians' playing areas on the instrument are shown in Fig. 1, with Lusoga names of their parts. Below, we find it easier to refer to these parts as starter, mixer, top, tenor, bass and bottom-key. The Lusoga names of the bass, tenor and bottom-key parts are those of corresponding drums.

The starter musician beats out his part with left and right hands in octave unison; likewise the mixer player sitting opposite. The top player also uses two beaters, but not in octave unison: he plays a broken stream of notes at a faster rate than the

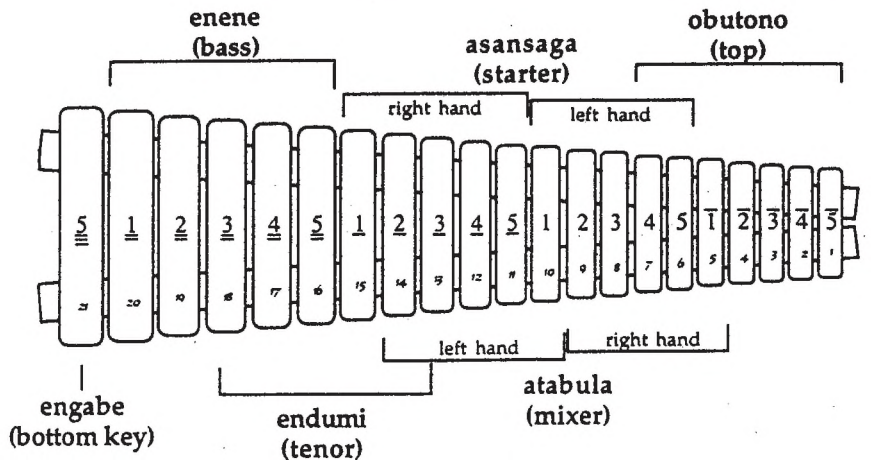


Fig. 1. Diagram of the six playing areas: the numbering 1-5 shows the different notes of the scale, with under- and overlines indicating their octave registers, as used in the transcriptions. Different songs sometimes use slightly different playing areas, especially the tenor and mixer (indicated by dotted lines). Note that the keys on the instrument itself are numbered from top to bottom (1-21), reflecting the order of their tuning.

starter or mixer. In contrast, the tenor and bass key musicians have only one stick in their right hand: most notes are played with the stick, hitting the end of the key, but many patterns include notes struck (with emphasis, or softly), by the fist or palm in the centre of the key. The hand is sometimes also used to mute the fundamental ringing of the key, producing an overtone clatter as a contrasting sound: this is done particularly by the bass musician when playing drum rhythms as described shortly. Likewise the bottom key player, although he often uses two beaters.

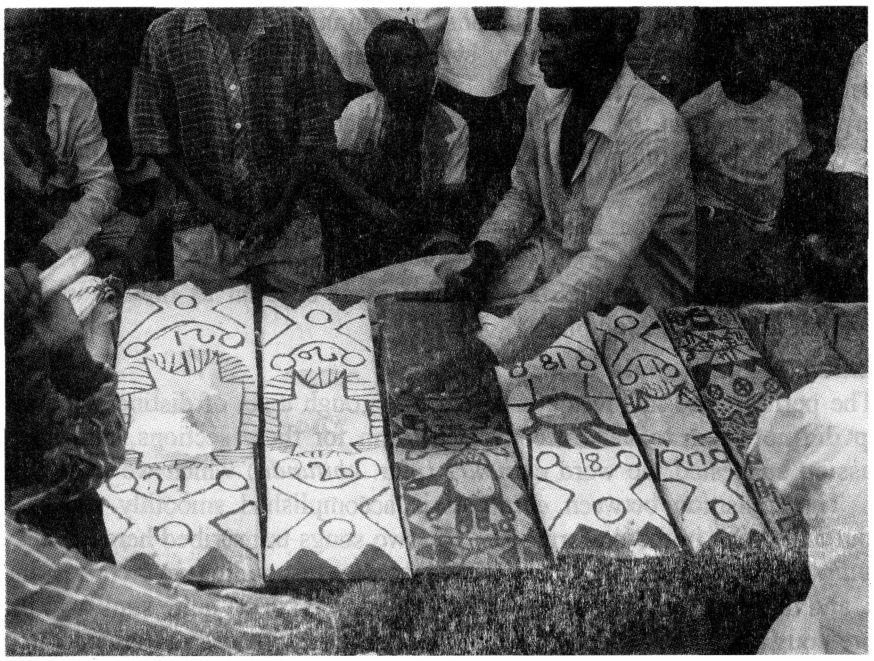
Performance

Transcriptions from two fairly typical songs are provided in the Appendix, and also a summary of the basic 'drum' patterns used to accompany dances (please refer beforehand to the guide preceding the transcriptions).[4] These are included both to give an indication of the richness and variety of styles of playing, and some understanding of the way the music is constructed. We also hope they will provide you with the resources to try playing some of this music for yourself! The music is exhilarating to play as well as to hear.

Playing is initiated by the starter part, quickly joined by the mixer and remaining players. The *embaire* players create an impression of great speed. Each player has a part consisting of a pattern of notes which is repeated in a cycle. Together they create an overall pattern combining notes contributed by all players. The overall pattern

[4] Recordings of about ten songs, and analytical recordings of four of these, including the two songs for which transcriptions are provided herein, are available from the British Library National Sound Archive, London (Catalog reference C837/1-3). The durations of the songs recorded range from about 4 to 12 minutes, though performances may sometimes last as long as 20 minutes.

clocks just over 10 beats per second, following a repeating cycle, most often of 24, 36 or 48 notes.



Detail of bass register of *embaire*, showing *enene* playing technique and decoration. Notice the strip of tyre rubber on the playing edge of *enene* key 19.

While the starter and mixer parts combine to give a rapid stream of notes, the bass, tenor and top parts, together with the song, tend to measure a slower underlying progression of notes, imposing another level of order, with a slower metrical structure, on the rapid stream. As a rule, the bass part tends to shadow notes of the starter part, with a variety of rhythms. The tenor part (like an *endumi* drum) almost invariably plays on the pulse immediately following the shaker/hoe beat. Where the tenor part is not in direct correspondence with the notes of other parts, the note chosen often corresponds to the immediately preceding (or following) note in the tonebank.

Song

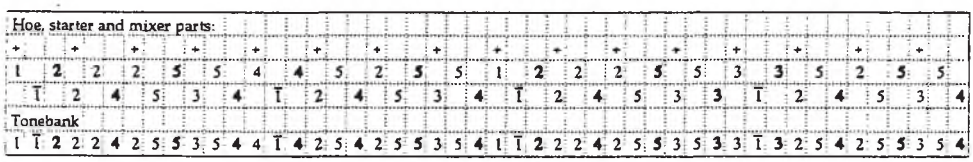
Singing starts as soon as the xylophone parts are underway, and may last throughout the performance. The starter xylophone part usually most outlines the basic melody of the song. With each cycle of the xylophone parts, one individual sings a solo phrase followed by a responding chorus from others in the group, sometimes including bystanders in the audience. Usually the song and response last one xylophone cycle each. In terms of both words and melody, the solo lines can be quite variable, while the chorus remains fairly constant. Many song and chorus lines consist of a basic melody mainly of sustained notes sung without the associated words.

The songlines of the songs transcribed here are given in the appendix: the 'meanings' which follow the Lusoga lines are short explanations of the songs as they were given, and are not exact translations. Bear in mind that these are mostly just the chorus lines which are sung, usually every alternate cycle, in response to the solo singer (*owembesi*). The solo singer might sometimes sing this chorus, or an abbreviated form of it, but most often his lines are much more variable, presenting him with the opportunity to communicate some new or unexpected message. Nakibembe group's singer Mugwisa Musa Kasadha is able to draw exclamations of surprise and laughter from his audience. He sings about topical subjects, and thinks of his role as being a traditional teacher. It would be interesting to study such song texts more fully: the present transcriptions must be seen as only a very limited snapshot of all that is taking place.

Variation: *ebitundu* and *ebisoko*

The performance involves a progression through a set of distinct sections. The group did not seem to have a convenient term for these sections, but after some discussion suggested the word *ekitundu* (plur. *ebitundu*) which we have therefore used. The transition between *ebitundu* is accomplished smoothly and abruptly, without any break in the performance. The two songs transcribed here have 3 and 5 *ebitundu* respectively. Each *ekitundu* heralds a corresponding new chorus and solo lines, and different parts for most or all of the players, often quite similar to those of the previous *ekitundu*. It seems likely that some part changes are intended to allow a better correspondence of the xylophone notes with particular songlines. For people familiar with the music, the subtly altered pattern of notes might then suggest the rhythm and tones of the words of that songline, so to them, it is almost as if the xylophone is singing those words.

Within an *ekitundu*, the pattern of each part remains fairly constant for most players: variants (*ekisoko*, plur. *ebisoko*) of the starter and mixer patterns usually involve a substitution of only one or a few notes in the pattern, keeping the rhythm constant. Another form of variation involves emphasis of certain notes in the patterns: for example the starter and mixer parts often accent their patterns to bring out every third note in the tonebank one pulse before the *akoma* hoe percussion. The following illustrates this (using bold type to show the accents) for the first *ekitundu* of the song *"Azirakunaaniya eyitaala"*:



Some variants of the tenor and bass parts involve notes added or moved in the pattern, changing the rhythm. The top part seems the most continuously variable,

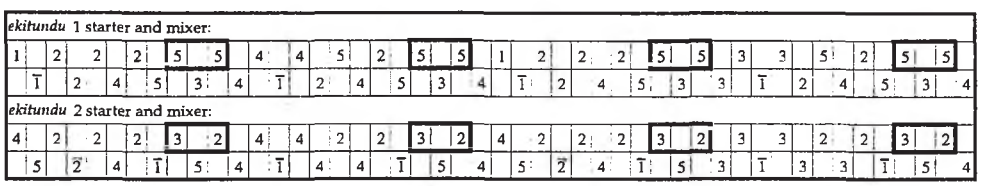
although it is still structured on quite a consistent framework: the exact pattern of notes and associated rhythms varies subtly from one cycle to the next, so that the same pattern is rarely repeated identically in two consecutive cycles. The bottom key (*engabe*) player often does not play during these sections, or just maintains a simple rhythm or beat with his fist.

Variation: drumming sections

However, in large sections of the performance, the bass, tenor and top players switch from playing the *ekitundu* pattern, to play patterns on one or two notes only. The bass player plays mostly bass note 3 (and sometimes 2 or 5), the tenor mostly note 1 and sometimes also 3, and the top plays the top register 1 and 3, or alternatively 2 and 4. They are joined by the sixth player, who beats rhythms only on the bottom key (in these sections, the top part often plays similar rhythms to the bottom key player). These parts are derived from the several drums (*enene*, *endumi* and *engabe*) that accompany Soga ensembles. On the *embaire*, these 'drumming' parts add variety, and control the pace and excitement of the performance, while reflecting dance movements: it is important for these players to be able to see the dancers. Drumming sections are also played in songs without dancers. Some of the basic drumming patterns are provided in detail in the Appendix for the two main dance styles, *tamenhaibuga* and *irongo*: in performance, the drum patterns are often more complex than the transcriptions might suggest, and sometimes vary almost continuously.

Variation: conserved symmetries

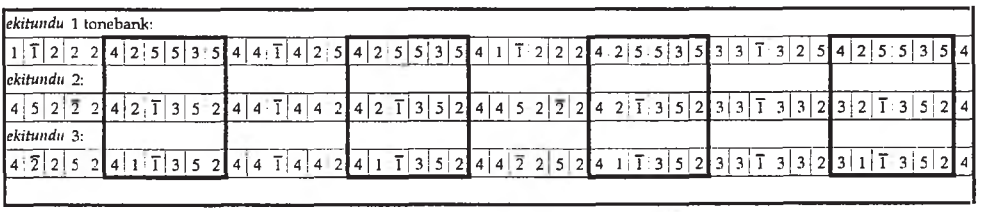
It is very common to find symmetries in both *amadinda* and *embaire* parts: these symmetries are often conserved when *embaire* parts are varied. This is well illustrated by the three *ebitundu* of the song *"Azirakunaaniya eyitaala"*. The three *ebitundu* all have recognisably similar starter parts, in spite of their numerous differences, (e.g. compared to the first *ekitundu*, the starter part of the second *ekitundu* has changed half the notes). The same can be said for the mixer parts too. The reason the parts remain similar is that the changes are mostly symmetric within the cycle, so that important elements of the structure of the parts are unchanged. For example, in the first *ekitundu* starter, there are four occurrences of the sequence pair 5 5, which are equally spaced apart in the pattern: in the second *ekitundu* starter, each occurrence of 5 5 is replaced by the sequence 3 2. The overall symmetry of the part is largely retained:



[Notice incidentally how, in the second *ekitundu*, the mixer part switches to playing all

occurrences in the pattern of the note 2 switched up one octave (effectively shifting the playing area one key to the right). This is another source of variation, creating a contrast in the sound texture between the two *ebitundu*.]

The tonebank of the first *ekitundu* has pronounced two-fold symmetry: that is, the second half of the pattern is like a variation of the first half. Not only this, there is also a four-fold symmetry: observe the sequence -425535- which repeats at equal intervals in the tonebank, four times in each cycle of the pattern. These symmetries are conserved in all three *ebitundu*. The following gives tonebanks of the three *ebitundu*, showing conserved four-fold symmetry outlined in boxes:



Ending

The cascade of sound is brought to an end with a coordinated finale. The ending is cued by the *enene* player: all the players stop at more or less the same instant, quickly followed by a final 'signature' rhythm played in unison by all the players. This coda is played at the end of each performance: it is a modified version of the traditional ending drum rhythm played for the *tamenhaibuga* dance. The Nakisenyi group finish their pieces in the same way, but with the unmodified drum rhythm. The coda is shown here for the starter player, but it is duplicated in all octaves by the other players:

Common xylophone styles

Fig. 2 summarises the ways in which xylophone parts are commonly interlocked in Buganda and Busoga, showing the rhythms of starter and mixer pattern interlocking for *amadinda* and *akadinda*, for comparison with '*kinyole*' and three more common *embaire* styles. It seems likely that there would be Lusoga terms that distinguish the three *embaire* styles, but we were unable to establish any; perhaps this is because they are interchangeable, so that the same songs may be performed in different styles, as shown below.

The 12-key *amadinda* from Buganda is played by at least two musicians (starter and mixer), one seated on either side of the instrument. Each plays a pattern at a constant rate of beats (usually a cycle of 12, 18 or 24 notes). The starter and mixer

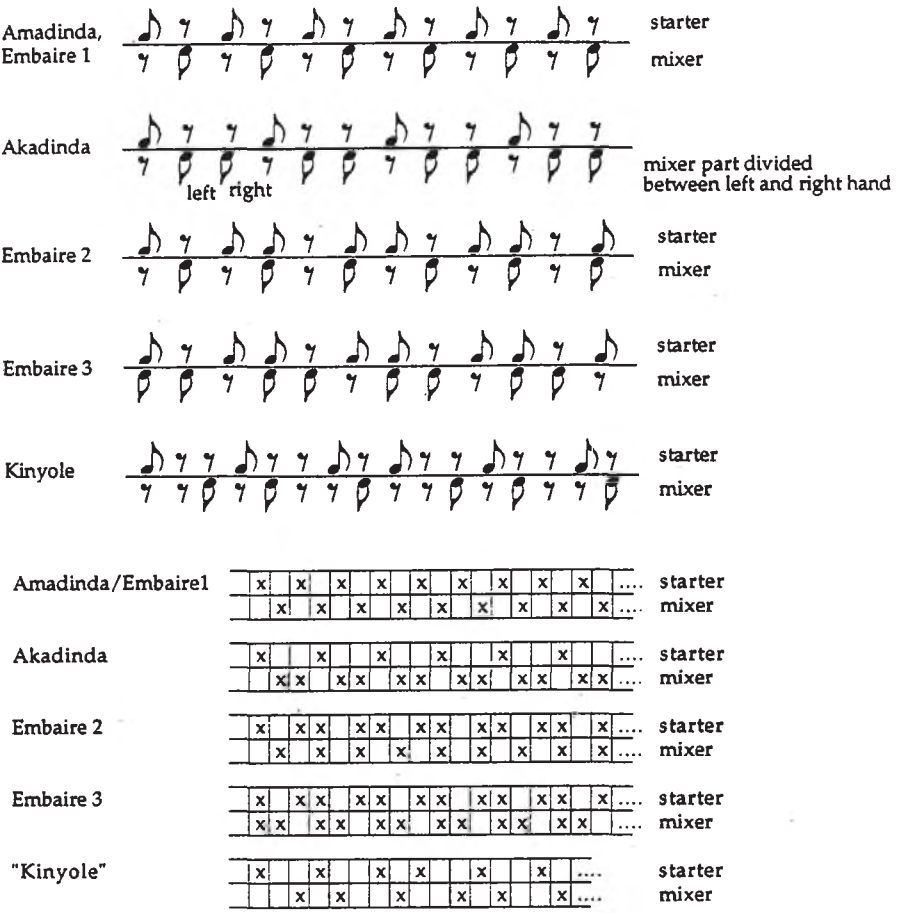
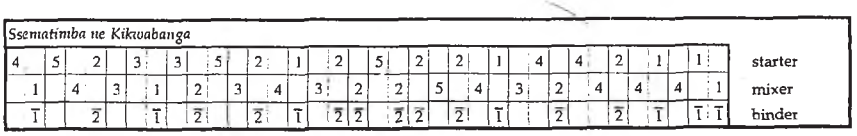


Fig. 2. Xylophone interlocking styles (Buganda and Busoga) shown in score and 'TUBS' notation. For all starter and mixer parts except *akadinda*, right hand duplicates left in octaves. *Akadinda* mixer part is divided between the left and right hand, either left-right as shown, or right-left, depending on which side of the instrument the player is seated.

parts interlock. That is, the beats of the mixer part are struck half-way between those of the starter part, creating a composite pattern that sounds at twice the speed of the two contributors: in performance, the stream of notes runs at more than 10 beats per second.[5] The complete set of notes in one full cycle of the parts is termed the "tonebank" by P.Cooke (1995). In fact, *amadinda* requires a third musician, who duplicates all the 1's and 2's in the tonebank, playing them on the top two keys of the instrument. The rhythm of this 'binder' pattern is unique to each song, and as such,

5The mixer part is not syncopated against the starter, but is really an independent cross-rhythm. P. Cooke's "Play Amadinda" teaching pack (1990) is a good introduction for those new to *amadinda* technique.

parts, for a well known Kiganda song:



So with *amadinda*, the mixer part inserts one note between each note of the starter part. *Akadinda* differs in that the mixer no longer plays his left and right hand simultaneously in octaves, but rather alternates them to insert two strokes between each beat of the starter, giving a triplet effect; a second mixer player duplicates the first mixer pattern an octave above (P. Cooke 1970, Kubik 1994).

In Buganda, the *amadinda* and *akadinda* represent two clearly distinctive approaches to interlocking xylophone parts. Interlocking styles seem to be more variable in Busoga, perhaps because of mixing and adoption of different traditions. The duple-time based rhythm of the *kinyole* style mentioned earlier suggests a Nilotic influence (P. Cooke 1995). The diversity may also be because there are more groups, each developing their own styles. A group described by Kubik (1992) thirty years ago combined four players on an 18-key instrument, two interlocking their parts rather like *amadinda*, the other two interlocking on the octave above in a manner similar to *akadinda*.

While there are several underlying styles of interlocking starter and mixer xylophone parts commonly used in Busoga, it seems likely that different xylophone groups feel free to develop their own individual approaches to the instrument. The transcriptions given here of the Nakibembe *embaire* group illustrate these basic styles, and how parts are further combined in various ways.

***Embaire* 1 style**

Probably the most common style played on 15-key Kisoga *embaire* with only two musicians employs the same interlocking technique as that of Kiganda *amadinda* (*Embaire* 1 style in Fig. 2). The song *"Azirakunaaniya eyitaala"* exemplifies this style as played on the large Nakibembe *embaire*. With *embaire* however, the playing area of the mixer is offset by one or more notes above the starter, so the playing areas of the starter and mixer parts only partially overlap (see Fig. 3). So, although individual *amadinda* starter or mixer parts are not obviously distinctive from *embaire* starter or mixer parts, the sound of *embaire* is quite different from that of *amadinda*.

Another reason for the different sound is the choice of notes in the tonebank. Kubik identified (1969) a number of three-note-sequences which apparently never occur in the tonebanks of *amadinda* compositions, some of which are common in *embaire* music (Kubik 1992). All 25 possible permutations of three-note-sequences

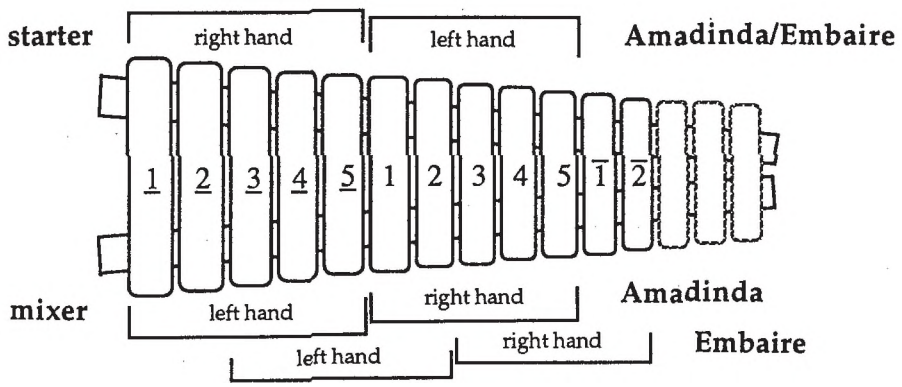


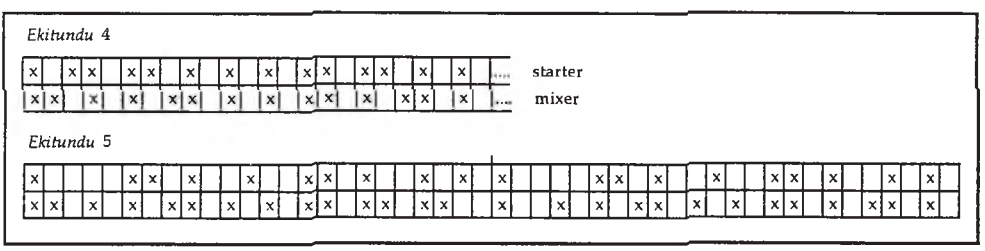
Fig. 3. *Embaire* mixer is offset compared to *amadinda* mixer (usually by one to three notes, most commonly two notes as shown here)

can be found in *embaire* songs we have transcribed. The most obvious example is that, in *amadinda* music, the same note is never repeated more than twice in succession in the tonebank; whereas *embaire* tonebanks frequently include runs of three or more of the same note. *Amadinda* music is reported to derive from *ennanga* harp compositions directly transferred to the xylophone, and Kubik suggests (1969) that the playing technique of the harp has influenced the structure of *amadinda* music: the difficulty of plucking the same string several times consecutively at great speed might account for the absence of such repeats in the *amadinda* tonebank.

These contrasts between *amadinda* and *embaire* may have their origin in differences in the style of singing between Kiganda and Kisoga music, no doubt reflecting linguistic differences, which most likely affect the choice of notes in the tonebank. In this vein, P. Cooke (1970) has shown how the phonology of a songline might actually underlie some apparent rules of *amadinda* composition that Kubik identified (1969).

Other embaire styles

The first two *ebitundu* of the song *"Omwoyo gulikudunguda"* exemplify two more methods of interlocking starter and mixer parts which are common in Busoga, and which give quite a different texture of sound from that of the preceding example. (*Embaire* styles 2 and 3 in Fig. 2).

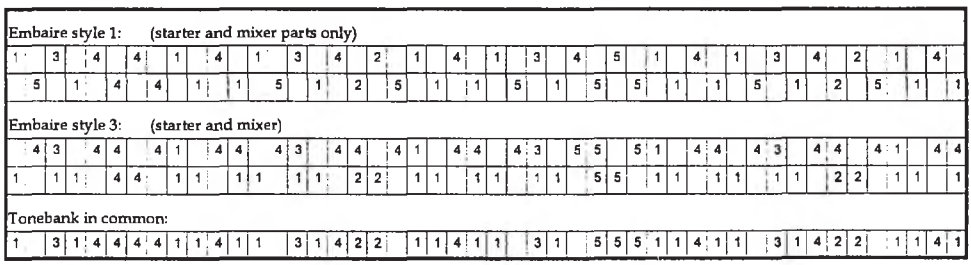


The 4th and 5th *ebitundu* (above) introduce rather more complicated rhythms for

with cycle length of 24 pulses, the mixer and tenor parts cycle length is 48 pulses).

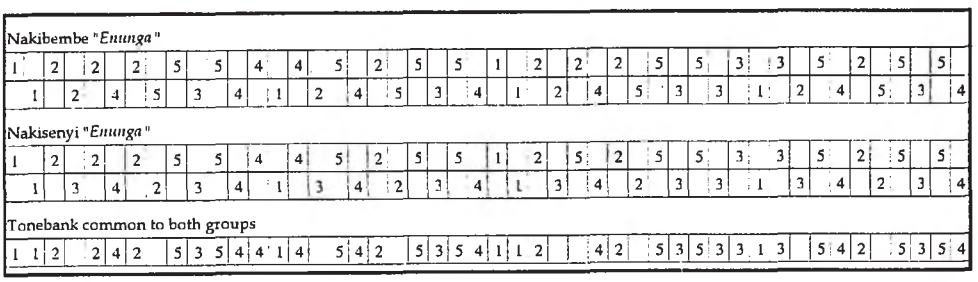
Same song, different style

The same song can be performed in different styles. The Nakisenyi group demonstrated this with the song *"Weirenziraante"*: although the individual players' parts are quite different, the resulting tonebanks of the two different styles are almost identical.

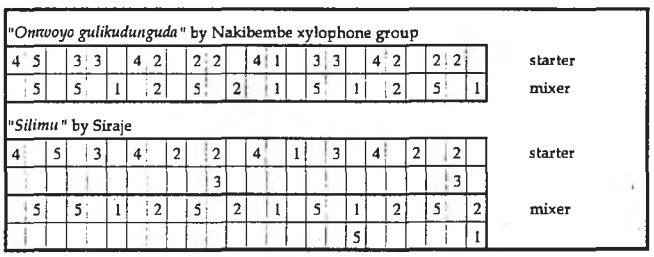


Shared repertoire

Different groups clearly have some songs in common. To illustrate this, the following example compares the Nakibembe version of the song *"Enunga/Azirakunaaniya eyitaala"* with that of Nakisenyi.



It is not clear whether this similarity is because it is an old tune with a common



historical origin, or due to one group copying another's song. Siraje explains that within the tradition, new songs are composed all the time: groups feel free to share

historical origin, or due to one group copying another's song. Siraje explains that within the tradition, new songs are composed all the time: groups feel free to share songs, and if a song becomes popular, it will be found in the repertory of several groups. A recorded tape available in the Iganga market ("Siraje" recorded by Lawrence Wangolo) includes the same song as *"Omwoyo gulikudunguda"* under the title *"Silimu"* (from 'slim', meaning AIDS). This is another example of the same song played with a different interlocking style – again, as might be expected, the different groups arrive at an almost identical tonebank (see previous page).

APPENDIX: GUIDE TO THE TRANSCRIPTIONS

[Note that these are printed on the fold-out pages at the back of the book]

Notation

We use 'TUBS' notation in which the 5 notes of the pentatonic xylophone scale are numbered in ascending order from 1 to 5. (If this precedent were not already set, it would have been preferable to number in the other direction, from the top down, since that is the direction of numbering used on all *embaire* encountered). Since the full *embaire* xylophone spans more than four octaves, the octave register is designated by lines below or above the note number (refer to Fig. 1 diagram of playing areas/note numbering scheme).

As usual, each box of the grid corresponds to one pulse of the cycle of notes. We have included the grid to help show more clearly the alignment of parts, allowing comparison of the notes struck in different parts on each pulse. Each line of the grid gives the pattern for one cycle of a player's part. This same pattern is repeated many times by the player, with more or less variation according to the part.

Most parts are played within a range of five keys of the xylophone, but there are exceptions (e.g. the tenor part in *"Omwoyo gulikudunguda", ekitundu 5*). The entry points of parts do not seem to be fixed, varying according to musicians' preferences, and for this reason, entry points have not been indicated on the transcriptions.

Chorus and solo usually sing in turn, each singing every alternate cycle of the xylophone parts. In the transcriptions, the cycle of xylophone parts as transcribed does not always match the phase of the song: song lines which do not fit into one line of transcription are continued on the line below. Sustaining of notes in the voice parts is shown by hyphenation.

The *ensaasi* shaker (box rattle) part is shown by asterisks. This part is usually accented: the larger asterisk indicates the emphasised stroke. The timing of the *akoma* hoe percussion is also shown.

The tonebank created by the combined basic starter and mixer parts is included in the first transcription for convenient reference. This is not to be confused as a xylophone part!

Variations

Variations of parts are shown in the line immediately below: many commonly involve changes of only one or two notes in the pattern, leaving the rest of the pattern unchanged: for these, only the changed notes in the pattern are indicated, in the box directly below the note(s) which they substitute. With variations involving more than two or three changes, the new pattern is written out in full. Performances include sporadic variations, continuing for one or a few cycles only, that may be accidental notes when playing at speed. Others are variants, reflecting consistent differences in the exact patterns used by a given musician, either as the

Please remember that the starter and mixer parts are both played with left and right hands in octave unison: only the upper octave line is shown in the transcriptions to save unnecessary duplications. Starter and mixer parts as shown in the transcriptions are repeated within an *ekitundu* with relatively little variation; the melodic parts shown for tenor and bass give a few snapshots of patterns that are used. The top player's part is almost continuously variable, in that the exact same pattern is seldom repeated in succession. Some of the top part transcriptions are sample excerpts of the continuous stream of minor variations; otherwise a representative selection of the commoner variations is shown, to give an indication of the kind of variation that is employed. Although the very topmost note of the instrument is often played, it seems that it was not used in the two songs transcribed.

The tenor and bass parts sometimes include bursts of notes in rapid succession: the technique for playing these involves use of both hand and stick, but it was not possible to provide reliable indications of hand strokes in these transcriptions. Distinct melodic tenor and bass parts were not recorded for the fourth *ekitundu* of "*Omwoyo gulikudunguda*".

Drumming parts

The bass and bottom-key 'drum' rhythm parts are much more variable than any of the melodic xylophone parts. Basic drum patterns for the *tamenhaibuga* and *irongo* dances, played on the tenor (*endumi*), bass (*enene*) and bottom key (*engabe*) are provided separately from the two song transcriptions. These are only a selection of some of the simpler patterns.

In performance of *tamenhaibuga*, the drum patterns, particularly of *enene* and *engabe*, are very variable. A sequence of several rhythms (Intro a-b-c) is consistently used as an initial introduction: this same sequence of rhythms is used at the end just before the cycle (Pre-cue) that anticipates the ending cue and final coda. A great variety of *tamenhaibuga* rhythms are employed in the central section, of which only a few examples are given (Exs. 1a, 1b, 2 and 3). The *endumi* patterns that accompany these various *enene* and *engabe* rhythms are relatively straightforward. Three examples are shown (accompanying Intro a-b-c): the same or similar *endumi* patterns would accompany the other examples of *enene/engabe* rhythms.

For *irongo*, the *enene* does not play: *engabe* provides a simpler accompaniment (of which one example is given) to a greater variety of *endumi* rhythms. However, to begin and end *irongo* pieces, the Nakibembe group uses the same rhythm sequences as for *tamenhaibuga* .

All the examples given of *engabe* parts are played with a stick in each hand, although there are times when this player uses the left hand without a stick. The *endumi* and *enene* parts are played with only one stick, held in the right hand: left hand strokes are played with the palm (hand flat) except where otherwise indicated. Some left hand strokes use a technique where the hand rocks from heel to tip: a stroke by the heel of the hand is followed by a stroke using the tip of the hand. Some left hand strokes are muted by holding the hand on the key. Some right hand stick strokes are also muted by the left hand held on the key. With occasional right hand strokes, the stick is stopped on the key.

Song texts

"Azirakunaanya eyitaala"

1. *enunga yanuma obwire kenzira akatala niyemba nakatala aye tenzira akunaanya*
   a bachelor sleeping, was bitten by *enunga* insect; he had a problem, with no wife to light a candle to see the *enunga*
2. *e....e....e.... mwoyo mulwayire*
   he is in a sad mood, because he has no wife

a candle to see the *enunga*

2. *e....e....e.... mwoyo mulwayire*
   he is in a sad mood, because he has no wife
3. *okobera abali eyo embaire zikaye*
   tell them: this *embaire* is great

"Omwoyo gulikudunguda"

1. *aa....ya....aa....mwoyo gulikudunguda*
   My heart is pumping – as of a man who is in love, but fears to say "I love you"
2. *wo...omwoyo.....wo...omwoyo*
   really I am feeling pain
3. *oyo omuwala bwabona kuyayenda omwoyo gwamudunguda*
   even a girl, when she sees him, she'll fall in love with him
4. *e...e...olumbe lwabu na ekyalo*
   though you are hoping for partners, be aware of AIDS, it is everywhere
5. *oyambala ngaku male wayidha twajja mumbaire*
   we should dress well, not wear rags to play the *embaire*

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The photographs related to this article can be found on our website at http://ilam.ru.ac.za.

16th Annual Conference of the ESEM (European Seminar in Ethnomusicology): John Blacking's Legacy

7-10 September 2000, The Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK.

John Blacking was the founder of ESEM, and it is, therefore, fitting that the association's millennial conference should be held at Queen's University Belfast, where he was based from 1971 to his death in 1990. Along with its regular membership, the ESEM is especially keen to attract people who worked with Blacking, in particular, former colleagues, associates and students. This reunion will provide a forum for assessing his impact upon the discipline around the world.

To honour his contributions to Ethnomusicology in Europe and beyond, proposals for papers are invited on topics that were of special interest to him, such as: the biology of music-making; the political implications of musical performance; children's music; the musics of initiation; the 'cultural analysis' of music; music scholarship in southern Africa; dance and the body; music and experience. Papers outlining 'work in progress' will also be considered.

Special events planned for the Conference include the 'Blacking Memorial Lecture', to be delivered by Paul Berliner; an African music workshop, conducted by Andrew Tracey; and a concert of Irish music, with the participation of Micheal O Suilleabhain, Cran, and Belfast Harps. There will also be a wine reception (sponsored by Queen's University) and a Conference Dinner (optional). Following the Conference Dinner, a room (with a bar) will be booked for an informal 'singaround', so bring your voices and your instruments!

Proposals for papers should be sent in duplicate, containing a short abstract (approximately 250 words) that outlines the themes to be addressed in the paper and the general theoretical thrust through which the argument is to be made. Presenters will be given 20 minutes to deliver their papers, followed by 10 minutes for questions. Proposals will also be accepted for 'alternative presentations' (films/videos, workshops, roundtable discussions etc.). Anyone intending to organise an alternative forum must inform the Programme Committee how long the session should last when submitting the proposal. Basic equipment (e.g., cassette/CD player, overhead/slide projector, video machine and monitor) will be available, but if any other special equipment is required, please make this clear in a note accompanying the abstract. There are plans to organise a collected volume dedicated to John Blacking, based upon papers presented at the Conference, and a contract for the volume is currently being negotiated. Those wishing to be considered for the volume are invited to inform the chairperson of the Programme Committee. In due course, guidelines to the contributors will be made available.

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