Contents

Acknowledgments ................................................................. vii
Introduction
Gerard Béhague ................................................................. 3

1. Performance Practice in Indian Classical Music
   Bonnie C. Wade .............................................................. 13

2. Music in Africa: The Manding Contexts
   Roderic Knight ............................................................. 53

3. Berber Professional Musicians in Performance
   Philip D. Schuyler .......................................................... 91

4. American Traditional Fiddling: Performance Contexts
   and Techniques
   Linda C. Burman-Hall ...................................................... 149

5. Patterns of Candomblé Music Performance:
   An Afro-Brazilian Religious Setting
   Gerard Béhague ............................................................ 222

Index .................................................................................. 255
Contributors ...................................................................... 263
Introduction

Gerard Béhague

Traditionally the concept of performance practice elaborated by musicologists has been limited to attempting to reconstruct the original sound of early European music of various periods through the study of a variety of literary and historical (including iconographic) sources. In focusing their attention on the sound structure phenomena, musicologists have generally isolated some performance traits for a given period or "style," which they came to consider essential to a historically "correct" performance of early music. Moreover, the quest for the historical authenticity of sound reproduction has led scholars to assume that contextual differences in the performance of a piece of music matter little since different contexts of performance could not account logically for a substantial modification of the essential elements of that piece. This assumption, which only recently has begun to be questioned, relegated the consideration of performance factors in the overall style analysis of a given corpus of music to the lowest level in the hierarchy of stylistic elements. Comparative musicologists and later ethnomusicologists inherited the numerous shortcomings of such an approach in the study of Aufführungspraxis. Consequently, as applied to non-Western and folk musics, this study has been generally limited to detailed aspects of performance dealing with the idiosyncratic qualities of vocal and instrumental sound production in a given culture, generally applying Western concepts of sound.

Heretofore few ethnomusicologists have paid close attention to the study of music performance as an event. But because ethnomusicologists concern themselves, in most cases, with musics of non-literate societies, they have come to realize, if only empirically, that performance is actually their primary source of study and have tended, therefore, to develop an all-inclusive approach to the study of performance. Recent work in folklore and ethnomusicology allows us to elaborate new perspectives on the study of performance practice, by attempting to integrate context and sound, i.e., performance and practice.
Under the tremendous impact of folklore studies in the "ethnography of speaking," and verbal art as performance (cf. Abrahams 1970, 1972; Bauman and Sherzer 1974; Bauman 1975; Paredes and Bauman 1972) since the early 1970s, the conceptualization of performance as an organizing principle and a process has taken shape. This conceptualization has greatly influenced the orientation taken by ethnomusicologists concerned with musical performance both as an event and a process.1

Any discussion of performance practice must of necessity elucidate first the nature of performance in as much of a cross-cultural capacity as possible. Because folklorists and ethnomusicologists have dealt with many different cultures, the nature of performance must also be understood in terms applicable to both general and specific studies. Actually several concepts of performance are available, of which the most useful for our purposes are perhaps those advanced by Milton Singer, Roger Abrahams, Richard Bauman, and Norma McLeod.

Milton Singer, an anthropologist specializing in South Asian studies, includes in what he calls "cultural performances" not only "what we in the West call by that name—for example, plays, music concerts and lectures," but also "prayers, ritual readings and recitations, rites and ceremonies, festivals and all those things which we usually classify under religion and ritual rather than with the 'cultural' or 'artistic'" (Singer 1955: 23). He further defines the actual patterning of a cultural performance as consisting of "a definitely limited time span or, at least, a beginning and an end, an organized program of activity, a set of performers, an audience and a place and occasion of performance" (Ibid.). Moreover, Singer conceives cultural performances as separable portions of activity thought by the members of a social group to be encapsulations of their culture "which they could exhibit to visitors and to themselves" (Ibid.). Singer's extension of the concept of performance to include rituals (sacred and secular), festivals and play, has long been recognized as valid because of its implication that "highly formalized human behavior is a cultural focusing, and that it probably is symbolic and meaningful" (in Herndon and Brunyte 1975: 12; see also Herndon 1971: 339). The question of meaning is paramount and will be examined below.

Both folklorists Roger Abrahams and Richard Bauman, in their conceptualization of verbal art as performance, emphasize and advocate the study of the actual behavior and social interaction of the participants in the performance, and of the rules or codes and contexts of the performance, so that they can ultimately develop the notion of performance as a mode of expression and communication. For Abrahams the "audience" plays an extremely important part of the performance occasion, but this obvious fact has not been recognized because "we come at performance from our highly Western sophisticated artistic conceptions, which have focused for so long on the virtuosic dimension of performance: the means by which the performer himself stuns everyone within the performance environment into silence" (Abrahams 1975: 19). Abrahams coined the term "Pure Performance" to underline the term on not so "specially licensed and set aside occasions" as when we use the term "a performance," to make it into "a term of art," or performance with a capital 'P' (Ibid.: 20). As he articulates it, Pure Performance is an "intensified (or stylized) behavioral system," including "an occasion, a time, places, codes, and patterns of expectation" (Ibid.: 25). Bauman, on the other hand, suggests very pertinently the kind of "interpretive frame performance establishes or represents" (cf. Bauman 1975: 293) and provides useful answers to the question of "how is communication that constitutes performance to be interpreted?" For this purpose, he discusses the patterning of performance in genres, roles, acts and events and, most importantly, develops, with Abrahams, the concept of "the emergent quality of performance" and that of performance as a "display of communicative competence." In addition, in conceiving of performance as "a mode of language use, a way of speaking," Bauman is able to draw a fundamental conclusion regarding the implication of such a concept for a theory of verbal art, namely,

it is no longer necessary to begin with articulate texts, identified on independent formal grounds and then re-acted into situations of use, in order to conceptualize verbal art in communicative terms. Rather, in terms of the approach being developed here, performance becomes constitutive of the domain of verbal art as spoken communication (Bauman 1975: 293).

Bauman and Abrahams also emphasize that performance is "unique unto itself within every culture" (Abrahams 1975: 25), and that "just as speaking itself, as a cultural system (or as a part of cultural systems defined in other terms) will vary from speech community to speech community, so too will the nature and extent of the realm of performance and verbal art" (Bauman 1975: 294). This view advocates the nature of performance as culture- and community-specific and the role of the folklorist and ethnomusicologist in the study of performance as consisting of elucidating ethnographically the extent of the domain of performance in a given community. But, while supporting strongly the necessity of determining the emic conceptions of performance, Bauman, in his discussion of how performance is keyed, provides "an etic list of communicative means... as serving to key performance," including at least eight categories:

(1) special codes, reserved for and diagnostic of performance; (2) special formulae that signal performance; (3) figurative language such as metaphor; (4) formal stylistic devices; (5) special prosodic patterns of tempo, stress, pitch; (6) special paralinguistic patterns of voice quality and vocalization; (7) appeal to tradition; and (8) disclaimer of performance (Bauman 1975: 295).

Such a list, however, is felt to be of limited utility in the ethnography of performance because the essential task of performance is seen as the determination of community-specific "constellations of communicative means
that serve to key performance in particular communities" (Bauman 1975: 296). Furthermore, Bauman recognizes the need to determine these means empirically and, despite variations from one community to another, admits the probable existence of universal tendencies of conventionalized means.

Finally, the concepts of competence and of the emergent quality of all performance discussed by both folklorists are crucial for the study of performance, "as a means toward comprehending the uniqueness of particular performances within the context of performance as a generalized cultural system in a community" (Bauman 1975: 302). For Abrahams, the role of an individual performer is paramount because of the fact that he brings patterns of performance into play, exhibits technical control over registers and codes of the performance, "has the ability to recognize where these occasions arise," and "can capitalize upon them and invest them with his own sense of energy" (Abrahams 1975: 25). In Bauman's terms, "the emergent quality of performance resides in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of a particular situation" (Bauman 1975: 302). Furthermore, he sees performance as offering "to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a way that is specific to performance as a mode of communication" (Idem: 305), and that is part of the essence of performance.

Norma McLeod's concept of musical occasion carries essential implications for the study of performance as an event. She coined the term "musical occasion" in her doctoral thesis (1966) and used it in a contextual sense, i.e., as a cultural performance of music. From her study of musical occasions in Tikopia, she concluded that "there is a very clear relationship between what we would call content, that is the performance item, and context, the occasion. As the general social texture of an occasion becomes thicker, with more forms of social structural principles present, music becomes more ordered" (McLeod 1975: 15). She also perceived a continuum of "ordering and complexity" and "a shift toward more complexity in the performance item, as complexity in the larger order of events increases," and "as anxiety [a funeral, for example] on the part of the participants increases, the music, at least, increases in level of redundancy" (Idem: 16). In her study of the Cherokee Ball Game, Marcia Herndon isolated the musical occasion as one particular aspect of the social context of music. For her, "the occasion may be regarded as an encapsulated expression of the shared cognitive forms and values of a society, which includes not only the music itself, but also the totality of associated behavior and underlying concepts. It is usually a named event with a beginning and an end, varying degrees of organization of activity, audience, performances, and location" (Herndon 1971: 340). This definition suggests that, from the point of view of individual composition, one aspect of its social context derives from the fact that it is part of a larger cognitive and social entity, a musical occasion in which many pieces of music are performed.

From such concepts, the ethnomusicologist should be able to consider some theoretical and methodological implications for the study of musical performance and performance practices. The ethnography of musical performance should bring to light the ways non-musical elements in a performance occasion or event influence the musical outcome of a performance. Practices of performance result from the relationship of content and context. To isolate the sound contents of a performance and call such an operation "Performance Practice" is no longer justifiable. In McLeod's words, "music provides sufficient density of marking to enable scholars to separate it from its context. That is, when music is being performed, it is usually quite clear that this is the case. With the development of notation systems, and, later, of recording devices, it is all too easy to separate musical sound from its cultural context. This is both a curse and a blessing. While the separability of music from its performance context allows us to compare this part of human behavior with other areas, it also tempts us to regard music as separate from culture, simply because it is separable from culture" (McLeod 1975: 17). The curse, however, far outweighs the blessing. Although it is easy to contend that the sound phenomena remain our primary source of study and that practice can only be ascertained through the minute examination and measurement of sound, the study of Performance Practice involves numerous levels of analysis so as to consider the multi-dimensionality of music. Moreover, no one will deny that performance practice (in its traditional sense) exists only in oral tradition. The distinctions between written and oral traditions of music have been overstressed. Behind all notational systems rests a dynamic oral tradition of performance, subject to change in time and space. This is true of all (written or oral) musical traditions, including that of Western art music. This oral tradition of performance represents one of the most essential sources for the study of cultural values, communication, and meaning.

THE STUDY OF MUSIC AS PERFORMANCE

Ideally, then, the study of music performance as an event and a process and of the resulting performance practices or products should concentrate on the actual musical and extra-musical behavior of participants (performers and audience), the consequent social interaction, the meaning of that interaction for the participants, and the rules or codes of performance defined by the community for a specific context or occasion. Such a study would rely on "symbolic interactionism" (cf. Blumer 1969) and semiotics, to be able to assess the process of interaction in emic terms and the meanings constructed from the subjective interpretation of the various signs and symbols of the performance by the participants. The ethnomusicologist will
have to focus his attention on that interpretation and in doing so will also engage in social interaction, either as observer or participant. The meaning of the latter's social interaction will generally differ considerably from the interpretation by the participants mentioned above. To a great extent, however, one can state that the ethnomusicologist's analytical evaluation of the folk evaluation is in itself a folk evaluation, since it is from his inference of the interpretative process of the performer that the analyst constructs his own understanding of the musical occasion and assigns specific meaning to it. Musical meaning, however, cannot be derived from a single source. Just as there exist "constellations of communicative means" in performance there are also many different perceptions of the performance situation. The ethnography of musical performance must be based, therefore, on numerous ethnic views and evaluations of any musical situation, specific events, musical systems, and practices, so that the researcher will, in most cases, base his perception on the commonalities of the evaluations. Such a procedure is clearly tied up to the question of musical meaning. "Creative, critical listening is a sign of musical competence no less than is musical performance" (Blacking 1971: 30). In addition, the result of that critical listening and the consequent behavior affects the outcome of the performance. The audience's behavior (musical, verbal or kinesic) is then an integral part of the performance situation.

In focusing our study of performance on the musical occasion (taken as a unit of study), it becomes imperative to document the total and often multiple contextual dimensions of that occasion. The musical organization of the occasion will almost always be determined by these dimensions. The course and structure of the music performance will also depend more or less clearly on the same contextual coordinates. But while recognizing the contention of numerous scholars in ethnomusicology that the social context of a composition or piece is not external to its music sound-structure, we must confess that our analytical tools for establishing that relationship unequivocally lack in sophistication. The theoretical foundation proposed by the method of Cantometrics, for example, assumes too much of that relationship to prove satisfactory. Rather minute musical elements among the 37 parameters of the Cantometrics' coding sheet are supposed to symbolize major cultural patterns, and the comparative, cross-cultural results of song trait measurements related to culture appear too unspecific to be of real usefulness. Furthermore, John Blacking's insistence that "no musical style has its own terms: its terms are the terms of its society and culture, and of the bodies of the human beings who listen to it, and create and perform it" (Blacking 1973b: 25), is convincing enough, but his application of structural linguistic concepts of deep and surface structures to traditional musical realms needs considerably more empirical evidence to prove feasible cross-culturally.

Once more, a possible hierarchy of levels of meaning and of structure cannot be elucidated through observation alone but through various degrees of participation. Among the various field techniques available to ethnomusicologists in the study of the musical occasion, those involving several forms of participation and observation have proved the most useful. Total participation, as advocated by Blacking, appears, in most cases, unrealistic because it is generally unattainable. Total observation, on the other hand, while possible, neglects social interaction. Participant observation offers, therefore, the highest probabilities of eliciting accurate information and interpretation of the musical occasion and should be complemented by other traditional techniques of research, such as interviews (rejecting once and for all the idea that musicians are generally unable to verbalize about their own music-making process), field experiment (as used by Blacking, for example, see Blacking 1973a: 215), the staging of musical performance, and the "staged interaction" as proposed by Spradley (1972). Although somewhat artificial, a "staged interaction," which consists of bringing together the participants of a specific performance for discussing whatever aspect of it they may wish to discuss, can reveal substantial insights about the meanings and expectations of that occasion for the participants. The basic advantage of such an "interaction" over the simple interviews is clear: the eliciting of information is not directed by the outsider/researcher but results from "natural" exchanges between the participants. The effects of staging musical performances are quite varied according to a given culture and community. Numerous musical occasions are actually staged in their original context, so that the staging becomes an integral part of the context. As a field technique, however, the staging of a performance is useful for bringing forth and clarifying certain aspects of musical performance practices, generally not as readily obtainable in the natural context, and the corresponding musical texts that such a staging might generate.

The present volume is conceived as an illustration of the study of music performance as an event and the corresponding performance practices. Each chapter represents a case study of performance, culture- and community-specific. Within the variety of performance contexts offered in this volume, the conceptualization of Performance Practice as the integrated study of sound and context is quite homogeneous among the five case studies. Given the different nature of empirical data gathered and interpreted by each of the five authors, the individual treatment of performance events and the relative importance given to aspects of those events are naturally quite different, thereby demonstrating the culture-, community-specific nature of the problem at hand. In addition, it is clear that the nature of individual data dictates to a great extent the orientation of the theoretical framework of each study presented here. Yet all studies resulted from participant observation in natural contexts of performance,
and while the holistic perspective in the study of Performance Practice as advocated here is recognized by all authors, some chose to stress the musical aspects or the social contexts of performance in their study.

In her detailed essay, Bonnie Wade addresses herself first to the identity of the performers of North and South Indian Classical music, both vocalists and instrumentalists in their soloistic and accompanimental functions. After considering the main types of performance contexts, she illustrates with specific examples the musical process of performance par excellence, i.e., improvisation, and the roles and responsibilities of the soloist in this creative art. She stresses also the Indian esthetic criteria associated with "style" of performance and, most importantly, provides a thorough comparative discussion of the nature of improvisation and performance in the Hindustani and Karnatak traditions. Her consideration of audience-performers relationships, of individual competence, constraints and discipline, and their influence on the performer's creative behavior (i.e., the keying of performance) sheds a rich light on the nature of performance in Classical music outside the Western European tradition.

In a very engaging manner, Roderic Knight sets the stage for his socio-historical account of the musician's status and role in the Old Mali Empire. Specifically, he opposes and contrasts the duality of Manding music, represented on one hand by the jali, a professional balladeer-historian, and on the other by the drummer, a popular entertainer. His all-inclusive approach to the study of performance brings forth the determinants of style in both the jali's music (jaliya) and drum music, including the consideration of instruments, tonal material, rhythmic organization, song style, the teaching and learning process, and the various musical occasions. Attention is also paid here to the Manding categories of excellence in performance and to the levels of social interaction operating in the various musical events described.

Professional musicians, this time from North Africa, are the focus of the study by Philip D. Schuyler. The Berber musicians known as rasais wander through Southwestern Morocco providing music in various contexts. In studying four different contexts of performance, namely the marketplace, private parties, commercial establishments and recording studios, Schuyler is able to establish the text-context relationships specifically by analyzing and revealing the influences of the contextual factors on the performance contents. In so doing he also provides a vivid picture of the sociology of these musicians and their adaptive mechanisms, in musical terms, operative in the performance contexts under study.

Linda Burman-Hall's essay penetrates the dynamic tradition of Anglo-American folk fiddling. This tradition is clearly traced to Western European dance violin practices presumably imported to the American colonies, as shown in specific Baroque violin techniques preserved in the Southeastern states of the United States, as in the Blue Ridge and Southern Appalachian fiddling styles. The author reveals through analyses some of the traditional performance techniques, such as bowing patterns and idiomatic melodic realization, preserved in more recent commercial styles arising from folk fiddling such as the String Band, Western Swing, and Bluegrass. Here again special attention is given to the various social contexts of performance, to the significance of the conventions and mannerisms of performance, and the importance of the fiddle tune as the essential cognitive structure of the fiddle repertory.

My own essay, dealing with a specific religious ritual context, illustrates the organic functionality that music performance possesses inherently in several musical events, and the ways it contributes to the expression of sociocultural meanings of ritual. Since the ritual structure dictates, to a great extent, the corresponding musical structure of song repertoires, it is considered in detail. In my exemplification of performance contexts, close attention is also paid to the relationship of liturgical dogmas and practices, musical behavior of participants, and specific music repertories. That relationship is, in fact, so pervasive that music performance appears truly constitutive of the liturgy itself.

NOTE

1. This concern was internationally recognized at the Twelfth Congress of the International Musicological Society in Berkeley in 1977 with the inclusion of a panel and study sessions on "The Ethnography of Musical Performance" (Heitz and Wade 1981). Earlier, a symposium on "Form in Performance, Hard-Core Ethnography" was held at the University of Texas at Austin in 1975, with the participation of several scholars in ethnomusicology and related disciplines. See also N. McLeod and M. Herndon (1980).

REFERENCES CITED

Abrahams, Roger D.

Bauman, Richard
Bauman, Richard and Sherzer, Joel, eds.
Performance Practice in Indian Classical Music

Bonnie C. Wade

An article on performance practice in Indian art music could take any one of a number of forms. "Indian art music" encompasses an enormous amount of music, just as the rubric "Western art music" does. Formulation of an article which would encompass much music, or one which considers some music in any detail, is made possible only by the relative degree of cohesion in "the tradition."

Given the difficulty of the assignment, this article takes only a first step in an effort to establish a framework for the consideration of the subject. This has been conceived with two purposes in mind. One is to explore for scholars of Western music—for whom the rubric "performance practice" has relatively concrete connotations—what that rubric could connote for Indian art music. The second purpose is to put forth for ethnomusicologists and others who wish to study Indian music a set of factors to consider (i.e., a research methodology) for any topic which falls under the rubric "performance practice." To speak to both those audiences in the same essay is indeed a formidable task, and thus the result is more a "thinkpiece" than a research report.¹

Since so little has been written under the rubric "performance practice" for any music other than Western art music, the format had to be formulated on an ad hoc basis. Folklore studies on performance practice contexts and performers have been most useful, particularly those by Roger Abrahams, Dan Ben-Amos, and Michael Owens Jones. It might be argued by musicologists that ideas of "folk" derivation are not applicable to a tradition of art music. Indian musicians and musicologists might argue further that they are inappropriate especially for their musical traditions. And indeed, the methods, models, and concepts dealing with performance which have been generated in folklore scholarship have a varying range of applicability to genres other than those for which they were developed. I have found them more useful in the shaping of some sections of this essay.
Patterns of Candomblé Music Performance: An Afro-Brazilian Religious Setting

Gerard Béhague

Candomblé is the term used specifically in the Brazilian northeastern region of Bahia to designate the various religious groups which exhibit varying degrees of West African religious beliefs and practices. The more traditional African-related groups are the Ketu, Ijexá (Yoruba), and Gêge (Fon), and Congo-Angola cults. The Ketu and Ijexá groups originating in Yorubaland in Southwestern Nigeria and South-Central Dahomey (today Bénin) are known generically in Brazil as Nagô. Other groups whose acculturation has been stronger and which, therefore, present more cultural traits of a local tradition include the candomblé de caboclo and the Umbanda cult groups (Carneiro 1954; Béhague 1975). In popular Bahian language, the term candomblé also refers to the locale of the cult center and to a specific public ceremony otherwise known as xirê, an important musical event described below.

While candomblé dogmas in general follow those of the Yoruba and Fon religions of Nigeria and Dahomey, the various myths of the many deities or orixás (also referred to as santos, voduns for the Gêge, iniques for the Congo-Angola) vary considerably on both sides of the Atlantic (Verger 1957). Moreover, as a result of the contact in Brazil of several prevailing African cultures, candomblé became a sort of cultural synthesis of the West African mythological world. Indeed, most candomblé houses in Bahia worship the major Yoruba and Fon deities, as opposed to the West African practice in which a religious center, and sometimes a whole village, is dedicated primarily to the worship of one particular orixá or vodun (Bastide 1958).

Ample historical evidence has been gathered (Viana Filho 1976; Verger 1968) to explain the Yoruba and Fon (i.e., Nagô) cultural religious predomiance in Bahia. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries most Africans came from various tribal groups inhabiting the Portuguese colony of Angola, and the Congo basin, but from the eighteenth century up until 1817 (the official beginning of prohibition of the slave trade north of the Equator) the Brazilian traders obtained their supply primarily from the Guinea or Benin Gulf Coast. The need for more slaves coincided exactly with the discovery of gold and precious stones in Minas Gerais, which was reached through Bahia. But only a small number of Benin-Gulf-Coast Africans actually reached Minas Gerais, as they were traded in Bahia to tobacco plantation owners. This explains the heavier concentration of Nagôs in Bahia. The fact that they were the last to take root in Brazil partially explains their cultural prevalence in Bahia in modern times.

The earliest establishment of the Nagô slaves' religious organization in Bahia cannot be determined accurately. According to local oral sources it was around 1830 that the first cult center was founded in Salvador (the present capital of the state of Bahia, also referred to as Bahia) by three African priestesses. This center was known as Ilê Iyà Nassô (House of the Priestess Nassô), the African title of one of them. From this center, of Ketu affiliation, originated the largest and best-known candomblé houses in Salvador during the twentieth century, particularly the Engenho Velho (also known as Casa Branca), the Gaíto, the Axé Opô Afinjê and the Alakete (Ilê Maroiála). Yoruba or Nagô liturgy exerted a lasting influence on candomblés of other affiliations, for instance the Congo-Angola people who use that liturgy rather freely, and the Caboclos who tend to simplify it in their attempt to rationalize the African and Amerindian beliefs. The Fon or Gêge (Ewe) initially maintained their vodun belief system (quite similar to the Yoruba religion in Africa (cf. Paul Falcon 1970), but subsequently integrated it, so that nowadays virtually all Ketu cult houses are recognized as Gêge-Nagô. In Salvador, only one cult center, the Bogum, still follows the vodun liturgy strictly. Although relatively small in number, the Gêge-Nagô cult centers continue to enjoy power and prestige among the Bahian population, about 70 percent people of African ancestry.

I. "CANDOMBLÉ" SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND MUSIC

It is well known that music and religion are closely related in all cultures. But, while music may appear simply as an ornamental, complementary yet essentially reinforcing element of certain religious practices, it has an organic functionality in most traditional cultures. In certain religious rituals, such as the Afro-Bahian candomblé, music and dance become the main vehicle of religious fulfillment and, therefore, are fully integrated within the social organization of those religions. Although no one could rightly maintain that ritual and music operate at analogous cultural levels, the Radcliffe-Brownian functionalist notion of ritual (Radcliffe-Brown 1922) properly expanded by Clifford Geertz (Geertz 1958; 1966) can at least further our understanding of the ways music, and especially musical performance, contributes to the expression of the sociocultural meanings of ritual. If
indeed, following Geertz’s insights, religion is a system of symbols which operates so as “to establish powerful, long-lasting and pervasive moods and motivations” (1966) in the members of a given culture, music as a natural expressive means would seem essential in order to bring forth the expression of that culture’s ethos. Moreover, music partakes of that system of symbols with its own referential network, notably in sacred ritual contexts.

Although the term “liturgy” is generally applied to Christian religions and churches, it seems perfectly suitable for certain traditional, non-Christian religions when religious behavior and all elements of religious practices are sanctioned by prescribed sets of rules which should be understood as much as possible in terms of native cognitive categories. These rules affect, of course, the whole range of musical behavior of initiates into a given religious group, as well as that of the musicians themselves or any other person with an active role in the musico-ritual performance. It is the responsibility of the ethnomusicologist to attempt to identify such rules, and, above all, to determine the degree of variation, or tolerance, allowed within the rules, since such a study would be related directly to the question of cultural change. In addition, these rules generally provide important clues to certain patterns affecting musical performance practices, as defined in the Introduction to this volume.

There are a number of dramatis personae involved in the various contexts of music-making in Afro-Bahian candomblé. Vivaldo da Costa Lima, particularly, has studied what he called the “religious family” (“família-desanto”) from a socio-anthropological viewpoint (Lima 1977). For our purposes, we will limit our comments here to the various musical functions or attributes of the most essential members of the religious family.

1. The Cult Leader

Variously called babalóríxá, pai de santo (both designations for men), iaboríxá, mãe de santo (for women), the cult leader appears to be the major repository of musical repertoires. Besides his functions of consulting the deities through the divination game related to Ifá (see Bascom 1969) and transmitting their messages, of organizing and supervising the various ceremonies, especially initiation rites, the pai or mãe de santo leads the singing on most occasions. Thus, the observation of the proper sequence of songs in a given ceremony, which determines the proper religious dénouement of that ceremony, depends on the cult leader. His/her knowledge of musical repertoires and of ritual dancing is most important for the initiation ceremonies during which the novices will learn these repertoires and the mythical choreography. The cult leader will gain recognition among the members of the center if the initiatives can show a good knowledge of music and dance, since good schooling is the responsibility of the babalóríxá. The profound power of music is recognized in candomblé language through the expression ser de fundamento (to be of fundamental principle, i.e., to have a basic power) applied to a cult leader with esoteric knowledge (to know things of fundamento) of divination techniques and secrets, sacred plants, sacred rites, and, of course, music. The latter is therefore equated with some of the most important elements of the religious dogmas and practices. This quality of fundamento is also extended to specific songs which are believed to hold particular power in connection with a given god or a given ritual situation, or which refer to some of the quintessential myths associated with a given deity. Thus, value is not placed as much on the extensiveness of the song repertoires of a given cult leader as on the knowledge of specific songs of fundamento to bring about the desired and necessary ritual effect.

The extensiveness of music repertoires in Gêge-Nagô candomblé is quite considerable. Although the cult leader is himself an initiate to a given orixá or vodun, and continues to be dedicated to that god throughout his life, he must also know the song repertoires for all orixás since he bears the responsibility of teaching all new initiates in his center, and of presiding, at least in theory, over all private or public ceremonies. In such occasions, he is expected to lead the singing. In practice, however, he relies on numerous helpers, such as his master drummer, his ogans (civil protectors of the house, honorific title), or his mãe pequena (or iakekeré). Yet, as with any aspect of candomblé life, the cult leader appears as the supreme authority on musical matters, although not all leaders are performers themselves.

2. The Master Drummer

Melville Herskovits (1944) has revealed the important position held by the master drummer or alábré in candomblé social hierarchy. His major function, Herskovits emphasized, is to bring about spirit possession of the initiates. It should be pointed out, however, that while he contributes substantially to the appearance of the trance phenomenon by means of his drumming, numerous other factors are necessary for dissociation to occur. For example, the cult leader who celebrates his or her orixá once a year is more likely to “fall” into trance (Portuguese cair no santo) on that occasion than on any other during the year. In other words, the degree of expectation of the community quite often influences the predisposition and overall religious behavior of members of that community. Moreover, since most of the religious choreography involves varying degrees of reenactment of Yoruba myths, as known in Bahia, the potential presence of certain gods on a given occasion may have a definite influence on certain initiates’ predisposition to become gods. The initiates’ knowledge of certain myths may also impel them to become active protagonists in the mythical performance for which spirit possession is necessary. Nevertheless, it is true that in most ritual contexts the immediate call to possession comes from the music itself, which helps to explain in part the occurrence of this phenomenon.

As with any other important positions in the social hierarchy of candomblé, seniority of initiation into the cult determines the social status
of alá bès. Thus, the master drummer is, as a rule, the oldest initiate among drummers and, in practice, plays any drum he wishes on a particular occasion. The actual organization of the musical performance is the responsibility of the master drummer who not only commands the drumming but frequently leads the singing as well. His wide knowledge of song repertories and sequences is necessary as the drumming is inseparable from the canticles. Drumming is done by three drummers in the Ketu or Gè ë cult houses. The smallest drum (lè) and the middle-sized drum (rumpi) reiterate regular rhythmic patterns. The agogô (bell) also repeats its own patterns throughout a song. The largest drum (run), played by the master drummer, provides improvisations or simply rhythmic variants. The dancers pay attention primarily to the run, which musically organizes the choreography. This is achieved by means of repetitions of improvised rhythmic patterns at shorter time-intervals, often twice as short, hence the terms dobrar (to double, to split) and virar (to turn to another rhythmic pattern) used by drummers. This generally calls for a faster execution of dance figures in the dancing round. In effect, the master drummer exerts pressure on the mental state of the dancers by forcing them to dance at a faster pace, thus stimulating deeper concentration on their dancing. Specific dances (sátó, for example) are organized according to various sequences of rhythmic patterns. The proper performance of such sequences is also the responsibility of the master drummer. Our field observations have shown that the master drummer often also acts as the lead singer. In that capacity, he may also exert influence and authority on the course of the ceremony. He may, for example, single out certain initiates by singing more songs (and some of more fundamento) to their particular gods, without deviating from the established order of song sequences. This inevitably serves as a cue to the degree of behavioral expectation of those initiates. In theory, the Gè ë-Nagòs sing three to seven songs for each god in the first part of the xiré (a ceremony described below), but in practice the number of songs for each god can vary considerably. The leader’s motivation for singling out some of the initiates may depend on the specific occasion of a particular ceremony.

Further responsibilities of the master drummer in certain performance contexts are mentioned below.

3. The “Iakekeré” or “Sabakekeré”

The iakekeré or mă pequena (little mother) is the immediate substitute of the iaolórixà. If a given cult center has a babalarórìxà, then the second in command is a man known as the babakekeré, or pai pequeno. In practice, numerous babalarórìxàs have iakekeré, thus the great majority fulfilling this role are women. She is generally the member closest to the cult leader, and almost always the iaó who has been initiated by that cult leader for the longest period of time. Very rarely is the iakekeré simply a very close friend or a blood relative of the cult leader. The iakekeré exhibits as much knowledge of the rites as any cult leader, and, in principle, becomes the iaolórixà upon the death of the cult leader, upon consultation of the gods through divination. This rule is not always observed, however, since the succession of a cult leader involves as much politics as in any other social organization where positions of power are involved.

The iakekeré fulfills many functions, but none as important in the liturgy and from a musical viewpoint as those discharged during the initiatory rites. She directs the daily activities of the initiates in reclusion and supervises their development into the sacred world, including their learning progress. Many activities—the awakening at dawn, the morning bath, the meals, the various prayers, the ritual dancing lessons—are accompanied by singing. The mă pequena also has the responsibility of leading and teaching the special canticles of each daily activity. She is also present at all of the more important phases of initiation, such as the preparation of the abó (a sacred liquid), of the kelé (a thin collar), the contregun (a braided thread made of straw and cowry shells worn around the arms as protection from the spirits of the dead), and other fetishes, the performance of the bori (an offering to the novice’s head to reinforce her spiritual strength, or axé), various rites of scarification, the saida (exit) of the iaó, and others. While the cult leader presides over such ceremonies, his or her iakekeré most often executes the appropriate ritual gestures and frequently acts as the organizer of the choral response to the singing.

4. The “Iaós/Adoxus”

Within candomblé social and religious hierarchy, the iaós/adoxus (i.e., initiates) could be said to represent the raison d’être of the religious group. Religious practices involve the initiates almost constantly, since they not only serve the African gods and thus assure the continuity of the cult, but become gods themselves, or the “horses of the oriixà” (exin oriixà, in Nagò language). The “horse” is the initiate who is possessed by the deity through the thought-image of that deity coming down and “mounting” his or her devotee, who finally assumes the personality of the god. Initiation represents the highest level of participation in candomblé, and is also determined by the gods. The will of the gods is believed to manifest itself through certain signs. Constant physical pains, sickness without apparent cure, or a sudden, uncontrolable crisis of spirit possession, called santo bruto (wild god) are signs whose interpretation by the cult leader, who also acts as diviner (babalador) through the divination game (eluaó), determines whether initiation is indicated and, if so, the particular oriixà to whom each iaó will devote herself or himself. To refuse to go through initiation when the gods demand it is considered extremely dangerous since physical harm and even death could occur in a state of santo bruto. Thus, initiation accomplishes the relative control of trance behavior, by properly “placing the oriixà in the head” of the iaós, and by teaching them how to respond to the various
stimuli to their condition as gods. Music is one such stimulus. The iásis' music-learning process is consequently of paramount importance. While they are being prepared during initiation to serve their gods according to the particular traditions of their groups, the various stages of initiation constitute true musical occasions not only because of the occurrence of their musical education at that time, but also because music functions as a sanctifying and sacralizing element.

There is no doubt that the initiates represent the chief protagonists in most performance contexts of Bahian candomblé.

II. PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS

1. Types of Contexts

The description and interpretation of the performance contexts presented here are not intended to be comprehensive but simply illustrative of candomblé musical life. Basically, two types of performance contexts are recognized, the public and the private rituals which take place during the various obrigações (obligations) observed by the worshippers. Obrigações are ritual offerings to the deities, required by them (as the name implies), to propitiate them and to receive their assistance in various spiritual or material matters. All members of a cult center must carry out their “obligations” regularly, but the initiates, by definition the closest members to the orixás, must fulfill a weekly, monthly and yearly offering to their individual gods. In addition, to commemorate their first, third and seventh anniversaries of initiation, they must perform a special ritual offering. Initiation itself is conceived as an “obligation,” specifically as obrigação de cabeça (obligation of the head), because initiation amounts to “placing or fixing the deity in one’s head,” as mentioned above. From a strictly liturgical viewpoint, private ceremonies generally display a more meaningful significance than public ceremonies. The social importance of the latter, however, is paramount. Private rituals include numerous ceremonies which involve animal sacrifices (oró de matança, sacudimento, etc.), the use and manipulation of sacred plants (preparation of abô, amaci, sacred liquids) and almost all phases of initiation. The privacy of such events (limited to the essential members of the cult house—all initiates) is necessary because the most vital principle of candomblé life—the axé—is invoked. Axé (from the Yoruba meaning order, command, power) is conceived as the dynamic force of the deities, their power of fulfillment, symbolized in the animal, vegetal and mineral worlds through certain objects or matter, such as animal blood, sacred plants and trees, and stones which appear as the fixing and revitalizing elements of this spiritual force. These symbols are kept secret to assure the spiritual security of the cult center, hence the need for privacy in those rites in which symbolic activity is at work. Music of fundamento, it will be seen, is an integral part of that activity.

Patterns of Candomblé Music Performance

Public ceremonies are essentially social, religious affairs, which take place in the main dancing room (known as barracão or salão) and during which the relative richness of performance of a given cult center is exhibited. Careful attention is given to the decoration of the barracão with pennants hung from the ceiling, of the specific colors of the main deity of the house, with the large branches of palms or other plants attached around the entrance door and placed at the corners, and proper lighting with electric bulbs (when electricity is available) or kerosene lamps. Drums are “dressed” for the occasion, with an ojá (odjá), a long, wide scarf tied in a bow around the drum’s body. The initiates appear as orixás in their most sumptuous attire, considered a basic source of pride of the whole cult center. For such public occasions, members of a particular candomblé house are expected to be present but friends and members of other cult centers are welcome and are often sent written invitations. Outsiders, including tourists, may observe public ceremonies. Their behavior within the barracão is strictly monitored by ogans who indicate to them where they should sit and call their attention to the smoking, photographic and other restrictions. Such policing reinforces the desire of the cult members to communicate to outsiders their expectation of respect for their own worldviews as reflected in the specific performances.

In most cases, public ceremonies represent the culmination of a series of religious acts. For example, any obrigação which includes several private rituals generally ends with a candomblé, xirá, or festa (i.e., an obligatory ceremony closing the cycle of ritual observance). Confirmation ceremonies for ogans or for aláhês (drummers) occur at the end of another ritual cycle and are true consecrations. Concurrently, public ceremonies give rise to communal social interaction of essential significance for an understanding of the ethnography of musical performance, and through it an appreciation of the cultural focal point that music exhibits for the Afro-Brazilians.

2. The “Baptism” of Drums

In the article “Música de culto afro-hispana,” co-authored by Melville Herskovits and Richard Waterman, Herskovits pointed out the difficulty of assessing the wealth of ritual songs in Afro-Bahian candomblé:

The important place occupied by ritual songs in the African cults of Bahia has been recognized in the many studies on that subject, since the times of Nina Rodrigues and Manoel Querino to the recent investigations of Arthur Ramos and others. Nevertheless, the assessment of the wealth of these mists is really difficult until technical advances allow a systematic and extensive program of recordings and musicological analyses capable of completing the ethnographic background [Spanish fondo] of these songs. With such resources, the range of song types used in these cults and the rules which guide their interpretation (performance) will be better explored (Herskovits and Waterman 1949: 65).
Herskovits’s own collection, gathered in Salvador, Bahia, in 1941 and 1942, and analyzed by Alan P. Merriam in his doctoral thesis (1951), supposedly numbers 671 songs. In reality, this collection includes many items which are not religious, such as the songs accompanying the so-called samba-batuke and samba de roda. But, more importantly, Herskovits himself revealed that many of the songs recorded were not collected in the context of the ceremonies, but in a laboratory installed in the State Museum (Museu do Estado). In addition, neither he nor anyone else after him ever paid attention to that “ethnographic background” of the songs, or stated differently, the liturgical contextual practices that govern the musical repertoires and therefore dictate their internal structure and justify the performance order.

Herskovits (1944) also reported the religious significance of drums and drummers in the Bahian cults. Since he worked among many cults of both the most traditional and African-related religious groups, specifically the Ketu, Gêge (or Gêge-Nagô), Congo-Angola cults, and the Candomblé de Caboclo, his description and interpretations of the ceremonies involving drums seem to be the result of a generalization from the various groups. But the terminology itself used by Herskovits tends to indicate that he paid greater attention to the Gêge-Nagô cult group in which sacred language is derived from the Yoruba language. Yet, some elements of his description of ceremonies affecting drums are not characteristic of the Gêge-Nagô group, but of the Caboclo group. Thus, it is impossible to determine whether any particular group served as his basic reference. Moreover, his previously mentioned collection does not include any items specifically associated with drum ceremonies.

Since the functional aspects of candumblé music have never been studied by anyone and the song repertoires have not been codified, the first step in reaching an understanding of the structure of the performance should be the documentation of the specific ritual or liturgical order in which songs should theoretically be performed in this ceremony, and the determination of the reasons for such sequences according to prevailing religious belief systems and practices. The assumption of a “theoretical” sequence of songs comes from opinions expressed by cult leaders of some of the oldest centers of Salvador, Bahia. What seems to be “theoretical” is dictated by tradition in the minds of these leaders. The actual uses of repertoires reveal frequent departure from the theoretical orthodoxy and have received close attention in my own studies.

My factual data concerning drum “baptism” are based on about fifteen such ceremonies observed between 1967 and 1979 among the Gêge-Nagô and the other cult groups. A comparison of Herskovits’s description of that ceremony and present-day practices among the various religious groups could have been helpful to illustrate the process of change in the study of musical functions in a traditional repertory. But, for the reason previously mentioned, a generalization among the various cult groups would be premature.

Despite syncretism with Christian elements, Afro-Brazilian candomblé continues to be essentially animistic in nature. Since drums (known as atahauques, tabaques, ilus) have the primary religious function of calling the gods, and thus of bringing on spirit possession which is the ultimate purpose of most Afro-Bahian rituals, they are believed to have a “voice” of their own, irresistible to the gods, and their azé or spiritual force needs to be reinforced through “nourishment.” Thus, because of this quasi-personification of the instruments, a proper spiritual treatment is essential. This treatment not only includes the initial rite of “baptism,” but occasionally the actual naming of the drums and annual “feeding” to prolong and assure the power received at the baptismal ritual. Although religious syncretism with Catholicism is well known, the term “baptism” is not used by cults of cult leaders. Rather, the native expression is dar de comer ao couro (to feed the hide or leather). Herskovits used the word “baptism” in its symbolic meaning of ablation, as part of the rite of passage from the secular to the sacred world. Yet, he saw in it an example of the striking quality possessed by such African cults as have survived in New World Catholic countries, a quality by means of which African and Catholic elements are harmoniously combined (Herskovits 1944: 484).

Syncretistic elements have been overemphasized. I subscribe to the interpretation that the apparent existence of features of Christian belief systems was the result of sociohistorical accommodation in the slave quarters of the plantations. Today, however, a recognized awareness of the value of traditional popular culture tends to minimize this “harmonious combination.” A concrete example would be the use of water in the “baptism” of drums. According to Herskovits, the priest or priestess takes holy water, obtained from a Catholic church, and speaking entirely in the African tongue employed by the group in its rituals, blesses the drums while sprinkling them with the sacred liquid (Herskovits 1944: 484). While this might still be true nowadays among the Caboclos, it is not the case among the Gêge-Nagô groups. The sacred liquid results from the maceration of sacred plants which are believed to have great power (azé) and are the secret of each cult center. The presence of this liquid is indeed signified by the special plant songs which appear in the sequence to be described. Plant songs (cantigas de fôlhas in Portuguese) would have no place in that sequence if it were not for the very nature of this liquid.

The liturgical setting of the drum “baptism” ceremony may be further considered. Each center is primarily dedicated to the cult of the orixá to
whom the cult leader was initiated. The drums become, therefore, one of the main vehicles of communication with that god (another being divination). The baptismal ritual will be placed under the sign of that god. The preparation of the drums entails painting their bodies with the characteristic colors of the god. In the specific performance to be described, Xangó, the god of thunder, fire, and lightning, is represented by the colors red and white. Although not a requirement, the drums are sometimes dressed for the occasion. This dressing consists of encircling them with a cloth called odja, following the same practice as for the initiates in a state of possession.

In most cult groups, drums are played in a battery of three, in conjunction with an iron gong or bell (agogó) or a shaken rattle. In the Gêge-Nagó cult groups, the trio always comes in three different sizes. In these cults they are played with sticks (aguáavis), while in the Congo-Angola and Caboclo cults the hands are used exclusively. A religious hierarchy exists between the rum (the largest drum) and the rumpi and lê. The rum is played by the master drummer and is considered the most important because it determines the various changes in the choreography. Its religious function of inducing spirit possession is paramount. While dancing, the initiates pay more attention to it than to the other ones, because they are expected to respond to its calls. By improvising, the rum establishes a contrast with the smaller drums which usually repeat a single steady ostinato pattern, as does the agogó. The following example sketches the structure of the rum in specific rhythmic patterns: [Example 1]. Functionally and musically the rum appears to be, therefore, the instrument par excellence. This hierarchy, however, is not manifested in the baptismal rites. Each drum is treated equally.

The ritual takes place shortly after a new drum has been constructed. In most instances, the three drums of the set are built at the same time. There is no basic difference between this first ceremony and the subsequent annual feeding of the drums (with the exception of the painting and occasional naming of the instruments). The babalorixá, or less frequently the master drummer (alabé), officiates. He or she begins by consulting the gods through divination to make sure that the particular day chosen for the ceremony is appropriate for the god under whose sign the ceremony takes place (obi, i.e., kola nuts, or cowry shells are used for divination purposes). Oríkis or prayers of offering are said concurrently with the divination game. If the divination signs (there are 256 in West Africa according to Bascom and Verger) should prove consistently negative, the ceremony would be postponed, although in actual practice such an occurrence is very rare. The drums are placed in a slanting position, which is only permissible on this occasion. Normally they are always in an upright position for actual performance (as opposed to comparable ceremonies witnessed in Dahomey-Bénin). Several dishes for the food offerings are placed in front of the drum heads. This food includes blood, the sacred liquid mentioned earlier, salt,
palm oil (epó), and honey. Of these, the foods believed to have real axé are the blood and the herbs or plants. The ritual use of blood is clearly an African trait in this context. As the most manifest symbol of life, blood, especially running blood, is necessary in the most liturgically significant Afro-Bahian rituals. Such a necessity appears quite consistent with the animistic nature of the Yoruba African religion. A feathered animal (a chicken, preferably a cock) will be sacrificed for each drum. At the moment the head of the animal begins to be severed, an appropriate song ("sacrificial" song as a native category) is sung: "Ogum chorô, chorô . . . Eje chorô, ilu paô," i.e., "Ogum conducts ceremony . . . the blood is flowing, ilu." The reference to the god Ogum is justified by the fact that Ogum, the god of war and metal tools, should be invoked in conjunction with the use of the sacrificial knife. (See Example 2).

Example 2 Sacrificial Song

Two more songs ("Eje ofere bará lajé," and "Oniê kilo paô"), presenting the same pentatonic or hexatonic melodic structure, are performed as a further offering of the blood to the ilu. All the songs are accompanied by the agogó alone (occasionally the ajú or xeré, a shaken double-coned bell, is also used to call on the spirit of the deity), the "baptism" being one of the few musical occasions of candomblé in which singing is not accompanied by drums. The cycle of plant songs follows, introduced by the greeting word Assâ (repeated three times) to Ossanha, the god of all vegetation. (See Example 3). In theory (i.e., according to the most orthodox tradition), the order in which the plants (or leaves) should be invoked is well set, involving sixteen different plants grown in both the West African and the Brazilian Northeastern coasts. Most of the Yoruba names of plants continue to be used in Bahia: irokó, odundun, eurepêpê, agitébá olá, etc. These plants are known by all cult leaders, who also act as medicine men in most cases. Since herbs and plants are considered to be one of the critical secrets of a given cult center, all plant songs are not generally sung if a member of another (rival) center is present, in order to avoid revealing these secrets. The songs-texts are, in general, traditional Yoruba or Fon texts although the numerous linguistic and phonetic alterations prevent a meaningful literal translation of such texts, even by a Yoruba-speaking person. The tones of the language especially have been lost.

With the performance of these songs a true baptism, i.e. in the sense of immersion, takes place. The drums are sprinkled with the sacred liquid, the sacralization of which occurs at the time of the gathering and maceration of the plants and involves offerings to Ossanha and singing. Plant songs may include songs for ìpessam (there is no common equivalent in English; these are plants of the mimosa, begonia and borage families), Agba-ô (a type of morning glory), Eurepepê (a water primrose) and Peregumi (a dracaena type). The song "Pelebe ni tobeô" or "Peleme mi koboô" (flat is my knife) appears in the middle of the plant cycle, presumably as a reference to the tool used to collect the plants. (See Example 4).

Example 3 Plant Song (text omitted)

Example 4 Song of Offering
The last plant song of this cycle “Ifa-ô, Ifa-omen” corresponds to the Mariou, the African oilpalm. The Yoruba songtext signifies good wishes of wealth and good fortune (Ifa-omen means to attract money). Four songs of greetings to the drums follow, in which ilu is already associated with Obá, the “King,” that is, the King Xangô. The placement of the chicken’s or cock’s head in one of the dishes in front of the drums is signified by the song “Ori abodi o gueguê maniô,” (the severed head is the fulfillment). (Ori = head; abodi = cut, severed; gueguê = fulfillment; maniô = this is; cf. Verger 1957: 84). (See Example 5).

![Example 5 Head Offering Song](image)

The greeting words of the text of this song mix Yoruba (e.g. ajé-um = food; omo = money; Achô = clothing) and Portuguese (e.g. paz, prosperidade, sossego, peace, prosperity, tranquility). Food offering songs follow in the order of salt (iyê), honey (ayin), and palm oil (epô). These three ingredients are mixed in a bowl and poured on the drums’ heads. Covering the drum bodies with the feathers of the sacrificial animals, the babalorixà sings “lorô, koko bo-ô” referring to the feathers (iyê). The last offering—perhaps the most significant from a strictly religious viewpoint—is that of the head of the animal. Indeed, the head symbolizes the new life conferred upon the instruments (“Ilô, bori ia-um”). This is why this offering is followed by two songs of general joy (“Opê iré” = “I call happiness, cheerfulness”) and thanksgiving (Oni-wáyagogô, the bell-playing greeting the drums).

The last songs (ten to fifteen) generally belong to the specific repertory associated with the orixá for whom the drums were “baptized.” In the specific case of Xangô, it is by greeting Xangô that the worshippers reveal the fulfillment of the rite of passage: Xangô takes possession of his drums. The latter are referred to in the songtexts as “omoróba” or “children of Xangô.” The greeting shout “Kawô, kabié sile” (translated by William Bascom [1972: 3-4] as “Welcome, we prostrate ourselves before you”), specific to Xangô, is uttered several times, indicating the imminent presence of the god, who may or may not manifest himself at that time. A few songs may be singled out. For example, “E mirê mirê xorobê eje koba, benô” forms an integral part of the obrigação to Xangô. The only difference here is the addition of the word ilu. Greeting songs to Obá, the King, and Obá otà, the King of stone (i.e. thunderstone) are also part of the cycle. The song “Okù, la ilê” is, from a liturgical viewpoint, the climax of the ceremony (and almost the ending), because in the Xangô repertory, this song is of special fundamento. (See Example 6).

![Example 6 Song of “Fundamento”](image)

The presence of this song at the end of the sequence is significant since it is supposed to help establish a direct communication with the orixá. The ceremony ends with a consultation game (again with oríkís) to make sure that the deity has accepted his new children and devotees. The positive result of the game is expressed through applause and shouting and general rejoicing of the limited congregation (see Béhague 1977). The drums remain in the sacred space (barracão) where the ceremony took place for several hours with a lit candle in front of each drum. After that period, drum heads and bodies are cleaned. The hides are left in the sun to dry. They are properly tuned, and then ready to fulfill their crucial role.

Thus, the “baptism” ceremony is a clear illustration of the close relationship existing between liturgical behavior and musical repertories. More specifically, music operates as an integral component of that behavior since music alone, in this instance, corroborates the very meaning of the ceremony which is the sacralization of the instruments.

3. A Public Musical Occasion: The “Xiré” Ceremony

The numerous public rituals of candomblé include several phases of initiation (Saída de iaôs, or the first public appearance of the new initiates; orunkô, the new name-giving ceremony; and pana na quitanda das iaôs, a rite of transition of the initiates from the sacred to the secular world), purification rituals such as the Agua de Oxalá, communion rites such as the Pião do Oxalá and Oluajé for the orixá Omolù or Obaluaiyé (the deity of smallpox and other contagious diseases), aspects of funeral ceremonies such as the Axê, and confirmation rites such as those for the ogran and alabês. While many of these public rituals take place at specific dates during the year, the xiré may occur at any date, depending on the occasion for which it is held, for the xiré really concludes a whole period of festive events. This is why it is the most generalized public ritual, open to all, including outsiders such as tourists. In the local language, xiré is simply referred to as candomblé or festa, which confirms the frequency of its performance, since the generic term is used to refer to that ceremony as a sort of epitome of the Afro-Bahian religious complex (see Béhague 1975).
The xirá takes place at night in the main dancing room (barracão), the largest area of a cult center. The barracão is decorated for the occasion with paper garlands in the colors of the main orixá of the house or those of the particular deity of the person(s) being honored at that occasion. The drums are often dressed with an od统一 of the same colors. Seats and benches surround the central dancing space. The hierarchy of candomblé personnel is made evident through the types and placement of seats within the barracão. A large armchair occupying a central position belongs to the cult head, on both sides of whom sit other dignitaries such as the ialekeré, the various ogãns of the house and distinguished visitors and friends. Members of the community and outsiders sit on benches generally on both sides of the main entrance of the barracão. Men and women sit separately. The drummers and agogó player occupy another focal point often enhanced by a platform covered with special decorations.

The xirá begins with the entrance of the filhas de santo into the barracão to a march-like rhythm known as asominha in the Gêge groups (cf. Béhague 1977), followed by the despacho de Exu (the sending away of the trickster-deity, Exu, or Legba to the Fon people, the guardian of the crossroads and a symbol of generative power). If a padre de Exu (i.e., a special sacrificial offering) was not performed during that same afternoon. When the padre is observed, there is no need for a despacho de Exu. In this case, the ceremony begins with a direct invocation of Ogum. For the despacho, three to seven songs are sung to Exu (cf. Hershkovits & Hershkovits, n.d.) while offering him water, sugar-cane alcohol (cachaca) or manioc flour. (See Example 7).

```
Example 7  Song to Exu
```

These offerings are thrown outside through the doorway of the main entrance where Exu is believed to reside. This despacho is essential because it assures the proper, uninterrupted course of the ceremony.

The ritual clearly follows a two-part sequence of varying length, with subdivisions within each part. The first part could be designated from a functional viewpoint as the “call to the gods” (first the greeting then the call) and the second as the “presence of the gods.” The main liturgical function of the first part is to bring about spirit possession, which signifies the response of the gods. This is done exclusively through ritual dancing and music; i.e., no artificial means can be utilized. Again three to seven songs should be performed for each orixá in the following sequence: Ogum, Oxossi (the hunting god), Ossanha, Oxumare (the rainbow, symbol of life continuity), Omolu, Nanã (an old female deity, considered the mother of all orixá), Iemanjá (goddess of the sea), Iansã (also known as Oyá, goddess of tempest and wind), Obá (the goddess of the Nigerian river of the same name, one of Xangô’s wives), Egu (goddess of the Nigerian river and lagoon Iewa), Xangô, and Oxalá (the god of creation, son of the Supreme Being, Oluron). In practice, however, there are many deviations from this sequence, but the types and functions of songs in this cycle are not altered. The number of songs for each deity also varies in practice depending on the special occasion for which the ceremony is being performed and on the response of the initiates to the songs of their own specific gods. It falls upon the solo singer (most frequently the cult head or the master drummer, at times an ogãni) to select those songs associated with each deity that he or she knows will incite a better response from the initiates. The latter dance to and sing the whole cycle of songs regardless of their own god association until spirit possession occurs. Thus, one can say that the most general functional category of the songs is to induce spirit possession. But specific songs function subjectively for each initiate according to the type of psychological association and conditioning developed during his/her period of initiation.

The structure of the possession phenomenon finds its basic explanation in sociocultural conditioning, as shown by the studies of Hershkovits, Bastide and Verger. Bastide considered spirit possession the result of social pressure on the individual, part of a cultural pattern following a certain number of collective representation. “A mystic manifestation,” he wrote, “which begins and ends at a given time, always according to certain rules, can only be explained through the antecedence of the social over the mystic [nature of such a manifestation]” (Bastide 1958: 121). On later occasions, however, Bastide stressed the mythical aspect of Afro-Brazilian culture, when he stated “the religious trance is regulated according to mythical models, it actually is a repetition of the myths” (Bastide 1958: 122). Indeed, one could interpret the ceremony as a reenactment of specific myths. Such a reenactment is meaningfully expressed through music and dance. The ceremony primarily entails a collective choreography whose structure for the most part is dictated by the dramatic representation of certain mythical stories involving the orixá. The fact that the gods are, in practical terms, initiates in trance and yet interact with each other, according to religious beliefs, tells us a great deal about the nature of spirit possession; namely, trance does not prevent the initiates from watching each other’s behavior and thus being stimulated by outside factors. To give a specific example, let me refer to the well-known legend of Xangô and his three wives, Iansã, Oxum and
Of these, Oxum was the favorite and Obá the most neglected (other versions mention Iansã as the preferred wife). One day, Obá asked Oxum to reveal her secret for being able to seduce so easily the fearful Xangó. Oxum answered that she had devised a magic trick: she had cut off her ear and had cooked it in the *caruru* (special dish) of Xangó. Thus, Xangó had developed a constant sexual desire for her. The gullible Obá in desperation for her husband’s love did just that, but when Xangó tasted his food and found out what had happened, he repudiated her forever. In the *xiré*, one of the most typical choreographic traits of Obá’s dancing consists of hiding her left ear, or of a mock fight against Oxum, should the latter deity be present at the same time. It is clear, then, that the religious dances are not the result of simple individual trances of the initiates separate from one another. On the contrary, they seem to complement each other by responding to each other, in a complex of stimuli and responses, according to the mythical tradition. This almost theatrical nature of spirit possession may make one wonder whether there might not be some simulacrum of the real possession. The answer is, in most cases, negative, for the trance phenomenon is actually tested frequently during the initiation.

By the time the worshippers reach the Xangó songs in the first part of the ceremony, numerous possessions may have occurred. However, if the many songs and the sacred dances (lasting from two to three hours as a rule) some initiates seem to have difficulty in reaching the state of possession, some cult centers may resort to a specific rhythm known as *adarrum* whose function is to call all the gods at once. Few people can avoid responding to the dynamic level and the fast tempo of this rhythm. Cross-cultural studies of possession drumming made by psychologists and neurologists have revealed that the “rhythmic stimulation of the organ of hearing can be accomplished only by using a sound stimulus containing components of supraliminal intensity over the whole gamut of auditory frequencies... as from an untuned percussion instrument or an explosion” (Walter & Walter 1949: 57). Moreover, whatever the prevailing rhythmic patterns of possession drumming may be, it has been shown that rhythmic stimulation (as opposed to continuous stimulation) elicits a greater driving response, and actual neurophysiological alterations in the brain waves. There is little doubt, however, that rhythmic stimulation and response to specific patterns are culturally determined. In Bahia the conditioning to *adarrum* (originally only found in Gege cult centers) is such that some of the most orthodox or purist cult leaders forbid its performance in their center on the grounds that it is an unnatural way of calling the gods, and the resulting trances may be too violent. This may also be the reason why *adarrum* is not too frequently performed. In a recorded performance in actual ritual context (see Béhague 1977, Side I, band 5), one can notice how the *adarrum* was brought about suddenly. The timing of the solo leader was perfect; from his singing to Ogum, he cued the initiates so that they would know that this was the final call for spirit possession. It is quite clear that the whole religious behavior was dictated and determined through musical means alone.

As the call to the gods materializes, each initiate backs out (a god cannot turn his back on the drums) into the “room of the orixás” inside the cult center, where each one will be dressed as a god and will be given the sacred ritual tools (daggers, fans, scepters, etc.). Depending on the occasion, female deities (*iabás*) also carry bouquets of flowers. After an interval of up to one hour, depending on the number of gods to appear, and during which feelings of high expectation build up, the cult leader, the drummers, and the whole community of spectators begin one of the special entrance songs, known as “Agoloná” (lit., please open the way), accompanied by a *batá* rhythm (reserved for some of the most solemn and important liturgical moments). (See Example 8). This performance signals the beginning of the second major part of the ceremony. In single file, the gods enter the *barracão*, dancing to the *batá* rhythm in a march-like, solemn and majestic fashion. Again social hierarchy within the group is observed in the order of appearance of the gods. This order is dictated by seniority of initiation and neglects the relative importance of the orixás represented by the initiates, a
significant case of human over supernatural prevalence. While the spectators stand, firecrackers are detonated outside, announcing the coming of the gods to the whole community. The song “Agoloná” is repeated as long as it takes for each god to circle the barracão, to salute the drums and to pay homage to the cult leader or any other official of the cult center.

This is an intensely emotional, dramatic moment for the worshippers of the particular cult house. Man is at last face to face with the supernatural power of the orixás, a power governing his destiny to a great extent and inspiring respect, admiration and awe. Yet, in spite of the possessed initiates’ uncommonly hardened, mask-like facial expressions representing their new personalities, they appear as gods in the very physical configuration of their fellow men, and as such become tangible, concrete entities with whom man can easily identify. Whatever communication might be established between gods and men during the remainder of the ceremony assumes a mostly non-verbal form of interchange, through music and dancing.

As opposed to the first part, in which collective dancing prevails, the second part stresses the individual choreography of the gods. When there are several initiates to a god, they often dance together, but as their dancing abilities are quite evidently displayed, attention is generally focused on the most skillful dancers. Once more three to seven songs may be sung for each deity, but more than seven may be sung for a specific orixá, depending on the occasion. The gods themselves may sing or speak (answering questions or conveying messages), and sometimes they intone specific canticles to which they wish to dance. Conversely, they may refuse to dance to other songs if and when such songs selected by the solo leader do not correspond to the proper fundamento of that god; in such cases, the solo leader switches to another appropriate song. It is significant to note that the vocal quality of an individual is totally altered when he/she sings as an orixá, logically following the idea that the initiates personify gods.

Specific rhythms correspond to specific gods. For example, a rhythm known as brumum may be associated with Ogum, Oxum, and Naná; agueré is reserved for Obá and Ìwé; opamifé for Òmolu; Ọfún, toníbó and bajuwá for Xangó; and Ọgbé for Ochún. Whenever any such rhythm is played, the god with whom it is associated reacts immediately by shouting his or her individual ritual cries known as ilà or kè (from the Yoruba: to shout). Most of the ritual behavior of the gods is controlled through such rhythms and appropriate songs by the babaloríkà or the master drummer who decides when one god should stop dancing and another should begin.

The musical structure of the second part of the ceremony cannot be as well defined as that of the first part since the sequence of songs and drum rhythms is dependent upon the religious observance of a specific day or occasion. Yet, as a general rule, once each of the gods or groups of gods have danced for a reasonable amount of time, they may all participate in special rounds, such as the Xangó Round. After these, the gods are led out of the barracão one at a time, or they may all retreat from the barracão to the same avaninha or brumum rhythms which opened the specific ritual.

At any time during the second part of this ceremony, social interaction develops at various levels. The splendid costumes of the gods and the various “tools” they display (sacred objects symbolizing their specific attributes) become the subject of much praise and discussion among the observers or spectators. The display of their choreographic skills and occasional disclosure of individually creative dancing figures may provoke visible signs of esthetic approval among the members of the cult house and visitors alike. Another form of social interchange occurs when the gods go around and embrace the dignitaries of the cult house or anyone they choose to single out for this special honor. Often worshippers take advantage of this close contact with the gods to speak to them briefly, either uttering a few words of greeting or consulting them about any problems in their life.

In this exchange, the gods may respond or may simply mimic a few comforting gestures, such as placing their hands for a few seconds on the worshipper’s head.

Music appears as the vehicle par excellence of social fellowship. Frequently, an important visitor signifies his/her friendship toward the cult center and the specific occasion of the ceremony by leading the singing (the local expression is puxar a cantiga, i.e., to draw out the song). The more fundamento the songs selected for such occasions may exhibit, the more positive and friendly a response will be elicited. The same reverence is expressed when an ogba, for example, begins leading the singing for a particular dance of a god. In such cases, the chorus responds becomes more animated (both in numbers of people responding and in the dynamic level of performance), a sure sign of approval and gratitude. Likewise, drummers of another cult house present at the ceremony may be invited by the alábés of the house to pay homage to the gods/initiates of this specific occasion by performing a few pieces.

4. Performance at Funeral Rites

Ancestor worship and the cult of the dead among candomblé groups have been explained with great insight by Juana Elbein dos Santos (1976) who provided elaborate descriptions and interpretations of the various ritual institutions and mechanisms related to Nagó’s conception of death. Her rather subjective analyses of ritual symbolism in the liturgy of death appear nevertheless as the necessary adjunct to any description of music performance at funeral occasions.

A. The Cult of the “Eguns”

The Nagó oppose the concept of the real, concrete universe, aiyé, which includes it in the life of all living beings with that of the supernatural world,
oran, whose conceptualization is essentially abstract yet closely related with aiyé. “Oran is a world parallel to the real world which coexists with all the contents of the latter. Each individual, each tree, each animal, each city, etc. possesses a spiritual and abstract double in the oran...” (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 54). All supernatural entities are believed to reside in the oran, to which human beings go after death. The eguns are spirits or souls of the ancestral dead who come back to aiyé during certain ritual ceremonies. As opposed to the orixás who are associated with and represent the forces of nature and cosmos, the eguns have a direct relationship with human history and thus are associated with the social structure and order of a given group. Since orixás are not conceived as eguns, the cult of the former is clearly differentiated from that of the latter. While in Nigeria and Dahomey (Bénin) there exist numerous secret societies for the cult of the eguns, in Brazil only two such societies remain, the Ilê Agboulá (in Bela Vista) and the related Ilê Oyá (Rouxinho) in the Itaparica Island, next to Salvador, Bahia. At present, the cult of the ancestral spirits takes place only in the terreiros or cult centers which contain a special secret room (igbalé in Yoruba, translated into ibalé and balé in Brazil) or a special house known as Ilê-Ibò-akú, where the dead are worshipped through food offerings and special rituals that only the men of the center can attend. The same cosmological dualism prevailing in Yoruba mythology appears in the native classification of the eguns. On the one hand, the male ancestors (babá-eguns) belong to the right of the world (otun-aiyé), on the other, the female ancestors (iainis) occupy the left (osí-aiyé). Moreover, while the female ancestors do not seem “to have individualized representations in the aiyé, as their symbols carry a collective meaning, the male ancestors have, besides their collective symbols, well defined individualized representations” (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 105). This explains the corporeal representations of the eguns as men, individualized through special costumes and special names and cultivated by members of their family and their descendants. (Ibid.) Iku (Death) is itself conceived as a man and male symbol.

While the cult of the eguns has remained institutionalized in Bahia through the society known as Egun (Egungun in West Africa), that of the iainis has its own grouping in the societies Geledé and Elekó, still existing in Nigeria and Dahomey, but no longer active in Brazil (cf. Verger 1965; Elbein dos Santos 1976). This does not mean that the female ancestral power is not recognized. On the contrary, numerous myths involving the iainis, and particularly iami Oxorongá or Àjé Mâe (the collective representative of the iainis) are interwoven with numerous beliefs and ritual practices (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 107-118). In Brazil, the iaimis’ generative power is still symbolized by a calabash (womb) containing a bird, the symbol of the element procreated, although specific assentos (the consecrated places for worship and sacrifices) of iami Oxorongá in Salvador exhibit different symbols.

The major rituals of the eguns in which music and dance performances occur include several ceremonial occasions in which the spirits of the dead need to be invoked. Moreover, the Egun society observes annual festivals with much singing and dancing. The ritual performance itself entails first the summoning of the eguns, by the ojé (or abá ojé) or initiated priests of the Egun society, the ‘intermediaries between the living and the dead’ (dos Santos & dos Santos 1969: 101), who go through a first stage of initiation as omo ìṣà before becoming ojé. This summoning begins with the call of the eguns by hitting the ground three times with a special ritual staff, known as ìṣà, and enunciating secret verbal formulas. After the last invocation the eguns must appear. The first to be invoked and worshipped is Onilé, a god conceived as “the collective representative of the ancestors,” to whom people sing: “Onilé ibly ré, Onilé mo jubá” (“Onilé, you are venerated, Onilé, I present you my humble respects, or I bow in front of you”) (dos Santos & dos Santos 1969: 90). The eguns appear dressed in phantasmagoric fashion, in vividly colored strips of cloth, richly embroidered and ornamented with shells, mirrors, and spangles (cf. illustrations in Verger 1957). “It is believed that under the stripes of cloth which cover the bodily forms is the Egun of a dead person, a known ancestor, or, in the event that the bodily form is not recognizable, some aspect related to death. In the latter case the Egungún represent collective ancestors who symbolize moral concepts and are the guardians of inherited customs and traditions. These collective ancestors are the most respected and feared of all the Egungún, keepers as they are of the ethics and moral discipline of the group” (dos Santos & dos Santos 1969: 86). This fear emerges from the mystery of death (awó) as symbolized by the eguns, a mystery acknowledged intangible to men, as the following song text confirms: “Gegé oró axó lari, lari, lari. Gegé oró axó lénim, ako mó Babá” (“According to the ritual, cloth is what we see, that which we see, pieces of cloth is what we see, we do not know, Father”).

Besides using the ìṣà, the ojé also invoke the ancestors with a large ritual scepter known as opá whose symbol of authority is linked directly to Olorun, the supreme being of Yoruba religion, as stated in the text of the song “Olorun, Olorun Olo Opá” (“Olorun, the master of the Opá”) performed in Bahia in the Egun society (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 123). The ojé control and guide the performance of the eguns with the ìṣà, making sure that the spirits of the ancestors remain physically separated from the mortals present at the ceremony. The performance of the eguns consists essentially of receiving the offerings prepared for them by the descendants of a given egun, and giving men their blessings, transmitting specific messages and rejoicing, in general terms, with their descendants. The eguns sing and dance on such occasions. Their performance takes place in a special sacred space, part of the barracão, where the throne and chairs of the eguns stand and non-initiates are allowed to penetrate only when accompanied by an ojé or the
leader of the terreiro. As with the orixás, the eguns possess greeting formulas, specific shouts (known as Rí, as for the orixás) and songs which identify them. In its various manifestations, sound appears, therefore, as the most fundamental sign of identification and communication. This is why the rites of preparation and invocation of the eguns include the “opening of speech” (Portuguese abrira a fala) of the eguns, done by only those ojé with special position and knowledge. The essential difference between the music associated with the cult of the orixás and that of the eguns, besides their respective song cycles, is the unusually fast tempo of the music for the eguns. An alujá of Xangó, for example, performed for an egun of Xangó, is rendered almost twice as fast as for the same dance of the orixás. The reason for the “fast music of the Eguns” is not verbalized, but an educated guess would indicate that the pace is an expression of the essential difference between orun and aiyé.

B. The Axéxé Ceremonies

The funeral ritual cycle of axéxé (azeri for the Gêge, sirrum for the Congo-Angola) is performed soon after the burial of an initiate, more specifically any adoxu of the cult center. When a babalorixá or alorixá dies, the axéxé (from the Yoruba meaning origin, or beginning) cycle involves more complex rites, since as “father” and “mother” of the axé of the center, the cult leader “has his/her hand” (to use a native expression) on all the initiates of the center. Upon his/her death, it is necessary, therefore, to “pull the hand” (Portuguese tirar a mão) of the cult leader so as to assure the continuity of the axé of the terreiro. In effect, the fundamental principle of the axéxé rites resides in the transfer of the axé. In Elbein dos Santos’s words “ ... once his life cycle is fulfilled, each human being disintegrates to return in part to the ancestral bodies and to reinforce the aṣẹ of the latter. ... In the case of the adọṣu, depending on their hierarchy, part of their components represented by their ‘assentos’ may remain in the aiyé and be venerated. But let us remember that the ‘assentos’ represent the priestess’s individual elements of the orun; her elements of the aiyé will be unfallingly reabsorbed by the ancestral bodies ...” (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 229-230). The axéxé cycle assures the smooth transition from one world to the other. Once the ceremony is completed, the adoxu herself (or himself) becomes an axéxé. Through this transformation, all axéxés are, therefore, “the first ancestors of creation, the beginning and the origin of the universe, of a lineage, of a family, of a ‘terreiro’” (Ibid. 231-232). The immediate, practical function of the axéxé ceremonies is to send Iku (Death) away and to call the egun of the dead person.

In principle, the full axéxé cycle, which lasts seven days, is observed for any initiate with three or more years of initiation. For those initiates with less than three years, frequently a simple carrego (lit. a load—see below) is prepared and taken away. Thus, the complexity and duration of the rites vary according to the importance of the post held in the candomblè hierarchy by the dead person. In general, however, the same ceremonies are performed during the first five days, including the padê (see description in Elbein dos Santos 1976: 187ff) celebrated in the barracão at sunset, with the corresponding song cycle. Around an empty container, generally made of a half-calabash (known as cuia), standing in the middle of the room, the members of the center and relatives of the dead, all dressed in white, wait for one of the priests officiating to light the candle next to the container. The lit candle is believed to indicate the presence of the dead’s spirit. With their heads and bodies covered with a large white cloth (ojó), each member of the center (beginning with the cult leader, then in order of seniority, with each of the priestesses and with pairs of initiates) dances around the cuia, greeting all those present, and deposits coins in it after making the symbolic gesture of rotating the coins over one’s head to signify the entrustment of one’s person to the spirit of the dead. The cult leader begins the performance of the first song of the cycle, paying special homage to all axéxés: “Axéxé, Axéxé o, Axéxé o jubáa” (“Axéxé, I bow in front of you, I present my respects”), and “Axéxé, o ku Agbá o” (“Axéxé, I greet the Old Ones”). The second song of the cycle refers to Odé Aroló, i.e., the orixá Oxossi, the hunting god, who, according to Elbein dos Santos, is the ‘mythical ancestor-founder of the Kete terreiros’ and, consequently, testament of the sons of the ‘terreiro’” (1976: 232). This is indeed confirmed by the songtext “Odé Aroló lo bi wa” (“Odé Aroló brought us to the world”). Canticles of farewell to the dead are sung by each member while depositing the coins. After the individual dancing and singing around the cuia, paying respects to the dead, a collective performance involving the whole membership takes place in the form of a large round with dances and songs, invoking the protection of the egun and orixás. Specific songs refer at that point to the fact that the dead person will go to the orun. Special food for the occasion as well as an obí (kola nut) are placed next to the cuia by several adoxus. Several priests come in to put out the candle and carry the cuia and the food outside next to all the belongings of the dead person. Finally, with their heads uncovered, the members of the center perform a second danced round, specifically greeting and paying their respects to the orixás. The invocation of all the major orixás in such funeral rites is perfectly natural. Herskovits’s indication that “songs addressed to certain deities who ‘run away’ from the contact with Death may not be performed” (Herskovits and Waterman 1949: 99) has, to my knowledge, no empirical validity, since all orixás need to be saluted without discrimination. Likewise, the information related to musical instruments and rhythmic organization of the axéxé musical occasion provided by Herskovits is sketchy. While the use of the agogó and of calabash drums played with sticks is indeed traditional in both Kete and Gêge cults, it is erroneous to state that “the main instrument is a pottery jar played by striking the opening of the jar with a fire-fan ...” (Ibid.). The pottery jar (Portuguese potê) is, according to local tradition, specific to the Gêge cult and the corresponding azeri rites. Consequently, the assertion that “drums consecrated to the gods are never seen” (Ibid.) in the axéxé is incorrect.
In those cult centers professing a Ketu-Gêge affiliation, it is possible, of course for jars to be used instead of regular drums. Furthermore, while axêxê songs have distinct rhythmic patterns, there is no evidence to support the predication that it is "the rhythmic accompaniment of the melodies performed to the gods during ordinary ceremonies that transforms these canticles [or melodies] into those used for the death rites." (Ibid.). In effect, only two distinct rhythms are performed on the pottery jar: the bravum and the satô, the latter a Gêge rhythm not exclusive to funeral rites. All other rhythmic accompaniments played on calabash drums and regular atabaques follow the common pattern known as corridô.

The last two days of the axêxê cycle involve special rites which include, among others, animal sacrifices with the performance of the appropriate "sacrificial" songs, and the last call of the dead, with the assentos, cuia, food offerings, animals, and three new containers made of clay, all brought together in the Ilê-ibo Aku. A circle is drawn on the ground with sand, in the middle of which the obi is cracked and used for divination to discover the oracle that will dictate the resting place of the assentos and objects of the dead person. Sometimes the spirit of the dead is consulted in order to determine if any of his/her belongings should remain in the terreiro. The priest of highest rank present strikes the ground three times with a new ixê to summon the dead so that he/she will take away his/her carrego (load) and will therefore never ever wear his/her ties with the terreiro. After the third call the dead responds and, at once, everything that belonged to the dead is broken with the ixê (including the cuia full of coins, the calabash drums, and when used, the pottery jars). The animals are then sacrificed and their bodies placed on top of everything destroyed. One deposits some sand on top of the remains, and proceeds to prepare the carrego, also known as eru. The exit of the carrego (eru Iku, i.e., the load of Death) is hailed with special sung words: "Beru le malô, A-fi-bô" ("The eru is leaving, let us cover ourselves"). The dreaded carrego is taken by special priests to the place indicated by the oracle so that Exu Aleru, the "patron of the eru," will make final disposition of it. Upon the return of the priests, who reveal the happy fulfillment of their assignment, the members of the group dance a final round in the barracão and sing to all orixás, concluding with two songs of farewell to the dead. This phase of the ceremony is sometimes designated as the arremate, i.e., the end or conclusion. At sunset of the seventh day, a final padê is sung, after which a sacudimento (lit. shaking, a prophylactic rite) is executed, consisting of washing and sweeping the cult house with branches of sacred plants. For an iaborixa, babalorixa, and other members of high rank and prestige, the axêxê is repeated at regular periods, generally thirty days after death, then six months, one, three, seven and fourteen years, with a rare maximum of twenty-one years for exceptional cases.

As we have seen, there is hardly a ritual gesture in candomblé performance that is sanctioned and brought into effective reality without music. The funeral rites which assure the communication with the orun, the

"passage of the individual existence of the aiyé to the generic existence in the òrún" (Elbein dos Santos 1976: 235), and, consequently, the very existential continuity of the group, are brought into focus, as performance and events, through music and dance.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps because of the tightly structured nature of candomblé rituals and the high level of specificity in ritual behavior dictated by the religious dogmas themselves, musical and dance performance appears inseparable from the prescribed ritual behavior. Yet, musical performance behavior differs somewhat from other aspects of ritual behavior in that the sets of rules determining that behavior recognize implicitly a certain degree of individual competence, and allow, consequently, some flexibility in the compliance with them. For example, while it is expected that the iaborixa or babalorixa should lead the singing, in actuality numerous cult leaders delegated that responsibility to others whom they considered better singers than themselves, without a single alteration in the expected ritual effect of the music. Other non-musical responsibilities are seldom delegated. Likewise, a certain degree of variance in the actual melodic rendition of ritual songs is quite common among various cult centers of Salvador and does not affect the ritual behavior of initiates in those centers. What remains fairly strict, however, is the proper observance of the sequence of songs in a given ceremony. The ejô of candomblé (i.e., gossip) frequently centers on criticism of a given terreiro for lack of compliance or knowledge of the proper songs to be performed at the appropriate liturgical moment. Another subject of frequent derisive criticism between candomblé centers concerns the performance of songtexts. Very few people in Bahia speak or understand Yoruba or Fon, but candomblé worshippers know the specific functional meaning of the songs, although they may not know the literal meaning of each word. Thus, frequent phonetic alterations occur and one can observe a general Brazilianization of Yoruba or Fon words. The tones of the African words have been lost and while numerous African words have become part of the daily vocabulary of most Bahians, no creole language as such ever developed in Brazil. The most orthodox cult leaders and a few persons affiliated with candomblé who have had the opportunity to sojourn in Nigeria or Dahomey in recent years point to the deficiencies and general impoverishment of the local ritual language. It is clear, however, that any effort toward the re-Africanization of the local religions, particularly through language, is bound to fail because its artificiality goes against well-established cultural dynamics, resulting from the whole complex of local cultural and historical contexts.

Of particular interest and significance in candomblé patterns of music performance is the integrated concept of performers and audience. In effect, on numerous public occasions, members who initially appear passive in
their observation of the ritual activities may, in the course of the
festivities, become very active participants-performers, depending on the
religious stimulation of such occasions. The traditional dichotomy between
performers and audience in such cases breaks down. Likewise, the inter-
action between performers and audience (defined by means of conventional
behavior in performance contexts) frequently becomes so intense that those
members of the “audience” end up behaving, through performance, as ful-
filledgledged participants. Furthermore, in some funeral rites the very division of
performers and audience ceases to exist, as worshippers act and interact in
both capacities at regular intervals.

Most importantly, it is primarily through musical and dance performance
that religious fulfillment takes place. While the traditional religious dogmas of
candomblé maintain their African anistic nature, the supernatural
function of sacred tools (such as drums and plants) is mostly established
through the power of musical performance. Ritual songs, in effect, when
performed at specifically appropriate times, make possible the expected
results of the ritual, and operate as the essential sacralizing elements of the
religious complex. Musical performance therefore is the absolute pre-
requisite for the very existence and operation of candomblé religion.

NOTES

1. Various etymologies have been proposed. The term candomblé, which first
appears in the literature only in the latter part of the nineteenth century, is most
likely derived from the contraction candombe (a dance of African origin in Brazil
and the Rio de la Plata area) and ilé, from the Yoruba, meaning “house.” Thus,
candomblé would mean literally the “house of the dance.”

2. In the spelling of African words, I follow the Portuguese phonetic rendition of
such words, without the diacritical marks indicating the various tones of a word,
since those tones no longer operate in Brazil. Diacritical marks are maintained,
however, in quotations from the literature in which they are observed.

3. Herskovits says that this is a proverb meaning that a Yoruba remains one

REFERENCES CITED

Bascom, William
1969 *Ife-Divination: Communication between Gods and Men in West
1972 *Shango in the New World*. Austin, Texas: African and Afro-American
Research Institute.

Bastide, Roger

Béhague, Gerard
1975 Notes on Regional and National Trends in Afro-Brazilian Cult Music.
In Merlin H. Forster, ed., *Tradition and Renewal*. Urbana, Chicago,

Patterns of *Candomblé* Music Performance

1977 Afro-Brazilian Religious Songs. *Cantigas de Candomblé/Candomblé
Songs*. Lyrichord Discs. Stereo LLST 7315.
Carneiro, Edison

Falcon, R. P. Paul

Geertz, Clifford
1958 *Ethos, World View and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols. The Antioch

1966 *Religion as a Cultural System. In M. Banton, ed., Anthropological
204-215.

Herskovits, Melville J.
1944 *Drums and Drummers in Afro-Brazilian Cult Life*. In *Musical
Quarterly* 30 (4): 477-492.

Herskovits, Melville J. & Frances Herskovits

Herskovits, Melville J. & Richard Waterman
1949 *Música de culto afro-bahiana*. In *Revista de Estudios Musicales*, Año 1,
no. 2. 65-127.

Lima, Vivaldo da Costa
1977 *A família-de-santo nos Candomblés Jeje Nagô da Bahia: Um estudo de

Merriam, Alan P.
1951 *Songs of the Afro-Bahian Cults. An Ethnomusicological Analysis. A

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred R.
1922 *The Andaman Islanders: A Study in Social Anthropology*. Cambridge:
The University Press.

Santos, Juana Elbein dos
1976 *Os Nagô e a morte. Páde, Asêse e o Culto Égun na Bahia*. Petrópolis:
Editora Vozes, Ltda.

Santos, Juana Elbein dos and Deosoredes M. dos Santos

Verger, Pierre
1957 *Notes sur le Culte des Ora et Vodun*. Dakar: Institut Français
d’Afrique Noire.
1965 *Grandeur et Décadence du Culte de Òyámi Osorongô*. *Journal de la
1968 *Flux et reflux de la traite des nègres entre le golfe de Bénin et Bahia de
Todos os Santos du dix-septième au dix-neuvième siècle*. The Hague:
Mouton & Cie.

Viana Filho, Luiz

Walter & Walter
1949 *The Central Effects of Rhythmic Sensory Stimulation. In Electro-
encephalographic and Clinical Neurophysiology*, 1: 57-86.
GLOSSARY OF MAIN TERMS USED IN BAHIAN “CANDOMBLÉ”

Abêbê—Fan of the orixá Iemanjá, Oxum and Oxalá.
Abian—Designation of the pre-initiation stage of a young girl or woman.
Adram—A special drum rhythm whose function is to induce possession.
Adô—Crown, especially Oxum’s crown in Angola candombélé.
Aljê—Bell-like instrument “to call” the orixá (white metal for Oxalá, copper for Xangô). Also see Xerê.
Agogô—Musical instrument (cow-bell type), including one or two bells (different sizes), struck with a metal stick.
Água dos axés—Liquid containing some blood of all sacrificed animals, kept in the péji.
Aguí—(also Agbé) Musical instrument, consisting of a calabash covered with beads.
The typical rattle of Caboclo candombélé.
Alahê—(also atabaque. Also used to refer to the master drummer.
Alujá—Special drum rhythm for Xangô.
Arixé—Ritual baths (with special herbs and plants) during initiation.
Assentar o Santo—To prepare the body of the abian for orixá penetration.
Assento—Altar of the orixá (related to péji).
Assentamentos—All the paraphernalia associated with the orixá and placed on the altar.
Atin—The ensemble of herbs and leaves special of each orixá.
Axé—Spiritual force. Magnetic force of a candombélé house.
AxBés—Funeral ceremonies.
Atabaques—Drums.
Axogun—The person who sacrifices the animals.
Babá—Father.
Babalá—Diviner, Iya priest.
Babalorixá—Same as Pai-de-santo. Cult house leader.
Baixar—“To come down.” lit. to possess the initiate’s body (by the orixá).
Banho de fólhas—Ritual bath, with infusion of certain plants, during initiation or for illness cures.
Barço das iãs—Ensemble of iãs who come out of initiation, each year.
Barraço—Locale in which public (some private) ceremonies take place.
Barrovento—1. The mental and physical disturbance that precedes possession. 2. One of the three drum rhythms in Angola candombélé.
Bori—Ceremony with animal sacrifices for the “owner” of one’s head (to feed the head). Purification ceremony.
Búzios—Cowries (cowry shells).
Caboclo—1. Orixá of the Caboclo candombélé. 2. Designation of candombélé in which prevails a strong local influence (Amerindian among others) as opposed to the more traditional, African-related Ketu, Gêje, Ijexá or Angola cults.
Cair no santo—to be possessed by the orixá.
Camarinhã—Special room of the cult center where the iãs remain during the period of initiation. (also Runkô).
Candombélé—1. Afro-Bahian religious cults. 2. Locale of cult center. 3. Public ceremony (Oró/Xirê).

Patterns of Candomblé Music Performance

Caruru—Food including okra, shrimp, palm oil and rice.
Cachaca—Sugar cane alcohol.
Cavalo do Santo—(Horse of the saint) The person possessed by the orixá (according to the general belief, the orixá cannot be on foot).
Couro—(Lit. leather) Popular designation of drums.
Deké—Ritual involving the installation of a new babalorixa or ioralixá.
Despacho—Gen. animal sacrifice to the orixá. More specifically, offering of food to Exu. (Often used as a synonym of Padê).
Despachar—1. To sacrifice to the orixá. 2. To send away, hence to remove the orixá from the body of the possessed initiate.
Dobalé—Special form of salutation for those who have feminine orixás.
Ebó—Animal and other food offerings to the orixá (used especially for Exu).
Ekomim—Initiated person for more than seven years.
Efim—Ritual act of depilating the abian’s body (more specifically, her head) during initiation. Also white drawings painted on the head and body of the initiates.
Egun—The dead. Dead’s souls, ancestors. (The Yoruba word is egungun = skeleton).
Emi—Soul.
Enu—Ox tail, one of the attributes of Oxossi.
Ekefe—Those in charge of the iãs (helpers).
Eluê—Diviner.
Engoma—General designation for drum in Congo-Angola candombélé.
Fazer santo—to be initiated.
Filá—Straw hood worn by Omolu (deity of smallpox and other contagious diseases).
Filha-de-santo—(Lit. daughter of the Saint). Initiate.
Gan—Often used to designate the agogô with one bell only.
Iã—(Yoruba yawó = bride) Initiate with less than seven years of initiation.
Ioralixá—Cult head (woman). Same of Mãe-de-santo.
Igbin—Drum rhythm for Oxalá.
Iká—Special form of salutation for those who have male orixás.
Ilê—House.
Ití—Feast stone of the orixá.
Iyãba—Any female orixá.
Iyã bateú—Cook of the orixá.
Iyã kekerê—Same as Mãe-pequena, immediate substitute of the Mãe de Santo.
Iyá lázé—The one who has charge of the axé.
Iyã Teixeirê—Soleist, the woman who sings the solo part of the canticles in public ceremonies.
Jurema—1. A sacred tree where the Caboclo Juremeiro lives. 2. Alcoholic beverage made with the Jurema’s fruit and roots used in Caboclo candombélé.
Kalê—(In Portuguese the tie of the orixá). Collar worn by the iãs as a sign of their subscription to the babalorixa or ioralixá.
Lê—The smallest drum.
Liquaquê—Hand clapping to accompany a canticle.
Lorogun—Ceremony to close the cult houses (send back the orixás) during Lent.
Mãe-de-santo—Ioralixá, female cult head.
Mãe-pequena—Iyã kekerê. Substitute of mãe-de-santo.
Mandinga—Magic, witchcraft.
Matanga—Animal sacrifices.
Mesa—Table—Altar.
Miranga—Secret.
Obá—King (Olokù de Xangò). The 12 ministers of Xangò. Also, the Yoruba deity of the river Obá, Xangò’s third wife.
Ofe—Knife.
Ojú—Kola nut.
Ogá—Civil protector of the candomblé, chosen by the orixás.
Ogíudé—Drum (wooden) sticks.
Ogá or Babasogé—Priest in charge of the cult of the dead.
Ojá—Piece of white cloth used by the filhas-de-santo on their thorax, as an extra ornament. Also, piece of cloth used as drum ornament.
Omaló—Special caruru of Xangò.
Opeté Ifá—Ifá rosary (collar) for divinatory practice.
Orixá—Deity.
Oriki—Prayer, praise.
Oró—Ritual. Also, sequence of songs accompanying public ceremonies (Xiré).
Oo — Food offering to the orixás by the filhas-de-santo.
Oxú—Xangó’s double ax.
Paí—gen. used as synonym of Despacho. But Paí implies the ritual sacrifice of a four-legged animal to Òxú, in theory accompanied by 36 songs.
Paí-de-santo—Same as Babalorixá. Cult head.
Panam—(See also Quitable) Ceremony in which initiates act as every day working individuals, symbolizing their reintegration into the secular world, at the very end of the initiation period.
Pazóro—Ceremonial cane of Oxlá.
Peji—Altar of the orixás.
Pomba girá—Female Òxú, of the Caboclos.
Pontos cantados—Canticles in Umbanda cult to call the orixás.
Pontos riscados—Drawings on the floor symbolizing the spirits in Umbanda cult, in order to attract those spirits.
Quitable das iãós—See Panam.
Roça—The actual place of the cult house.
Rum—The largest ataque.
Rumpí—Medium size ataque.
Sirrām—Funeral ceremony in Angola candomblé, same as Axáxá.
Sundúa—The bath of blood. Part of initiatory rites.
Terretó—Same as Roça.
Xaaoró—Bracelet or ornamental chain worn at the ankles by the iãós with small bells, sign of subjection.
Xaxarà—Straw scepter type, ornamented with cowry shells, an attribute of Omolu.
Xiré—Bell to call the orixás (see Adiá).
Xiré—1. Offering to Òxú in the form of a two-legged animal or simply food. 2. Particular sequence of canticles sung at public ceremonies (see Oró).

Index

Abrahams, Roger, 4, 5, 13, 36, 47n.7, 48n.8, 49n.32
Acceleration, 42
Aesthetics, in Manding music, 72, 81
Agricola, Martin, 200
Alabd (in candomblé music), 225, 226, 229, 232, 237
Ancestor worship, 244, 245, 246
Antiphonal chorus, in ahuash (Berber) performance, 106
Apprenticeship, in Manding music, 75, 76, 83, 84
Articulation, 44-45
Ashley, Clarence, 166
Audience: behavior, 119, 120; manipulation, 105, 115; media listening, 129-130
Audiend-performer alienation, in Moroccan music, 114, 120-122
Audiend-performer relationship: in Afro-Brazilian music, 243, 250; in Berber music, 101, 108, 112, 132; in Indian music, 16-21
Aufführungspraxis (Performance practice). See Performance practice
Babalorixá (cult leader), 224, 226, 232, 236, 242, 246, 248, 249
Bagpipes, 152, 165
Bahia, Brazil, 222-223, 225, 229-230, 234, 244, 249
Balafon. See Balò
Balo (Manding), 54, 55, 70, 76
Banana, 59
Bambara, 59
Bartók, Béla, 174
Barzun, Jacques, 212
Bassam, William, 232, 236
Bastide, Roger, 239
Bantú, Ibn, 63, 64, 66, 67, 70
Bauman, Richard, 4, 5, 6
Bayard, Samuel, 152, 153, 154, 160, 166, 175
Ben-Amos, Dan, 13
Bénin. See Dahomey
Bennett, David Parker, 162
Berber professional musicians. See Rwaï
Blacking, John, 8, 9
Bluegrass, 198
“Bonaparte’s Retreat” tune complex, 164, 174, 202n.34
Bow. See Violin bow; Fiddle bow; Fiddle bowing
Boyden, David, 149, 165, 167, 168, 173
British-American balladry, 171
British-American instrumental music: collection by Library of Congress, 160; Northern diffusion of, 151; Southern diffusion of, 150; survival in rural areas, 150, 151, 154, 158,