

MUSIC/AAAS 789: PERFORMANCE PRACTICES IN AFRICAN MUSIC

CREDIT: 3 HRS

MEETINGS: Two 1.5hr meetings

PREREQUISITES: Graduate and undergraduate(upper level) standing

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Daniel Avorgbedor

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OFFICE HRS: 2:30-4:30 Wed. else by appointment

VENUE: Sullivant Hall 166 (basement, seminar rm)

Homepage: <http://aaas.ohio-state.edu/dka>

COURSE OBJECTIVE AND DESCRIPTION

This course will examine a limited corpus of musical traditions from sub-Saharan Africa in order to understand how and what types of compositional choices are made, as well as the local ideas or concepts that support these choices. The goal of the course is to explore the specific ways in which these choices and conventions represent for the participants an ideal way of presenting music. Conventions such as tuning patterns, ensemble formation and selection of instruments, vocal timbre, different manifestations of the notion of "heterogeneous sound ideal," and the importance of social and musical cues or markers in building form and general musical coherence will be studied in detail. An additional goal is to highlight those conventions that inform much of the performance practices (e.g., techniques of improvisation, pitch-bending, use of speech surrogates, etc.) associated with African-American genres. Musical examples will be limited to the following: the *kora* performance tradition of the Mande *Sunjata* epic, the *Adzida* ensemble of the Anlo-Ewe of Ghana, and the *Amadinda/Akadinda* (xylophone) traditions of Uganda, East Africa. The course will be supplemented by intensive listening and live demonstrations. We will also explore the specific performance modes identified with panegyric or praise song genres such as Zulu *izibongo* and Yoruba *Ijala*. Interested students will also have an opportunity to play in an Anlo-Ewe ensemble as a way of building on their knowledge and practical experiences in African music.

Texts:

Kubik, Gerhard, *A Theory of African Music, Vol. 1*. Wilhelmshaven, Germany. Florian Noetzel Verlag, 1994

Nketia, Kwabena J. H. *The Music of Africa*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1974

Nketia, Kwabena & Djedje, Jacqueline Cogdell, ed. *Studies in African Music [Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology, V]*, Department of Music, UCLA, 1984

REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS, AND EVALUATION

Non-majors: While an ability to read and write music will be advantageous in this class, it is not absolutely necessary that all students possess those skills.

Grading*

Grades will be assigned according to the following criteria and will take into consideration the class standing of students (e.g., graduate, upper level undergraduate):

--60%: Research Paper

Students will complete an original research paper that is between 20 and 35 pages long. In the special circumstance of an undergraduate in the class, that student will have an option of submitting a shorter paper, between 15 and 20 pages long (excluding appendices such as scores or extended transcriptions). Term papers should provide an in-depth analysis of the concepts and examples presented in class (or relating to these). Topics must first be approved by the instructor. A final paper must be submitted after an oral presentation of the same in class.

--20%: **brief written and oral reports in class**-- reports will be based on specific tasks involving ideas discussed in class, critical overview of assigned essays drawn from the reading list; they will include also listening and analyzing specific musical selections.

--20%: **a mid-term exam** that focuses on terms, concepts, and sociocultural processes discussed in class

*Letter grades will be assigned in all cases. 95-100 =A; 90-94=A-; 85-89=B+; 80-84=B; 75-79=B-; 70-74=C+; 65-69=C; 60-64=D;

Attendance: Regular attendance is required and students must submit proofs (or a doctor's note) of unusual circumstances or emergencies (such as sickness, bereavement, etc.) in cases of absence in class.

Quizzes/Exams: The format of the mid-term will include T/F, multiple choice, short paragraph responses. Requests for makeup exams are extremely discouraged and will most likely be denied. In the unlikely event of extreme emergency, students must contact an instructor or the music department office in advance of the scheduled exam.

Written Assignments and Final Paper: Guidelines (and deadlines) for brief written or oral reports will be circulated in class. All Written work must be typed or word processed, double-spaced, and must conform to one of the standard citation formats consistently throughout the text. The final research paper is due on the last day of regularly-scheduled classes (oral summaries will be presented in class prior to the last day of classes). See under "Grading" for length specifications. Visit the OSU main library homepage for additional information on both hardcopy and electronic source citations: <http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/guides/Index.html>; see also <http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/guides/etext.html>

Students will be required to complete all reading and listening assignments (indicated in the detailed weekly schedule) before each class.

A 10% penalty will be deducted from the grade for the assignment if submitted late--no exceptions

Plagiarism: It is against University regulations to "steal" answers from your classmates during exams/quizzes. A research paper or assignment that is composed mostly of *unacknowledged* sources will be treated as a case of plagiarism, and after a consultation with the student concerned. **The Internet:** All information downloaded/ printed from the internet/WWW must receive proper citation, as detailed below. It is being considered unethical, troublesome and even "illegal" in certain academic settings when a student purchase ready-made term papers on the Internet. Identifiable cases will be processed according to university regulations. (Visit <http://www.lib.ohio-state.edu/guides/etext.html> for details).

• **Accessibility:** Individuals with special needs (such as physical limitations, etc.) should feel free to inform the instructor in order to make the necessary arrangements.

Reserve Materials:

- A set of listening tapes and video selections will supplement class discussions/examples. These items are available at the Audio-Visual section of the Music and Dance Library, Sullivant Hall
- Supplementary reading materials are also on reserve at the Music and Dance Library

SCHEDULE

Week 1

overview of "performance practice" in ethnomusicological perspectives
unity in diversity--overview of concepts and processes in music making in sub-Saharan Africa

Reading Assignment:

Béhague, **Performance Practice: Ethnomusicological Perspectives**, "Introduction"
Kubik, **A Theory of African Music**, "Introduction," pp. 9-46.
Lo-Bamijoko, Joy Nwosu. "Performance Practice in Nigerian Music"
Nketia, **The Music of Africa**, chapter 2--"Music in Community Life," pp.21-34.

Week 2

- the temporal, structural, and general stylistic aspects of Time-Line (TL) in African music

- detailed analysis, regional distribution, and performance of selective TLs, with emphasis on their musical attributes

Reading Assignment:

- Kubik, *A Theory of African Music*, pp.44-46.
 Kubik, "Oral Notation of Some West and Central African Time-Line Patterns"
 Kauffman, "African Rhythm: A Reassessment"
 Nketia, *The Music of Africa*, chapter 12--"The Rhythmic Basis of Instrumental Music," pp.125-138.
 Stone, "In Search of Time in African Music"

Week 3

- tuning systems--musical and cultural considerations
- tuning preferences/discriminations in string instruments--the kora
 tomora, sataro, kelefaba, and hardino modes
- tuning preferences/discrimination in percussion instruments--drums
 --Mandinka and Anlo-Ewe drums--non-pitched
 --*etenga* tuned drums of Uganda
 --musical and linguistic constraints

Reading Assignment:

- Knight, "The Style of Mandinka Music: A Study in Extracting Theory from Practice," in *Studies in African Music*, pp. 3-66.
 Kubik, *A theory of African Music*, chapter 5, section 3--"Likembe tunings and Musical concepts...."
 pp.328-404.
 Anderson, "Multipart Relationships in Xylophone and Tuned Drum Traditions in Buganda," in *Studies in African Music*, pp. 121-144.

Week 4

- three primary performance modes in Mande *Sunjata* epic with emphasis on units of composition--literary, musical, and thematic features:
 - praise-proverb mode
 - song-lyrical mode
 - narrative mode

Reading Assignment:

- Johnson, "Yes, Virginia, There is Epic in Africa"
 Johnson, *The Epic of son-Jara: A West African Tradition*, pp. 97-181 (transcribed text only)

Week 5

- *adzida* ensemble of the Anlo-Ewe
 - pre-performance activities and their musical implications
 - rehearsal and oral-aural modes of musical transmission

Reading Assignment:

- Ladzekpo, Alfred K.; Ladzekpo, Kobla. "Anlo-Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana"
 Fiagbedzi, Nissio. *The Music of the Anlo*

Week 6

- musicians, music roles, and arrangements supporting a meaning performance
- form, structure, and influential factors in *adzidza*

Week 7

- Ensemble procedures in Mande *kora*, *balafon*, song and dance
- demonstration by visiting artist

Reading Assignment:

- Knight, Roderic. "Music in Africa: The Manding Contexts"
 Knight, Roderic. "The Style of Mandinka Music: A Study in Extracting Theory from Practice," in *Studies in African Music*, pp. 3-66.

Week 8

- influence of language on musical style and performance procedures
- tone-tune relationships in Anlo-Ewe song culture

Reading Assignment:

- Agawu, Kofi. "Tone and Tune: The Evidence for Northern Ewe Music"

- Nketia, **African Music**, chapter 16--"Speech and Melody," pp. 177-188.
Nketia, Kwabena J.H. "The Linguistic Aspect of Style in African Music"
Mbabi-Katana, "The Use of Measured Rhythm to Communicate Messages among Banyoro and Baganda in Uganda"
Johnson, "Yes, Virginia, There is Epic in Africa"
Cope, *The Zulu Izibongo*

Week 9

- drum language and speech surrogates
 - the influence of linguistic considerations on the selection and play of instruments
 - the linguistic basis of drumming; musical and signal modes of instrumental performance
 - examples from *atumpan* talking drum, *akadinda/amadinda* xylophone techniques; horns, flutes

Week 10

- techniques of composition and performance in the *balafon* and *akadinda/amadinda*
- overview of performance practices in African-American genres and their interface with African traditions

Reading Assignment:

- Kubik, **A theory of African Music**, chapter 1--"Xylophone Playing in Southern Uganda," pp.47-85
Anderson, Lois. "Multipart Relationships in Xylophone and Tuned Drum Traditions in Buganda," in **Studies in African Music**, pp. 121-144
Wilson, "The Heterogeneous Sound Ideal in African-American Music"

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- BABALOLA, S.A. 1966 *Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala*. Oxford; Clarendon Press.
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- Kubik, **A theory of African Music**, chapter 5, section 3--Likembe tunings and Musical concepts..., pp.328-404.
- Kwakwa, Patience. "The Dynamics of Music and Dance Integrations in Traditional Societies," in **Working Documents: International Conference on African Music and Dance--Problems and Prospects**. Legon, Ghana: International Centre for African Music and Dance, 1992.
- Ladzekpo, Alfred K.; Ladzekpo, Kobla. "Anlo-Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana," in Elizabeth May, ed., **Musics of Many Cultures: An Introduction**. Berkeley: ULCA, 1980. Pp.216-231.
- Ledang, Ola Kai. "Open Form in African Tribal Music," *Studia Musicologica Norvegica* 9(1983)9-26.
- Lo-Bamijoko, Joy Nwosu. "Performance Practice in Nigerian Music," *Black Perspective in Music* 12/1(1984):3-20.
- Lo-Bamijoko, Joy Nwosu. "Tuning Methods of African Musical Instruments: Some Examples from Nigeria and Ghana," *Nigeria Magazine* no. 142(1982):15-24.
- Nketia, **African Music**, chapter 16--"Speech and Melody," pp. 177-188.
- Nketia, **African Music**, chapter 20--"The Conventions of Musical Practice," pp. 231-240.

- Nketia, **African Music**, chapter 14--"Melody and Polyphony in vocal Music," pp. 147-167.
- Nketia, Kwabena J.H. "The Linguistic Aspect of Style in African Music," in **Working Documents: International Conference on African Music and Dance--Problems and Prospects**. Legon, Ghana: International Centre for African Music and Dance, 1992. Pp.214-249.
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