

"An African Approach
to
Caribbean Rhythms"

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AN AFRICAN MUSICAL APPROACH
TO CARIBBEAN RHYTHMS

by Landon Rose

The purpose of this paper is to analyze various Caribbean music forms, using an African musical approach. In the first half of this paper I will present several important features of African music. In the second half I will discuss in depth the "clave" rhythm of Cuba and Puerto Rico. I will also touch briefly on calypso, santeria-vodoun worship music and rural songs of Haiti.

The African approach to music is more integral than just one "influence", of many, in Caribbean music. The principles of African music are the file of the Caribbean gumbo, the ingredient that holds all the flavors together.

I have taken these "principles" mainly from two sources, J.H. Nketia's The Music of Africa and A.M. Jones, Studies in African Music. They, in turn, have drawn from:

African societies whose musical cultures not only have their historical roots in the soil of Africa, but which also form a network of distinct, yet related traditions which overlap in certain aspects of style, practice or usage and share common features of internal pattern, basic procedure and contextual similarities.^{1/}

There are three primary aspects to African music: one, it

is conceived vocally, two; the percussive and rhythmic approach is fundamental and three; the music serves a functional-societal purpose sharing equal prominence to all forms of communal expression -- dance, drama, costume, performance.^{2/}

A vocal conception of music has many aspects. First, there is the practice of learning instrumental music and drum patterns through the use of nonsense syllables. J. S. Roberts in his Black Music or Two Worlds mentions Ugandan xylophone music first learned by the musicians vocally, but which is never sung, only played. I learned of another example in a conversation about this study with Professor Jacobs and one of his students.^{3/} The student told us about a rite of passage in his Senegal village when, at age 13, he had to make a drum out of tree trunk and goat skin. When answering our question as to what drum pattern he learned, he didn't tap it out on a table, he sang it, using nonsense syllables, as easily as if he were telling us his name.

A second aspect to vocalization concerns songs or stories where the voice does the telling. Certainly the process that comes to mind for anyone the least familiar with African influences is the "call and response" vocal form. The call and response idiom is a multidimensional practice. The forms include cantor lead - chorus response; cantor lead - chorus continuation of phrase; alternation of cantor and chorus in a series of phrases; chorus interrupted by cantor; and the most remarkable of all, practiced by the Bushmen, in which:

stant overlapping of their phrases. When other voices are added, some of them may run counter to the two main parts, while others

Example XIII-5 ³

Bushman

The musical score consists of ten staves. The top five staves are labeled 'Voice 1', 'Voice 2', 'Voice 3', 'Voice 4', and 'Voice 5'. The bottom five staves are labeled 'Clap 1' and 'Clap 2' (stacked vertically), 'Dance', and 'Rattles' (stacked vertically). The 'Dance' and 'Rattles' staves are grouped together under the number '4'. The music is in common time, with a key signature of one sharp. The notation includes various note heads (circles, diamonds, squares) and rests. Measure numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 are indicated above the staves. The 'Dance' and 'Rattles' staves feature rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth note heads.

² See A. P. Merriam, *Ekonda: Tribal Music of the Belgian Congo*, album notes (Riverside RLP-4006).

³ Nicholas England, "Bushman Counterpoint," *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, XIX (1967), 62.

A basic phrase design that forms the framework of a song is elaborated simultaneously by individual singers who insert tones and shorten or prolong rhythmic values until they arrive at a melody that pleases them, which is then repeated in a complex polyphonic form with suitable variations.^{4/} See music Ex.1

A third aspect to vocal music is the influence of speech on melody. Rather than the pronunciation of words in a song being adapted to the melody, the melody follows the inflections of spoken language.

African traditions deliberately treat songs as though they were speech utterances . . . Furthermore, the possibility of enhancing musical expression through the choice and useage of the prosodic useages of speech is not ignored. The use of rapid delivery of texts, explosive sounds or special interjections, vocal grunts, and even the whisper is not uncommon.^{5/}

Moving on to the African percussive-rhythmic approach, I believe it will be useful to combine Jones' study (in 1959) and Nketia's work (in 1974) by examining a musical phrase from Jones' music using Nketia's terminology. They are very much in agreement in overall approach, with Jones being delightfully specific and Nketia dryly academic. The example I chose is the song used in Gunther Schuller's Early Jazz.^{6/} See Music Example 2.

First, Nketia describes what he calls the "time span". By this he means that within the same length of time there may

Sovu Dance (bars 32-35)¹⁵

from A.M. Jones' Studies in African music, Vol. 2 pg 86

BACKGROUND RHYTHM SECTION

GANK (32) AXAT (33) CL (1&2) CL (3&4) CL (5) SONG (34) CANTOR (35)

RUMS "heart"

ATSI (32) KIDI (32) KAG (32) PATTERN C (33) CHORUS (33) AZI - GI - DE - GLO (33) KI - DE, (33) AZE - GI - DE - GLO (33) KI - DE, (33) TLO - TE (33) CLO (33) KI - DE, (33) KI - DE (33) KI - DID (34) KRID (34) TI - DID - TSYA (35)

photocopies from G. Schuller's Early Jazz p. 14

be a group of two beats per pulse (or clap) or a group of three. Examples would be in claps 3 & 4 in duple time or in clap 5 within the same time span; triple time.

Nketia then defines the use of divisive and additive rhythms. Divisive rhythms are those that divide the time span in a regular fashion, whereas additive rhythms add notes which may extend beyond the time span (or measure). For example, if you extend the bar lines from measure 33-34-35 down one brace to the "song", one may readily see that measure 33 is essentially a bar of four claps (See clap 1) divided into eighth notes. Thus one calls the rhythmic structure divisive. Next in the song brace we have a dotted half note (which we know is stressed, or accented, because Jones always notates pulse in the singing and the drum sections by its occurrence on the first beat of each measure) followed by another measure of three eighth notes , the first of which is accented. These are followed by a quarter note beginning the next measure. Simple arithmetic shows that the sum of the notes is greater than the time span of four claps; thus it results in an additive rhythm. The fact that through measure 34 we near first the chorus, then the cantor, only accentuates the "additive" quality of the voices against the rhythm set up by the Gankogui-claps.

Nketia now introduces a difficult concept he calls the "time line". He describes it as "externalizing the basic pulse" through handclaps or a "simple idiophone" (in this case, a struck instrument).^{7/} Rather general and dry, but once

again we are saved by Mr. Jones' refreshing perspective:

With the Ewe, the Gankogui is the foundation par
excellence of the back-ground rhythm section. (it) is
a double clapperless bell (Mr. Nketia's simple
idiophone). Normally the Gankogui plays steadily and
continuously right through a dance. It provides a
background rhythm which keeps the whole orchestra in
time. What the Gankogui plays is a rhythm-pattern and
not a succession of regular beats. There are several
of these patterns whose length lies from 8 to 12
quavers (eighth notes). The pattern is repeated over
and over again.^{8/}

Without using the term, Jones provides/a reasonable
definition of "time line". Thus, the Gankogui in the example
functions in this fashion.

The last area Nketia talks about is multilinear rhythms.
These he divides into four procedures: grading, spacing,
cross-rhythms and interplay of polyrhythms. All of these are
easily recognizable in the example. The grading principle
simply means that "instruments which perform similar roles may
have a similar degree of complexity".^{9/} Thus the Ganki-Axat
as a time line, functions on one density, the five hand-claps
on yet another, the three drums (bottom 3 braces) operating on
an even more complex relation to the whole and finally, the
voices adding another rhythmic phrasing.

According to Nketia, spacing means the rhythmic lines may interlock by starting at different but clearly specified points in time. This process is seen by the staggered entry of the 3 drums, measure 32, bottom three braces. Cross-rhythms arise where rhythms based on different schemes of pulse structure are juxtaposed. Handclap 4 and 5 (double over triple) is the simplest example. The interplay of polyrhythms is the sum total of this particular orchestra, when all parts are playing, the resultant cross-rhythms between the hand-claps and the drums being quite complex.

Thus I have outlined the basic African rhythmic procedure. Yet this still only tells part of the story:

In multilinear organization, the use of instruments at different pitches and timbres enables each one to be distinctly heard. It enables their cross-rhythms to stand out clearly in the form of little "tunes". Hence, although rhythm is the primary focus in drumming, some attention is paid to pitch level, for the aesthetic appeal of drumming lies in the organization of the rhythmic and melodic elements.^{10/}

Jones talks about this factor as well in explaining the limits of his notational scheme. He felt it would unduly complicate his score for the European trained musician if he were to notate exactly how any instruments were struck.

Therefore, his system approximates pitch but does not describe variations in tone.

I would like to return to the first observation about African music, that it is taught and learned vocally. African rhythms are taught through patterns of nonsense syllables. In order for the rhythmic phrase to make sense in how it fits into the complete song or ensemble, first one must understand where the pulse occurs in relation to these vocal patterns. It is common for Westerners to misplace the basic pulse in African rhythms. Here are two examples of how the placement of the handclaps clarifies the pulse.

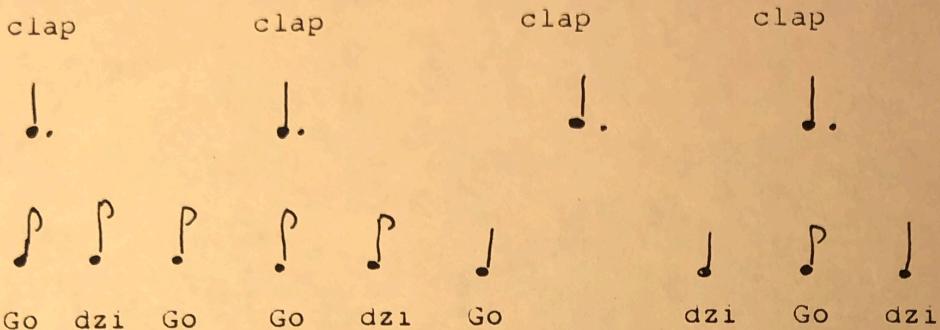
Example 1: The Master Drummer of the African ensemble we are about to join teaches us a rhythm for the Gankogui bells. He sings the following nonsense syllables:



There is a pulse, but where is it? The Master Drummer tells us that you can keep a background pulse with hand claps,

in what one would think of as a triplet feel:

So we add the claps:



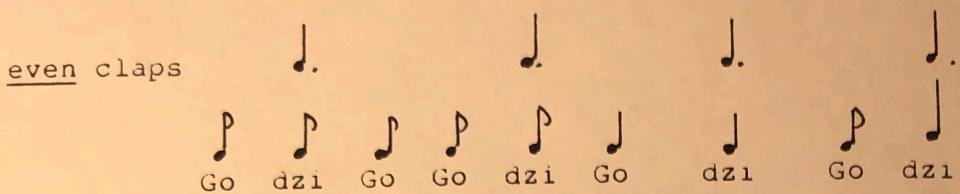
There, you've got it, right? Wrong. For one only has to sing this a few times to realize that the sung syllables are not at all helpful in singing the pattern. (You could practice it until you could execute the phrase of clapping and nonsense syllables, but the placement of the rhythmic pattern would not be correct). These syllables are even more confusing to Western ears when the handclaps are absent.

So where does the pattern fall in relation to the claps?

I refer back to Jones:

Question him (Mr. Kay, the Ewe Master Drummer) and he will tell you the syllables of the song (or pattern) on which the claps occur. This is the key to successful unravelling of the time values of African songs.11/

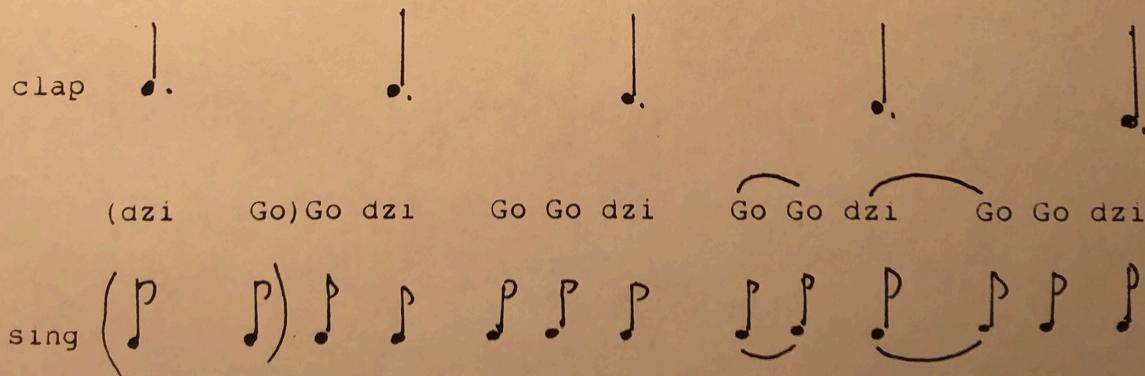
In this pattern, the "dzi" coincides with the claps, thus:



Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? But you're still skeptical. How does one remember the time of the last two "Go dzi's"?



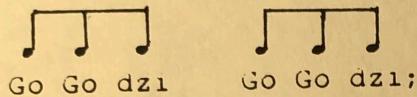
Isn't it confusing that a syllable can represent either an eighth or quarter note? Jones doesn't bother with this question, but an explanation can be found. One may postulate that this Gankogui pattern is lifted from a pulse "feel" which could be written:



To derive our pattern, look for the phrase markings over

the words and sing the first syllable of each phrase and you've retrieved the pattern. Thus it is not necessary to introduce a new nonsense syllable into the pattern for with just two syllables and this approach to phrasing it is possible to sing an infinite number of Gankogui patterns (the example being only one).

Example 2: If you sing "dzi Go Go" over and over quickly (without clapping), you will almost immediately be phrasing it



with the "Go Go's" being a kind of pick-up to the "dzi". However, for a correct pulse you must clap on the "dzi's", but accent the "Go Go's". The clap is keeping time, but does not coincide with the accent.

Here is the instinctive (African) tendency to think in terms of polyrhythms . . . and the tendency for a . . . (Gankogui) pattern to regard the first note of the background pattern (handclap on "dzi" in these examples) as the place to end on rather than start on. 12/

You may ask, "As a background pattern, how do I accent the clap? What happens if I change the clap?" Jones would say:

The claps carry no accent whatever in the African mind . . . Once the clap has started you can, never, on any pretext whatever, stretch or diminish the clap-values. They remain constant and tney do not impart any rhythm to the melody (or pattern) itself.^{13/}

African music is a vocal tradition. It is taught vocally because "The nonsense syllables indicate both patterns."^{14/} In other words those of the handclaps and Gankogui: It's not the Gankogui pattern by itself that's important, but its place in the overall rhythmic scheme. By singing rhythmic structure one is best able to hear the correct resultant pattern, or the pattern you near as a result of the accented beats in the rhythms played by a variety of instruments. It is this resultant pattern which characterizes each dance, song or story.

The third aspect of African music, its societal-functional purpose, is evident in the fact that almost every daily activity could conceivably have musical accompaniment:

MUSIC making is generally organized as a social event. Public performances, therefore take place on social occasions . . . for leisure, for recreational activities, or for the performance of a rite, ceremony . . . or any kind of collective activity, such as building bridges, clearing paths, going on a search party, or putting out fires . . .^{15/}

MUSIC IS VIEWED AS "LIVING OUT THE ACTIONS OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN SONG."^{16/} ROBERTS ALSO MAKES THE POINT THAT MUSIC IS NOT CONCEIVED AS SOMETHING APART FROM ALL THE OTHER ARTS, FOR INSTANCE, THERE IS NO WORD FOR "MUSIC" IN SWANILLI.^{17/}

MUSIC, IN THESE CONTEXTS, IS JUDGED NOT SO MUCH IN TERMS OF GOOD OR BAD, BUT "RIGHT" FOR ITS PURPOSE, ITS PART IN THE SOCIETAL FUNCTION. FOR EXAMPLE, ROBERTS NOTES THAT SINGING STYLES VARYING FROM "OPEN" TO "INTENSE" (NASAL) TO FALSETTO ARE ALL ACCEPTED WAYS OF EXPRESSION SO LONG AS THEY CONVEY THE MEANING OF THE STORY OR SONG.^{18/}

MAKING MUSIC IS A COMMUNAL ACTIVITY, WITH DIRECT AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION THROUGH HANDCLAPS OR SUNG CHORAL SECTIONS.

Caribbean Rhythms

IN THIS PART OF THE PAPER I WILL ATTEMPT TO APPLY TRADITIONAL AFRICAN MUSICAL PRACTICE TO VARIOUS CARIBBEAN STYLES. FIRST, I'M GOING TO TALK ABOUT A FEW GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE MUSIC. THEN I'M GOING TO ANALYZE THE CUBAN "CLAVE" RHYTHM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO MUSIC IN WHICH IT IS PLAYED. AND LAST, I WILL DISCUSS BRIEFLY MUSICAL GENRES FROM TRINIDAD, HAITI, AND JAMAICA.

WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, THE MUSIC OF THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS, LIKE AFRICAN MUSIC, OPERATES IN A SOCIAL-FUNCTIONAL CONTEXT. THERE ARE WORK SONGS FROM HAITI AND JAMAICA, SONGS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SATIRE FROM TRINIDAD, THE RELIGIOUS SONG-DANCE

offerings of vodoun and santeria worship, country dance-song forms of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, which all serve as a reflection and backdrop to everyday life. When Cuban folklorist Argelieus Leon describes the rumba as follows: a "popular fiesta . . . (with) elements that come from other manifestations of the life of the people . . . It has the function of enacting . . . things from daily experience,"^{19/} he could have been speaking of Mighty Sparrow's calypsos or a story dance of the Ewe from Ghana.

There is incredible diversity among the islands and within the music developed on each one. A Cuban guajira with solo voice and guitar, a rumba, a Haitian compas, or a Trinidadian steel band, all create very different musical moods. But Nketia's comment about African music applies quite succinctly to the music of the Caribbean as well:

The most important characteristic of this family of musical traditions is the diversity of expressions it accommodates, a diversity arising from different applications of common procedures and usages.^{20/}

The most basic of these is that music must serve some function, be it dancing, story telling, calling a god, work, or carrying on one incredible bacchanal.

Even though there is great eclecticism, each style preserves its integrity to the educated listener. For my analysis of this idea in terms of traditional African practice,

I offer two points. One is that what is "right" for the occasion is important^{21/} and two, that "The African concept of a musical sound gives equal prominence to sounds of indefinite as well as definite pitch."^{22/} This "mind set" would tend to explore sound regardless of its origin, be it a stick or bamboo, an opera singing style, or a fifty-five gallon oil drum. I am referring to the bamboo violins of Jamaica and the ganbo stamping tubes of Haiti, the bolero stylized singing which Roberts and others say is related to an opera company that visited Cuba in the nineteenth century and, of course, the Trinidadian steel drums.

Although one could say that there is not a formal tradition of learning music patterns through specific nonsense syllables, an informal practice is certainly present. I've heard different musicians use similar sounds to describe the same pattern, like the drum part to a rhumba guaguanco, which sounds something like "goun-ghin-ghin-goun". Musicians will sing a bass part or guitar part complete with the cross-rhythmic percussion parts sung as grunts or clicks or whatever, but done vocally, as opposed to singing a melodic phrase while tapping out the rhythm by hand. This is (as discussed earlier) the African practice of vocalizing resultant rhythms in relation to the complete ensemble.

Claves and "clave" rhythm

Claves are two round wooden sticks about 6-7 inches long.

They are held in a manner to produce maximum resonance and you strike one with the other. "Another type of idiophone commonly found in Africa is the struck idiophone . . . This group . . . includes two round sticks of the same size which are struck together." 23/

Claves are heard in many styles of Cuban and Puerto Rican music, playing a repeating figure called the "clave" rhythm. Here are the notated rhythms I've found described as "clave" rhythm.

4 ||: . . . | z | . . . z:|| 2-3 or "reversed":

4 ||: . . . , P | z | . . . z:|| 4 ||: z | . . . z | . . .||

||: . , P z , P | z | . . . z:||

||: . , P z , P | z | . . . z:||

(also called
2-3 or "reversed") → ||: . . . , P z , P | P | . . . z:||

||: . . . | z | P z z z:|| 24/

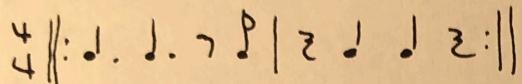
And this example describing the "son" rhythm:

2 ||: P | P z | P z | P z z | . |

25/

It is interesting to note that Jones in Appendix A in his Studies in African Music discusses as a quintessential African rhythm - $\frac{4}{4} | \underline{J. J. J. J.} |$ 26/

In grouping these rhythms together, I've been a little deceptive because the rhythm:



in whatever variant (i.e., tied over the bar line or "reversed") is usually played only in rhumba, chumba guaguancó, or rhumba yambu. It may occur in other dance forms, but I know of no examples. This rhythm is often called "Cuban clave", because it ~~may have~~ originated there. I have seen four different ways to place the clave rhythm in relation to the typical drum pattern played for a guaguancó or yambu.

(drum) tumbadores $\underline{J} ||: J. J. J | - z J :||$

(a) clave $||: J. J. J | z J J z :||$

(b) clave $||: z J J z | J. J. J :||$

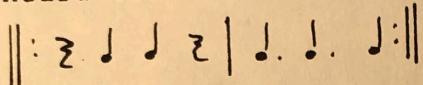
(c) clave $||: J. J. J | z J J z :||$

(d) clave $||: z J J z | J. J. J | :||$

27/

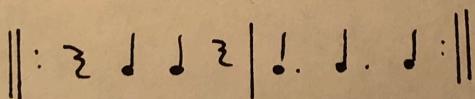
It is often said that Latinos cannot stand to hear music "out of clave" meaning that the "clave" rhythm is placed incorrectly. In addition, "in 'son' and 'salsa', the clave is regarded as a fundamental pattern even when it may not actually be realized in performance."^{28/}

The more I've listened to son, salsa or charangas, the more frequently I've heard clave which is "reversed", or 2-3.



In these styles, even where the clave rhythm is not realized in performance, the 2-3 clave tends to feel "right". I asked a Puerto Rican percussionist if all guajiras (A Cuban derived country song) used the 2-3 clave (as in the song "Guantanamera"). He replied that he couldn't think of any that were 3-2, but that that didn't mean there weren't any, and he'd know what the clave was when he heard the song.

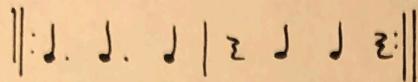
One practice in salsa from Puerto Rico is to change the relation between where the horns begin and the clave. How this is done musically is, the song begins with a 2-3 clave pattern



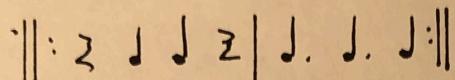
which continues for ^{an odd number of} V bars, when the horn part enters. Thus the "feel" is immediately changed by the clave being heard as 3-2 in relation to the horns. The clave doesn't change, but our perception of where it falls in the ensemble does.^{29/}

Thus, a few contradictions arise. Most musicians familiar

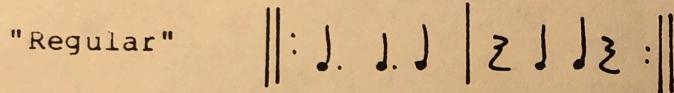
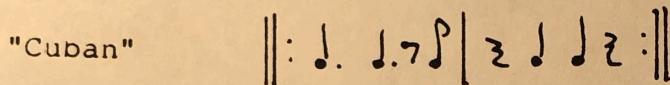
with the clave rhythm demonstrate it by tapping:



yet it may very well be that in a great number of songs the "correct" clave would be



regardless of whether it is played. People familiar with Latin music describe "clave" as a fundamental "rhythm", yet in the rumba there are four different ways to place this rhythm in relation to the drums. Then there is the subtle difference between the "Cuban" clave and the regular clave:



By using the African rhythmic approach discussed in the first part of this paper, one can decipher this seemingly confusing and contradictory musical practice. Neither Nketia nor Jones talk of "fundamental" rhythms, but rather "Standard" (often used) rhythms.^{30/} But they do imply that the drums played by a Master Drummer and his assistants (the largest, deepest drums in the ensemble) are the "heart" of the orchestra. The struck idiophones (claves, Gankogui bells) are part of the "background rhythm section."^{31/} They are essential, but secondary. In African music, the "fundamental"

rhythm would be the resultant rhythms provided by the ensemble, not a single rhythm pattern. It is more helpful to discuss individual rhythms by their role in the ensemble, as "heart" or "background" (both being essential). If one applies this perspective to "clave" rhythms, a clear parallel exists. The clave rhythm is like the Gankogui example discussed earlier, a repetitive, infectious figure that drives the music forward by its interplay with the "heart" drums of the orchestra.^{32/} The claves provide a light, high-pitched counterpoint to the deeper, heavier patterns laid down by the drums. And like the handclaps or Gankogui, they may be felt internally as well, since the musical practice in song and dance requires the feel of the rhythm whether or not it's actually being played. In the rumba rhythm example, the tumbadores (drums) may be seen as the "heart" of the orchestra, and the clave rhythms as providing the essential background pattern. The "heart" rhythm does not change, but the placement of the clave rhythm may be varied, thereby changing the resultant pattern.

Thus, I would propose that all of the clave rhythms shown above could be considered "right", and that "right", used in the African^{esthetic}, simply means that the people who are actually playing the parts define what is right. There is no "ideal" rhythm, the ideal rhythm is the one that works, that sounds musically right to the players. The discrepancy between where one player places the clave and where another places it may be seen as a "tribal" difference, in this case evolving from usage in different islands. Fundamental to determining

"right" here is that music serves a social function; it is an interplay between musician, audience and whatever purpose the event has: story, dance, work or party. In short, what clave rhythm is played is a social as well as musical decision.

Calypso

Calypso is a most varied Caribbean style. Borrowing extensively from Hispanic, British, French, and United States influences, it takes on a chameleon like form, changing its color depending on the background, in this case meaning the island of origin. This process of cross-fertilization is one which is common throughout Africa, where the use of musical influences among tribes and from outside the continent (e.g., Europe, Arab countries) has been described as African eclecticism. Nketia comments that even with these varied influences, each tribe is able to preserve an essential sound of its own. Similarly, the historical influence of early American jazz or rhythm and blues shows how the Trinidadians can adapt these styles without losing the feel of Calypso - in its playfulness, its "devil may care" looseness, and its satirical, political content---the latter also reflecting an African tradition.^{33/} [See tape for examples].

Calypso is primarily an urban phenomenon, its history has been intimately linked with the celebration of Carnival in Port of Spain (Trinidad).^{34/}

Jamaican calypso, as exemplified by Harry Belafonte, is closer to United States folk song tradition in its presentation.^{35/}

Unlike meringue or rumba, the word "calypso" does not also describe a rhythm and dance. The rhythmic feel has changed greatly between the 1920's and 1980's. The early recordings reflect New Orleans polyphonic jazz style of the same period. A Mighty Sparrow record from the late "50's" - early "60's reflects an American black rhythm and blues feel; Sparrow's 25th Anniversary album (1970's) reflects up to date recording techniques (clean, multitrack sound), drum machines, synthesizers. Harry Belafonte's album "Calypso" (1957), or Lord Burgess' album of the late sixties influenced and was influenced by the traditional American sounds of guitar, banjo and British Isles folk song. The use of African-style congas is limited and a trap set is utilized. A group of 50 or so European derived melodies is used over and over^{36/}. The texts are political, satirical or about partying at Carnival.

Haiti

I would now like to turn to songs which express the clearest African musical practice, rural songs of Haiti collected by Courlander. I have included many in the appendix to demonstrate the great number of rhythmic patterns used, and

Example 122. TAKE ME TO THE FIGHT (79-A)

Original pitch - 3 st. $\text{♩} = 132$. Notation: 3d stanza.

Marimba

1) 2) 3) simile

Wo - y wo - y wo - y! Wo - y wo - y wo - y!

Wo - y wo - y wo - y! Ça - pas bien ar - ran - gé corps yo! Mène en ba - ta - ille là! Ça - li - ra Ça - li - ra ça! Mène en ba - ta - ille là!

3) Ah

Var. 1 Var. 2 Var. 3
(in all other stanzas)

Example 123: DICE GAME (58-B-2)

Original pitch - 2 st. Voice: $\text{♩} = 92$. Marimba and claves: $\text{♩} = 138$.

Notation: 4th stanza.

Claves

Pas - se - frai, oh pas - sé belle, oh pas - sé un beau - te! etc.

Pas - se - frai, oh pas - sé belle, oh pas - sé un beau - te! Y - r - é

Marimba

1) 2) 3) 4)

2) 3)

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Example 122. TAKE ME TO THE FIGHT (79-A)

Original pitch - 3 st. $\text{♩} = 132$. Notation: 3d stanza.

Marimba

1) 2) 3)

Wo-y wo-y wo-y! Ça pas bien un rangé corps yo! Mène en ba-ta-ille là! Ça-li-ra Ça-li-ra ça! Mène en ba-ta-ille là!

Var. 1 Var. 2 Var. 3
(in all other stanzas)

Example 123: DICE GAME (58-B-2)

Original pitch - 2 st. Voice: $\text{♩} = 92$. Marimba and claves: $\text{♩} = 138$.

Notation: 4th stanza.

Claves

Marimba

Pas-se frai, oh pas-sé belle oh pas-sé un beau-té! etc.

Pas-se frai, oh pas-sé belle, oh pas-sé un beau-té! Y-r-e

Sur oh trap-pe zos, non fa trois laisse!

1) 2) 3)

to show that the rhythm is as important to the song as the melody and lyrics. A Haitian musician living in Boston said that Haitian music uses over 100 different rhythms and that each song in practice has its own rhythmic accompaniment. I will mention a few specific points. In "Dice Game" (Ex. 123) the marimbula (a bass version of the African thumb piano) uses a form specifically mentioned by Nketia - "In linear organization, the use of different pitches at a single instrument as a framework allows for the same rhythmic pattern to be varied in several ways."^{37/} I mention this because a "western" trained musician could look at that figure and think the marimbula was arpeggiating a simple harmony when, according to Nketia's definition, the player is not thinking in terms of harmony at all, but of rhythmic variation. In "Sinde Macaya" (Ex. 132) there is an example of a sung phrase ending on the first beat of the measure (as examined in the Gankogui phrase). This example also shows African solo-chorus call and response technique.

Santeria - vodoun

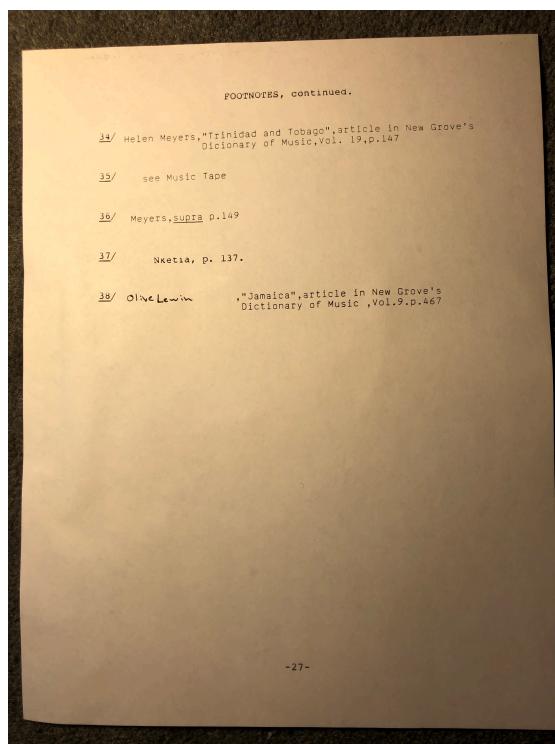
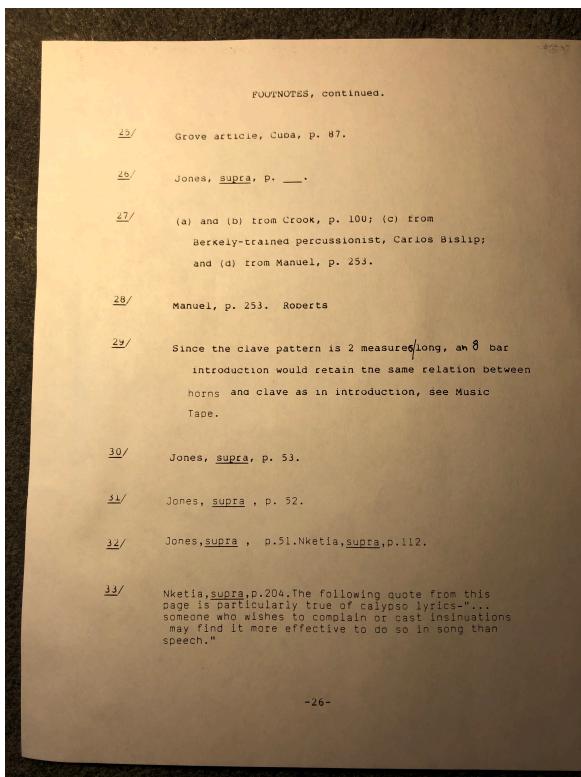
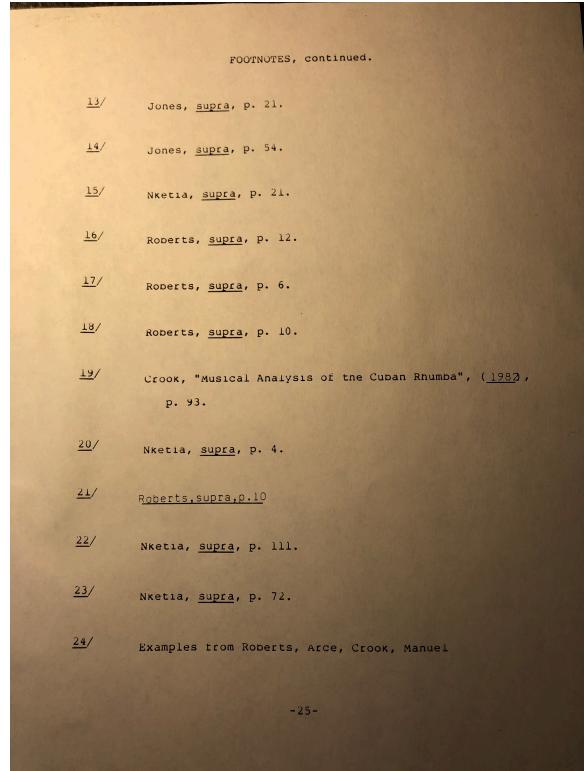
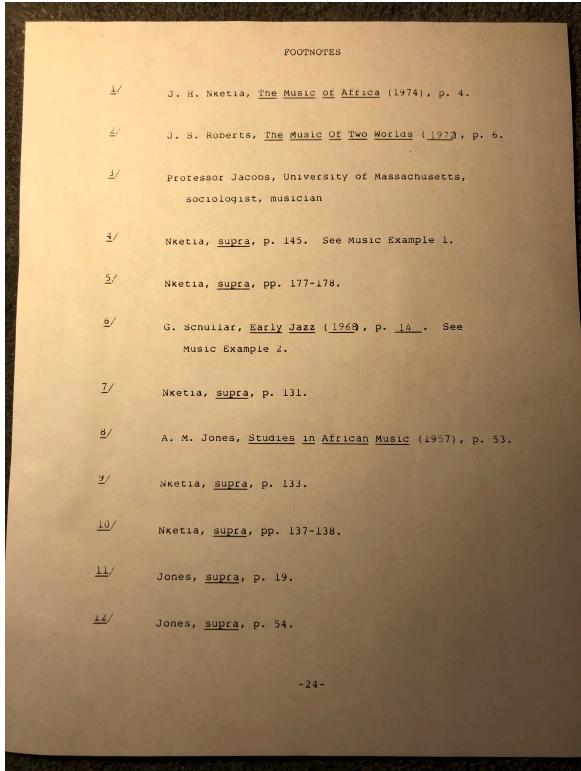
Another area of direct African influence involves the Santeria worship of Cuba and Brazil, and the vodoun religion of Haiti. In both religions (as in their African origins) three drums plays a central role. Without delving into the specific practice of each, one point important to both, is the African belief in the sanctity of the drums themselves as possessing spiritual power.

The gods and saints (borrowed conveniently from the

Catholic tradition) cannot be summoned without the drums. No drums, no gods. In the Grove article on Jamaica the author mentions that "Sacred drums may be played by anyone as long as he knows the rhythm needed to address the particular deity."^{38/}

CONCLUSION

A direct relationship exists between the practices of traditional African music and its Caribbean counterpart. I believe the African practice of vocalizing rhythms, the generally rhythmic percussive approach and the importance of music's social context, and the synthesis of varied musical sources are primary to understanding Caribbean music. The esthetic of "rightness" and the practice of using pitched and non-pitched tones with equal emphasis are of great importance in understanding why a musician or group chooses particular instruments and rhythms. And completing the circle, the audience actively participates in this process, through ritual, party, song or dance.



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Appendix 1. Music Tape Notes

Totico y sus Rumberos - I believe the clave-drum relationship
is: Drums ||: - 2 d f d. d. d. ||
clave ||: d. d. 2 | 2 d d 2 :||

with tempo = 132-144

El Gran Combo - "Pordiosero"

The clave begins

||: z d d z | d. d. d :||

but after seven measures the horns enter on the eighth measure thus in relation to the phrasing of melody the clave becomes: $||: \begin{smallmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \end{smallmatrix} \mid \begin{smallmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \end{smallmatrix} :||$

"Y No Hago Mas Na"- sounds to me like

||: 3 J J 3 | J. J. J.:||

clave throughout.

Grupo Moncada- "Guantanamera". A guajira(Cuban country song)

with slave

||: 3 J J 3 | J. J. J. :||

If you listen carefully you can hear the "clave" player corrected to the "right" pattern after the flute break.

Example 132. SINDÉ MACAYA (38.A.2)

Original pitch + 5 st. $\bullet = 108-126$. Notation: 2d stanza.

Original pitch of claves

Hand-chapone

Chach van temme qui belle thi Solo Chorus

Chach van temme qui belle thi Solo Chorus

Chah - che - ya qui belle thi Solo Chorus

Chah - che - ya qui belle thi Solo Chorus

(Ma - ca - val) Solo Chorus

Oh Sin - de Ma - ca - val Solo Chorus

On Sin - de Ma - ca - val Solo Chorus

Sin - de Ma - ca - val Sin - de, Sin - de Ma - ca - val On Sin - de Ma - ca - val

Sin - de, Sin - de Ma - ca - val Sin - de, Sin - de Ma - ca - val

Solo Chorus

D.C.

Example 179: COUNTRYMEN, CALL THE LOA FOR ME (7-B-1)

Original pitch - 8 st. $\bullet = 13$

Example 16⁷: CARNIVAL SONG (22-B-3)

Original pitch = 7 st. $\downarrow = 104 - 120$. Notation: 2d stanza

Example 168 MOLTA MALO ("SPANISH" SONG) (58-B-1)

Original pitch - 2 st. $\text{♩} = 126$. Notation: Toward middle of record.

A musical score for 'Moldau' by Smetana. The vocal line is in soprano, with lyrics 'Moldau-ma' and 'etc.' The accompaniment includes a piano (piano and celesta) and a double bass. The double bass part consists of sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. The piano part includes eighth-note chords and sustained notes. The celesta part consists of sustained notes.

Example 93. WE'RE GOING TO EAT A ZOMBIE (14-B-2) $132 = 144$. Female chorus in upper octaves

Original pitch - 3 st. $\text{♩} = 132-144$ Female chorus in upper octave

Music score for 'Cham-pa-sing' with lyrics in English and Vietnamese. The score includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The lyrics are as follows:

1. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. (Sometime omitted by the Soloist)

2. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. (17 more stanzas; how hard it's singing)

3. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. Cham-pa-sing, non phu man ge zim-zi. (etc.)

Original pitch - 4 st. \bullet - 156

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UMB

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Martha Leader

Lillian Wilmore

