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Exploring Music Performance Practices in the Zimbabwe Republic Police

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Abstract

The study explored the music performance practices in the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP). The authors examined musical practices envisioned in the ZRP from colonial times to date. The ZRP music section has dance and brass bands, traditional dance, and vocal ensembles. The study focused on the ZRP dance and brass bands since they were subjected to colonial practices. Decoloniality theory was used to interrogate the data. A qualitative research methodology was used to examine the ZRP musical practices. Thirty participants were purposively sampled from current and ex-members of the ZRP. The study collected data through interviews and observations to understand the ZRP musical practices. The study explored topics including sight-reading, harmony, discipline, performance of copyrighted music, European songs, and transcription to explain how they affected the musical practices of the ZRP. The data showed that certain practices, like the playing of “Roast Beef of Old England” depicts the colonial system. Other practices, like playing European calls at national and police ceremonial events did not reflect African contexts. Although the ZRP incorporated indigenous musical practices into their musical renditions, more musical activities are needed to replace the fanfare and songs, including “Scipio,” “Road to the Isles,” and “Waltzing Matilda.”

Keywords: African; colonial legacy; musical culture; performance; police; Western culture

Introduction

The arrival and settlement of European settlers in Zimbabwe dates back to 1890 with a team headed by Cecil John Rhodes, the director of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in Mashonaland and later in Matabeleland (Harding 1937). The expedition was protected by the BSAC's police force, the British South Africa Police (BSAP). The BSAP recruited black Africans in 1896 (Chaza 1998). The black policemen, also known as *mabhurakwacha* (localised name for black watcher with derogatory connotations), were meant to undertake all the dirty work for the colonial masters such as crushing any form of dissent, torturing those who spoke against the white colonial government, and shooting protesters using live bullets. All these acts of tyranny were openly committed to instil fear, break resistance, and impose a new sociopolitical culture among the black majority (Chaza 1998). Policing by cohesion on the part of the BSAP was meant to completely undo all African religious practices and beliefs (their way of living and music-making). The BSAP wanted to subject locals to the new music culture of brass bands without questioning or resisting. Military music was a tool with which to advance the cultural and political oppression of the indigenous people in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). It is from this police force that the British South Africa Police Band was formed in 1896. According to Hamley (2011, 49), "It is known that the British South Africa Police had a band in Salisbury, under the direction of band master C.W. Day and it was from that source that musicians were drawn to form the first regimental band of the British South Africa Police in 1896." The British South Africa regimental band performed at military parades, royal garden dinners, funeral services of members (white police officers), horse competitions, pay parades, state occasions, and private parties by the elite settlers. The BSAP band's musical venues and functions were intended to proffer a new "modern" and "civilised" musical culture among the indigenous African people. Brucher and Reily (2016) note that the establishment of military bands in European colonies was clearly aimed at impressing the colonial masters and promoting a sense of amazement among the indigenous people. Hamley (2011) states that the Rhodesian regimental band was actually an extension of the police band in England in terms of focus, repertoire, and administration. They had an obligation to observe the same processes including commemorations and celebrations which were revered by the administration in England and imposed on its colonies. For instance, in 1897 the BSAP band performed at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, both in Bulawayo and Salisbury (present Harare) as a way of showing allegiance and solidarity to the British monarchy. Although little was recorded of military bands in early Rhodesian history, the BSAP band was mainly a colonial project aimed at advancing the cultural and technological superiority of European music. Although the BSAP was mainly white-dominated, by 1923 the force had a considerable number of African members in their bid to maintain law and order. In the 1950s, the responsibility of managing border control and counter-insurgency saw more African recruits such that by the 1960s the majority of the force were blacks. In 1965, during the unilateral declaration of independence (UDI), the force assumed the name Rhodesian Security Force (RSF)

largely to keep law and order. In 1979 the RSF was replaced by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP), which is what it is still known as.

After independence in 1980, the black majority government inherited most of the systems of colonial governance in the political, economic, social, and military domains. The ZRP was rolled out and was affected by the stigma of the colonial system with regard to structure, uniforms, command and control, statutes, and training. The ZRP's music section in particular inherited most if not all of the colonial systems of music-making and performance from music repertoire, music directors, and instrumentation. The colonial legacies remained in force in the ZRP as Dick Hall, a former BSAP cadre, averred: "As a world-class police force and second to none, we left a fine legacy now completely undone" (Hall 2015, 38). This notion implies that the Western way of policing, music-making, performance, and instruction are deeply entrenched and not easily removed from the music section and the police force as a whole. In spite of some reforms within the ZRP with more autonomy and reflection of African identity than in the colonial past, some traces of the past continue to linger in the musical performances of the ZRP. For instance, there is no solid explanation regarding the performance of colonial legacy compositions like "Roast Beef of Old England" during police functions. "Roast Beef" is an English patriotic ballad that was composed by Henry Fielding in 1731 and was recognised by colonial soldiers as the signal for representatives to come and draw rations (Murray 1994). "Roast Beef" became a deep-seated ritual in the British army; it was (and still is) traditionally played when English officers went to dine (Murray 1994). This inherited musical performance or ritual is not in sync with the African way of serving dinner. An African dinner is rarely accompanied by musical entertainment or any other form of musical signal; people gather to eat when called to do so by the elderly women of the society who in most cases would have prepared the dishes. However, this does not necessarily mean Africans observe complete silence during dinner; elders chart the way forward on pertinent issues affecting their work programmes. Children are usually chastised not to speak or sing while eating as this will distract elders from hearing others as they discuss. Apart from the colonial repertoire, *hosho*, *mbira*, and *ngoma* instruments are yet to find a place in the ZRP music section more than 40 years after independence.

However, not all colonial legacies are undesirable to the contemporary music performance of the ZRP. It is an undeniable fact that some colonial traits such as music notations, musical arrangement, the playing of copyrighted music, and discipline have brought some good to the performance of the ZRP. Conversely, these traits have had a diminishing effect on the creativity, art, and improvisation expected in African performances. In some instances, these traits have created strait jackets in the routine of duties of the ZRP and reinforced the Western approach to music performance and instruction. The problem at hand is that although some aspects have remained relevant, transformation and the relinquishing of an irrelevant colonial legacy to suit contemporary music performance is slow. The motivation behind exposing the impact of colonial legacies on the ZRP dance and brass bands is to influence flexibility on

colonial aspects which affect music performance and bring about a policy change in that regard. The two bands have a colonial musical orientation that needs to be explored. Imbombe, the other musical section, and traditional dance are derived from various Zimbabwean musical cultures, hence there is no need to study them now. Furthermore, the authors are driven by the need to address the scarcity in literature regarding the ZRP music section in Zimbabwe; therefore, the study interrogates the impact of colonial legacies on current ZRP performance practices under the spotlight of contemporary and modern society as a means of inculcating an Africa-oriented musical culture which is socially relevant and acceptable to the people of Zimbabwe. The people share common aspects of the musical cultures in Zimbabwe from which the performers at ZRP are drawn.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative research methodology which culminated in observations and interviews of selected members of the ZRP. This methodology enabled the authors to take note of what was happening during the study with room to write down the important details (Lune and Berg 2017). A total of 19 males and 11 females were selected using purposive sampling from a total of 203 current and past ZRP members. The researchers pledged to keep the participants' identities confidential and to respect their views even if they differed from their own. Special consideration was made to cater for gender balance. Since the ZRP music section had more male members than females, the ratio of 19 to 11 was justifiable. The participants included members currently serving in the music section as well as ex-members who had served in both the ZRP and Rhodesian band. The ex-members (two females and four males) provided insights into the musical practices of the force both in colonial and post-colonial times. A structured interview made up of both closed and open-ended questions was used to solicit information from the participants. Ballena (2021) holds that open-ended questions give more options on impartial responses while close-ended questions force the informants to stick to the subject matter. Pattern or thematic analysis was used to make sense of the interview data. Document analysis was used to study primary textual sources such as journal articles, books, official documents, historical narratives, magazines, and online publications relating to the ZRP (O'Leary 2004). Content analysis helped to establish some notions, trends, and implications in the study (Berg and Latin 2008).

Theoretical Framework

The study is premised on the theory of decoloniality as a philosophy that seeks to foster what colonisers deprived the colonised people in Africa of (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020), decolonisation entails enabling the once colonised people to fully exercise a sense of belonging, citizenship, restoration of their dignity, and sovereignty. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) further holds that decolonisation is a process of rehumanising and bringing in new forms of life to the people. Decolonisation is tailored to make the people who were once oppressed into creative, expressive crafts

persons who can chart their own destiny and future. Oelofsen (2015) advances the view that decolonisation is supposed to take place in the minds of the people. The mind can be a colonial stronghold if it is not subjected to decolonisation. This study argues that musical performance and expressivity in the BSAP were subjected to colonial hegemony. The colonial masters dictated and prescribed the musical practices. After independence, the government of Zimbabwe changed from the BSAP to the ZRP as a way of embracing the identity of the Zimbabwean people as they moved away from colonialism. The authors appreciate that not all colonial systems should be done away with but argue that there is a need for reflection on the musical culture of the people who perform the music to be relevant more than to perpetuate a wholly Western musical culture especially more than 40 years after independence in Zimbabwe. The study holds that the decolonisation of musical practices will allow the musical cultures of the people of Zimbabwe to appear through the ZRP's musical performances. In contemporary society, the ZRP's musical practices should not be dominated by Western music cultures as was the case before independence. The authors hold that musical cultures are unique and draw meaning from the inherent set of beliefs, values, and norms of the people who own them. Different cultures approach music differently, hence the authors argue that no musical culture is superior to another. The people of Zimbabwe should be allowed to express themselves in their own unique ways.

Colonial Legacy

Young (1995, 24) stated, "Overall colonial legacy cast its shadow over the emergent African state system to a degree unique among the major world regions." The proposition is that Africa can neither be elucidated nor understood without unravelling the continent's colonial experience. To understand and appreciate the current ZRP, it is necessary to look at the embedded historical perspective and origins of the organisation. Colonialism as a political, economic, and social institution affected all aspects of African development (Achola, Ndege, and Ondieki 2009). European annexation in Zimbabwe led to the imposition of the colonial world-view (Rodney 1972). It distorted traditional education and led to the abandonment of indigenous development programmes that had operated for hundreds of years (Nyerere 1968). Colonialism aimed to create blacks with foreign cultural traditions. We concur with the premise that Africans had to assimilate into the European lifestyles and values that at times undermined their identity and self-perceptions (Shizha and Kariwo 2011). Traditional African cultural practices were shelved to pave the way for foreign customs of doing things as Africans became westernised. Western culture was then viewed as leading advancement as Africans had to devise ways of shifting the overriding narrative and engage in a deconstruction of colonial supremacy and misrepresentation of the indigenous people's culture. Colonialism imposed an annulment of African identity in musical performances. The economic, social, and political undertakings of the African continent have been influenced by the policies enacted by the white colonial regime. Burchard (2005) asserts that the exact nature and gravity of colonial legacies varies widely within countries. Consequently, the nature of the colonial bequests has been

debated in literature that articulates African development. Some of the legacies that exert a colonial influence on musical performances in the ZRP include Western transcription, sight-reading, and a defined code of discipline.

Music Notation and Sight-Reading

Richman (1986) points out that sight-reading is the art of playing/singing music notated on a sheet without unnecessary repetitions. It is similar to reading a written sentence or paragraph. The skill is developed over time ranging from one to four years. It requires one to be open and ready to take up information. Worries, uncertainties, qualms, expectations, and disturbances are great inhibitors. Playing notated music is a legacy which has been held in the band for a very long time. Hamley (2011) notes that on completion of basic police recruit training, members of the BSAP regimental band received comprehensive music training in sight-reading and music notation. However, it was not easy to bring in a new music performing culture to Africans in the band who came from a cultural background where musical literacy was not emphasised and music transmission had taken place orally over many generations. Music instructors such as Sergeant Sparks made use of any acceptable method of teaching music which helped the Africans in the band understand music notation and sight-reading (Hamley 2011). For example, he taught musical notation by associating music symbols with the differing denominations of local currency. A currency denomination like one pound (equivalent to four ticks) was used to represent the semibreve. Whenever Sergeant Sparks raised such a denomination the trainee musicians would play or hum four counts (Taa-aa-aa-aa). Smaller denominations represented shorter note values. This customised knowledge system of teaching helped to address the gap in understanding the Western system of interpreting music which was imposed by the colonial administration in Southern Rhodesia.

The participants stated that playing from notated parts has continued to be revered in modern-day ZRP music. Data from the interviews show that ZRP brass band performances are mainly informed by notated pieces and staff notation is used as a language for the communication of instruments and voices. There is general agreement among band members that reading music makes the band look and sound professional. They contend that only through reading music can they truly understand the music, play together, and sound as one. It is discouraged within the band not to play the piece as it is written or without strict adherence of the composer's staff or solfège expression. In her study of Christmas bands in South Africa, Bruinders (2015) pointed out that sight-reading music differentiates the real musicians from those who are not. She is of the view that when musicians read from a score there is thoroughness in learning that music and they will never forget it because the notes are there at all times. The ability to sight-read is a major strength which gives ZRP musicians a competitive edge over other brass bands and competitors in the country. The ZRP is most preferred when it comes to performing foreign national anthems and music during state visits, which shows that the perpetuation of the two colonial legacies (sight-reading and music notation) is

inevitable. Contemporary bookings, functions, and performances of the ZRP still call for the application of sight-reading of notated musical pieces.

Africans in the ZRP have historically found it difficult to interpret printed music. Some of the bandsmen performed well when they listened to the melody and then mastered the fingering pattern, as they are adept at performing by ear. It is undeniable that performing by ear (orally) is an attribute among Africans which always takes centre stage no matter how much they are conditioned to a new culture of music performance. Gerou and Lusk (1996) advance the viewpoint that for music to be easily and effectively performed and communicable as a language, the notation should closely stick to people's values, systems, and guidelines in terms of music-making. The proponents of sight-reading always miss this overt fact that different cultures interpret music in uniquely different ways even though music-making may be a universal phenomenon. Apart from being difficult to interpret and perform, playing notated parts was described as having a diminishing effect on the overall musicianship of performers in the ZRP brass band. About 70% of serving members in the ZRP indicated that over-reliance on notated music created a strait jacket in music performers. They held that if performers are used to seeing notes represented on the score all the time, they can face a lot of difficulties when performing music that is not notated as is always the case with African performance composition. Nzewi (2010) says performance composition is the ability to recreate a known piece spontaneously in order to capture the exigencies of extra-musical intentions or non-musical contexts without making reference to printed music scores. Thus, the Western concept of strict observance of the given sheet music is a distraction; instead of instigating positive developmental changes it results in reduced musical identity within ZRP music performances which leaves bandmasters and station tutors with an obligation to strike a balance between the oral and literacy methods of performing music.

Discipline

In this study, discipline refers to the ability to obey rules and orders including all issues of command and control. Chaza (1998) states that the BSAP, being a paramilitary division, skilled its personnel (including bandsmen) in diverse disciplines aimed at expanding the scope of the trainees in anticipation of what they would meet in the course of their duties. "Paramilitary" denotes a semi-militarised force whose organisational structure, tactics, training, subculture, and (often) functions are similar to those of a professional military. The significance of discipline was inculcated into the trainees in various ways. Foot and arms drills were military aspects of the BSAP training, while law and police procedures were vital parts of police training. These aspects were followed by other general and everyday police focus areas such as horse grazing guard, horse grooming, stable picket, office orderly, first aid, guard house and guard escort duties, physical training, catering, and camp cleaning (Gibbs and Phillips 2002). These aspects are still part of the police today; every police recruit (including bandsmen) perform these duties during training. These activities are aimed at shaping the

behaviour, attitudes, and skills of trainees in preparation for police duties. However, not much has been done to investigate how this discipline impacts the general character of musicians and music performance in the ZRP.

The female participants mentioned that some of the activities offered in recruit training like musketry are more suited to prepare individuals for basic police work; they do not stir up the necessary musical skills although they shape the physical and mental focus. The major challenge with recruit training is that it instils in members an extraordinary discipline which does not resonate with stage performance. Because of this, the performance of the music section is often characterised by reservations not common in other local bands. Stage performance is characterised by the expression of feelings, emotions, and behaviour consistent with performances. The ZRP members usually fail to attain such climactic performances on stage because of the inbuilt code of conduct cultivated during recruit training. The code of conduct is informed by numerous regulations and the Police Act. For example, an individual should behave in a manner which is not likely to bring disrepute to the police force or be prejudicial to good order. This provision of the Police Act is very subjective in nature and yet it informs the conduct of musicians on stage. Music is an art which is supposed to be expressed freely without fear of being punished. In the African tradition, *vana gwenyambira* (“music artists”) are not restricted in any way in their performances and movement. In general, the ZRP music performances are more attached to institutional requirements. The majority of the performers are yet to exploit their full innate attributes. However, a few express themselves freely. Musicians can express themselves to their full potential if they are not subjected to strict authority and orders; therefore, this poses a dilemma regarding the way to go. First, the authors would like to imagine what would happen in a state institution if there were no limits to freedom of expression. There is some doubt as to whether, to avoid such extremes, the colonial masters had structured things in such a way that one did not question authority. Certainly, the researchers think that this approach is an effective way to instil order. From a different perspective it does not work as it pacifies the creativity of performers; hence the researchers think that quite a number of recordings would have been made if the ZRP had opened up an avenue that promotes creativity. This study thus opts for the ZRP music section to strike a balance and allow members to fully express their innate attributes under certain parameters to protect the image of the force and the state.

The male participants in this study had different views to those of their female counterparts. They found the military side of training unbearable but necessary for discipline. Apart from playing music, ZRP band members like other members of the force have an obligation to arrest and detain. As such it is not always the case that trainees who start off as ZRP music members remain there until retirement; they can be transferred to other sections within the ZRP. They all held that military training is necessary and has direct relevance to all those who serve in the ZRP regardless of section. The researchers hold that recruit training inculcates the necessary discipline among music performers in the ZRP. The performance of the members is characterised

by soberness on stage, a high standard of turnout, systematic and logical presentation of music programmes, and timeously reporting for duty. It is undoubtedly so that these aspects are only cultivated through training. It was also noted that discipline during performance was the main reason why many clients opt for the services of the music section despite the cost being out of some clients' reach. Thus, the ZRP band has become successful because of being disciplined on and off the stage. Without discipline a performance is usually characterised by lack of order and unpredictability. All the participants agreed that discipline is the missing link in some of the local music bands. They reported that while there might be good instrument players in other bands, the manner in which they present themselves both on and off the stage leaves a lot to be desired. Some popular musicians sealed their fate and ended up bankrupt, dead, or jailed because of lack of discipline. The authors concur that discipline guides a musician to career success. Musicianship thrives with discipline; examples include Charles Charamba, Mechanic Manyeruke, Thomas Mapfumo, Oliver Mtukudzi, Alick Macheso, and Nicholas Zachariah. These and other musicians stood the test of time to become legends of the current generation. The authors note that the cultivated behaviour after recruit training can have a direct bearing on the performance of musicians. Such positive aspects should be maintained and irrelevant and extraneous activities of the training process inherited from the colonial regime should be relinquished.

Copyright

Copyright is a legal protection accorded to different kinds of created works such as musical compositions or songs, lyrics, records, poems, books, films, TV shows, computer software, and even commercials (Strand, Kouchoukas, and Rather 2005). Zimbabwe's Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act [Chapter 26:05] is an adaptation of the Copyright and Neighbouring Act of 9 September 1965 which provides for the registration of copyrights and other matters in terms of the act. The legacy of playing copyrighted music within the music section has a long history. The BSAP band's musical performances were mainly informed by copyrighted music. According to Barry (2009, 27), "In 1939 the Bandmaster, then Sergeant Max Sparks, arranged the tune Kum-A-Kye, a local adaptation of a folk song from the American West, so the band could play it." However, questions arose over copyright of the tune. Letters were sent to London to see if the tune breached any copyright in existence and permission was granted. The playing of copyrighted music from Europe and America was meant to suppress indigenous music in Rhodesia and make locals follow the music footpath of the colonisers. If it were not for modernity and domination, the ideal situation was to play original compositions rooted in the African tradition.

A number of participants acknowledged that playing the music of other artists is still prevalent in ZRP music performances, and estimated the range to be between 90% and 100%. This shows that playing copyrighted music is a very strong tradition which is relied upon in delivering musical services to clients as compared with original compositions. Makwenda (2005) also asserts that the ZRP has a history of playing

copyrighted music, singing exactly as it sounds on radio. Although this tradition is viewed as important by the rank and file of the ZRP, it seems reasonable that original compositions should comprise the major share in all performances. Playing original compositions is the only way the ZRP's identity and brand can be reinforced. For example, one of the few compositions done after independence, "Mapurisa iShamwari Dzakanaka" ("Police Officers are Good Friends"), reinforces the brand and identity of the ZRP music section and the piece has been used for a long time as a tool to promote police public relations. In fact, the ZRP music section has become comfortable in being emulators as a way to earn popularity. The ZRP musicians derive satisfaction in perfecting works of popular artists like Alick Macheso or Jah Prayzah. Resultantly, the ZRP music section is losing the benchmark status or the epitome of excellent musical performance and composition. In addition, the most pressing issue is that all ZRP music section members are fully employed to perform music and there is nothing different from their counterparts—popular musicians like Alick Macheso and Suluman Chimbetu who are capable of composing new music though not notated. They all wake up every day to work on perfecting their skills in performing music and yet the difference is in performing copyrighted music and original compositions.

Twenty-seven of the participants expressed that over-reliance on copyrighted music was the major contributing factor affecting the lack of original works or music compositions within the ZRP. The researchers also subscribe to this view because ZRP performers spend most of their time perfecting what other musicians have done and dedicate little effort towards original compositions. Another contributory element is the lack of a clear policy that promotes and governs what people should do in terms of composing and publishing for the ZRP music section. The researchers hold that the absence of such a policy is because of the fact that the ZRP music section members have a salary paid by the organisation whether they have performances or not. Conversely the musicians in the community rely on their own music compositions and performances to earn a living and that difference is the motivation behind their trade as musicians. The ZRP musicians have found solace in the playing of copyrighted music. However, apart from all the negative impacts of playing copyrighted music, this tradition has somewhat improved the performance skills of singers and instrumentalists within the ZRP. Their singing and playing are always sharpened by the desire to reproduce the exact artistic work of the original creator. The ZRP music section has also remained relevant in the market because the playing of copyrighted music enhances its ability to satisfy the musical tastes of customers from different walks of life.

Four-Part Harmony and European Syllabi

According to Shizha and Kariwo (2011), the missionaries and colonial administrators introduced an education system designed to marginalise Africans overtly and explicitly and fortify African subjection. To some extent colonial instruction resulted in some psycho-cultural control. Makwenda (2005) says that missionaries established stations and schools and used hymns in proselytising and in their church services. According to

Taaffe (2011), four-part harmony is an inheritance of the missionaries. The traditional indigenous songs of Zimbabwe have a two-part harmonic structure: male and female parts, with hocketing lines of contrasting rhythms in between. For example, there are lots of problems which confront the people when singing the national anthem of Zimbabwe alongside the ZRP brass band at large gatherings. The general population tend to sing in a two-part harmonic structure contrary to the notated four vocal parts. The alluded challenge indicates the conflict between the cultural legacy of the indigenous knowledge systems and the colonial lines of thought. Thorsén (2004) mentions that in some countries control and supervision of European-inspired syllabi and examination systems is in the hands of the former colonial governments. In areas where colonial settlers lived, the music education was imprinted by the needs of the minorities to preserve European dominance. In Zimbabwe, the researchers observed that the settlers' culture dominated the stage for music performance, education, and scholarship. The British Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) conducts examinations in Zimbabwe. The ABRSM started its work in South Africa around 1900 (Thorsén 2004). The regimental band of Rhodesia embraced this board in all matters pertaining to music theory lessons and examinations. It is still held as an essential part of music tuition and instruction in the ZRP. The music framework is based on the ABRSM syllabi to influence the skills of band trainees to accomplish given practical tasks. Generally, the *modus operandi* of the ZRP owes much to the colonial system. Traditional Zimbabwean approaches are rarely implemented. The participants noted that it was necessary to pave the way to a Zimbabwean framework of teaching musical skills to instil pride and ownership of the indigenous musical cultures. However, some of the interviewees were aware that it was a difficult process to change the status quo, although necessary. The African musicals express the cultural beliefs, values, and ethos of the people who perform the music. The ZRP dance and brass bands perform African musicals at burials of national, provincial, and district heroes at the shrines. The choice of musicals is at the discretion of the force but the mandate to evolve lies with the government of Zimbabwe. This is one reason why the current Western instruments in use with the ZRP music section actually favour the four-part harmony structure. They are designed to suit the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass categories. The researchers envisage the four-part harmony system being in band performances for many years to come.

European Songs

Hamley (2011) submits that the BSAP played music from handwritten parts photocopied over the years. The music aimed to advance the colonial interest of the BSAC and the monarchy in Britain. The blacks in the band were motivated by the ability to interpret the rhythms and melodies even without understanding the meaning of tunes. "Rhodesian Bold," composed after the Mashona rebellion by Charles Warren Day to honour the police men and women of that time, was adopted as the quick march of the force from August 1970. Prior to this, police units had marched on and off parade to the tune of "The British Grenadiers," a dedication song to the first regiment of the royal

household infantry (Hamley 2011). Although there is a sharp decrease in the playing of European songs, the virtuosity of performers is still benchmarked on the ability to perform music pieces like “Scipio,” “Road to the Isles,” and “Waltzing Matilda.” These regimental marching songs are still used by British foot guards in conducting ceremonial parades. The above Eurocentric songs certainly discourage an urge to engage in indigenous activities that reflect the local people’s African musical idiom in call and response through indigenous expressive ways. The authors hold that music is distinctive and it draws meaning from the inherent set of beliefs, values, and norms in the people who own it. European songs which are played by the brass band do not appeal much to the performers and the local audiences because the meaning of these songs is not known to them. It is important to note that even though the ZRP music section has seen significant transformations in its repertoire, the ZRP no longer rely much on European songs only. The inclusion of indigenous musicals should be approached through the African ways. Data from the interviews showed that it is now rare for songs like “Old Comrades” to be performed or become part of the selection list. These songs used to dominate selection lists up to the year 2000 when the government of Zimbabwe embarked on the land reform programme. The ZRP changed their repertoire to suit the reforms that were instituted. It became unacceptable to perform some of the Eurocentric songs. Subsequently the music section realised that they should be client-focused and perform music in a language understood and appreciated by the customer. The authors appreciate that Zimbabwe is in a global village and it is rare to have a musical performance that is totally devoid of Western songs, instruments, and technologies. That is to say, the relinquishing of colonial legacies should not be radical in nature.

Transcription

Klapuri (2006) says that music transcription refers to the analysis of an acoustic musical signal so as to write down the pitch, onset time, duration, and source of each sound that occurs in it. The rationale of a transcription dictates the information necessary for a particular piece of music. The purpose can be to help learn the words to a song and detailed analysis of style. Transcription also helps in the preservation and archiving of the song/music. History shows that the regimental band of the BSAP was more oriented to prescriptive transcription. Transcription was aimed at reperformance and included features like pitch, rhythm, ornamentation, and harmony. Their transcription relied on Western notation and this is still prevalent as the core of the ZRP musical practices. Transcribed songs constitute the majority of music pieces in the ZRP music library compared with original compositions. It was noted that the band has remained popular and appealing to fans because of its ability to transcribe contemporary songs from local artists for reperformance, which means that the music section adopts prescriptive transcription where a transcription is made as a guide to the performer. However, Nzewi (2010) differs on the application of transcription especially in relation to the African context. He states that the idea behind the transcription of indigenous African music pieces is not to be able to recreate the piece in a performance situation, but rather to document key elements of the musical piece, which is only intended to give a generic

idea of what the actual performance is like, for intellectual discourse. The authors agree with this notion; however, they also think that over-reliance on transcribed parts is the main problem. Over-reliance on transcribed parts does not promote the art of original compositions among brass band members. Music composition requires a lot of imagination and inventiveness yet transcription only requires a critical ear to represent the sounds on paper. As such most musicians in the brass band have resorted to becoming transcribers or arrangers.

In aural societies like Zimbabwe, transcription as a method of representing music on paper is regarded as more useful for analysis than reperformance. Seeger (1958) says that it is very difficult to achieve a perfect transcription because there are hazards inherent in the practice of writing music. Results from the study indicated that it is difficult for a full auditory parameter of music to be represented by a partial visual parameter written down on paper. Most of the transcriptions in the ZRP are characterised by some inadequacies which often leave the arranger with an unsatisfied ear. There is a noticeable difference between how a piece of music is made to sound and a report of how a specific performance of its actual executed sound. Similarly, Seeger (1958) states that prescriptive transcription does not go beyond ordinary staff notation to include extra-musical features and commentary on the general character of a performance. So, it is very difficult for music arrangers in the music section to fully represent some important aspects of African music like ululation. Generally, the colonial legacy of transcribing songs for reperformance has a major impact on the brass band. The dance band and other subsidiaries apply transcription to a lesser extent. That is to say, subsidiary groups of the music section which were formed after independence subscribe less to the legacy of transcription for reperformance. They are more inclined towards indigenous practices or home-grown endeavours of performing through imitation and from memory. Despite the above observations, the authors find that transcription carries a positive benefit as a preservative measure for musicals. It also impacts negatively as it reduces the aptitude to indigenous performance art which is inherent in African musical practices.

Points to Note

The researchers acknowledge that colonialism has had far-reaching effects especially on African musical arts to the extent of causing a near death or demise or a temporary disruption of indigenous performances. However, there is no substantive justification to sustain the blame game four decades after independence in this contemporary society. The ZRP as an organisation is constituted by citizens of Zimbabwe, hence they ought to reflect their self-identity and shrug off the mental shackles of colonial hegemony. The capacity to come up with the composition *Mapurisa Ishamwari dzakanaka* demonstrates the potential to compose several other songs that articulate fundamentals of the socio-economic realities in twenty-first century Zimbabwe. The firmness on self-censorship by the ZRP music section and being petrified with possible reprisals from the ruling government largely contributes to stagnation in the ZRP music section. As

researchers we aver that this stance by the ZRP has nothing to do with colonialism as there seems to be no clear restriction in composing apolitical songs. The researchers mention the above point against a background of the dance band that freely plays popular artists' music at state functions and social gatherings in Zimbabwe. In a way the ZRP are their own mental slaves and they must liberate themselves. The ZRP authorities should use the dictates of the cultural policy of Zimbabwe which promotes such creative and identity-affirming endeavours. The ZRP music section needs to generate their own unique musical notations for compositions and choreographies grounded in the indigenous knowledge systems. Zimbabwe is not a closed society; thus it is important to embrace the cultural traits of others while remaining grounded and anchored in one's own musical practices.

Conclusion

This study engaged with a range of issues relevant to the music performance practices of the ZRP. The study discussed the nature of colonial legacies and their implications for African musical performances. The authors also surveyed the music in African contexts relating to the focus of the ZRP music section. Based on the theory adopted in this study, the researchers conclude that a number of positives were drawn from the colonial system. The study shows that the ZRP inherited a great deal in their military music. The use of music notation and sight-reading are aspects that comprise the core of the ZRP musical performances. The organisation still needs to work on some aspects to reflect an autonomous application of African musical performance contexts. The exclusive use of Western instruments at formal state functions needs to evolve to a point where a variety of indigenous instruments find a place in the ZRP music performance repertoire to reduce the exclusivity and dominance of Western music. The unanswered questions are a process; hence the study highlights some possibilities in the way forward.

Acknowledgement

This article is based in part on Patson Manyame's BSc (Hons) Music and Musicology dissertation at Midlands State University (Manyame 2016).

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