

kwaito's sounds while the car spins, in place. The sound of screeching tyres and the smell of exhaust fumes and burning rubber are part of the auditory realm and encapsulate the 'doubling of reality' Steingo reiterates throughout the book.

Steingo elucidates how his theory agrees but differs from that of Kant, Adorno, Bourdieu, McClarey and numerous others to illustrate how his account of the emergence of kwaito and how it is experienced does *not* conform with the usual parameters of musicological and ethnomusicological analysis. He rather follows the thought of philosopher Jacques Rancière as he carefully puts forth his theory that "music is not so much an illusion that hides reality than it is a way of doubling reality"(xi) and then proceeds throughout the book to show readers how it is that kwaito doubles reality. The aim of the book, he says, "is twofold. I hope to contribute to the development of ethnomusicology as a discipline and I also hope to elaborate an understanding of music that lives up to the challenges of the contemporary South African political situation"(x). Clearly he has done the latter; Steingo's creation of a music ethnography that engages and goes beyond existing critical theory to articulate a theory substantiated by the example kwaito also achieves his first aim to contribute to ethnomusicology, the discipline. The book is clearly written and deeply descriptive of Steingo's interlocutors' and his own experience of kwaito and its contexts in Soweto and beyond. The exigencies of kwaito's manufacture, consumption and impact on life experience are analyzed in depth by Steingo. His incisive ability to understand the genre's music industry and consumer milieus and theorize convincingly about them has produced insights that go far beyond the obvious in revealing the realities of kwaito's practitioners (both the producers who manufacture it and artists who work for them) and its consumers. His analytical prowess is admirable. Finally, this book is a must-read for those seeking to understand how and why ethnographic research is essential to practice in ethnomusicology.

Diane Thram, Rhodes University

Staging Ghana: Artistry and Nationalism in State Dance Ensembles. Paul Schauert. 2015. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 29 online media examples at Ethnomusicology Multimedia Series, 15 figures, bibliography, index, 343 pp.

With examples such as David Gweshe's troupe from Zimbabwe, the Ballet National du Mali or the National Dance Troupe from Tanzania, the representation of nationhood through national dance ensembles has become popular in many postcolonial countries in Africa. After independence, for Nkrumah, representing or 'staging' the idea of a nation was an attempt at bringing awareness to the cultural plurality in postcolonial Ghana (82). Rather than promoting cultural plurality, many ideals of postcolonial nationalism over-represented the largest ethnic group of many, newly independent nations in Africa. Examples of the latter would be the elevation of Shona music by the Zimbabwean African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) in Zimbabwe,

the promotion of the music of the amaXhosa and amaZulu by the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa or the lack of support of Berber music by the Moroccan Kingdom and the Algerian *Front de liberation national* (FLN).

In this book, Schauert examines the performers' agency in the Ghana Dance Ensemble (GDE) and how they 'manage' their representation of Ghanaian culture within the country and internationally (5). In comparison to other books based on the study of musical representations of postcolonial nationalisms through performance, Schauert examines how the performer negotiates his or her agency and interest in nationhood through membership to the GDE (5).

Schauert's book is divided into six chapters and a conclusion which analyse the GDE from its genesis in 1962 to the present day. Chapter One describes how the GDE was part of Nkrumah's nationalist project which was informed by promoting cultural plurality and by challenging the ethnic partition of Ghana during British colonialism (34). This chapter provides a narrative about the foundations of GDE, which may be considered as part of the first independent African country on the continent in relation to Nkrumah's notion of 'African personality'. 'African personality' was described as the possibility of linking pre-colonial and post-colonial narratives in a new, decolonised country (43). This chapter explains how Nkrumah's notion of 'African personality' contributed to exploring the main cultural, social and spiritual symbols of Ghanaian dances and their continuum through GDE's artistic representation of postcolonial Ghana. Within the University of Ghana where GDE had emerged, Nkrumah's notion of 'African personality' was used to bring African scholars from different countries together to help liberate the continent from the yoke of colonialism and to implement socialism in Africa. Through Nkrumah's project the University of Ghana became the epicentre for the possible Africanisation of the continent in social, political and cultural contexts.

Chapter Two examines how some Ghanaian traditional dances were modified by band members from the GDE. The first part of this chapter provides an insight into the notion of authenticity in artistic agency in relation to the main characteristics of dances that represent the nation. Later, Chapter Two examines how individuals from GDE 'manage' the idea of authenticity during their careers with the national dance ensemble (81). As an example, the author mentions how a GDE member who was influenced by a North American choreographer, Williams, explored the possibility of bringing American contemporary movements into Ghanaian traditional dances (105). The inclination by GDE members to fuse traditional dances with external influences was evident from the 1960s.

In Chapter Three, Schauert describes how many GDE members transcend traditional social hierarchies (ethnic, age) by gaining access to education and their social status gaining them entry into national and international social networks. Many GDE members became educated and multilingual through their membership to the national ensemble. The author describes how there are ranks and positions with difference wages within the national ensemble. Schauert observes that this arrangement may resemble the colonial project rather than a new postcolonial structure. The senior

positions are determined not only by professional skills but also by the commitment and discipline shown over a period of time (126). In relation to the discipline and education acquired as a GDE member, Schauert describes how they become professional dancers or musicians. As an example, the author mentions different situations in which individuals from the dance ensemble had to negotiate their artistic skills with external agents during their performances abroad and the possibility of 'being disobedient' by not returning to Ghana after international tours (148).

Chapter Four focuses on the interaction between GDE members and the state with them expressing their discontent in performances. The author starts by reporting about the death of the Ghanaian president, John Atta Mills, in 2012, and how it affected the GDE members who performed on TV to commemorate Mills while they were frustrated by the government's lack of support. In relation to the discontent of the dance ensemble, this chapter indirectly explores the GDE's ways of criticising the Ghanaian government. By using subtle forms of criticism towards the government, the dance troupe provides a new social engagement with the public. As another form of social criticism and approach to tradition, the chapter continues by analysing the importance of representing symbols within music cultures and how the state banned certain dances for their sexual connotations. Nkrumah's government established the directions of how GDE dances should represent the nation, which excluded any form of sexually suggestive movements (170). The chapter analyses other aspects to the president's policy on the promotion of a national culture, pointing out Rawling's passion for music and dance (176). In contrast, Schauert describes how some GDE members did not appreciate Kufuor's policy on culture and how they showed their discontent during their performances. The author states that Kufuor promoted Ghanaian cultural diversity by improving the cultural policy of Ghana in 2004 (191). This is one of the few chapters in which Schauert provides a positive view about the improvements made by the state towards its cultural policy, which is in contrast to his criticism of the Ghanaian government in other chapters.

In Chapter Five, the author analyses the bifurcation of the ensemble between the University of Ghana in Legon and in the National Theatre in Accra. This chapter examines how the GDE troupe in Legon maintains the traditional dances while the Folkloric Dance Company (FDC) in Accra is moving towards contemporary African dances. Compared to the FDC the author describes how the GDE had higher salaries and more opportunities to travel abroad. This chapter deals with the different power structures and their decisions to promote Ghanaian dances by using traditional and contemporary influences in their dances.

Lastly, in Chapter Six, the author examines the different, creative forms in which GDE's individual members express their personal views as related to their understanding of nationhood. Schauert emphasises the role of GDE's artistic directors in either pointing out perceived notions of authenticity or individual creativity in staging the nation. For instance, in the 1960s, Addy (GDE director) attempted to fuse traditional dances with external influences whereas the following director, Okopu, tried to search

for authenticity and tradition in his choreography although he modified certain elements (244). Schauert remarks on the role of the last GDE director, Nii-Yartey, who introduced contemporary forms of dance to the extent that the public was not familiar with some of the choreographies created by him (249). The author describes how the dichotomy between tradition and contemporary dance created a difficulty for Nii-Yartey. Schauert differentiates between Okopu as an arranger of traditional music and Nii-Yartey as an innovator in GDE (254). One of the more remarkable parts of this chapter is the author's analyses of Nii-Yartey's dissemination of Ghanaian traditional dances in relation to his innovative choreographies.

Schauert's book provides a valuable study on how individual performers represent the nation and their personal views through membership to the GDE. The book provides valuable descriptions of GDE's performances and its representation of nationalism. In comparison to this study of the GDE the book lacks examples of Ghanaian dance troupes from other regions in Ghana and how they represent a collective or individual agency in the former colony. The possibility of offering a comparative study between national and non-national dance ensembles in Ghana could have gained insight from Askew's (2002: 269) study of the music of a postcolonial state (or any state) in which national ensembles differ from the representation of the subaltern's ensembles. In addition, in order to not essentialise the African continent through the representation of nationhood by GDE in Ghana, the possibility of including more examples of national dance ensembles in other African countries would have provided a wider scope of artistic agency in a former colony. The author briefly mentions certain studies on cultural nationalism in some African countries such as Tanzania (Edmondson 2007) or Burkina Faso (Mayen 2006).

This book offers rich analyses of artistic agency in relation to its relationship with certain theoretical concepts used in interdisciplinary studies such as cosmopolitanism, nationhood or globalisation (although not the Global South). The book is mostly an ethnography on how the artists represent their perceptions of a national culture and the apparent dichotomies between traditional/contemporary, urban/rural, global/local in postcolonial Ghana. Schauert's book will be of great interest for scholars interested in the representation of Ghanaian music through the performances of a national troupe who seems to combine a sense of community with individual agency.

References

Askew, Kelly

- 2002 *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania*. Philp V. Bohlman and Bruno Nettl, eds. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Edmondson, Laura

- 2007 *Performance and Politics in Tanzania: The Nation on Stage*.
Bloomington: Indiana University Press.