

Ssematimba ne Kikwabanga: The Music and Poetry of a Ganda Historical Song

Author(s): Francis Katamba and Peter Cooke

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Francis Katamba and Peter Cooke

## **Ssematimba ne Kikwabanga: The Music and Poetry of a Ganda Historical Song**

Stressing the supreme importance of the poetry of Ganda song texts Klaus Wachsmann has given a concise summary of the main characteristics of such song performances:

The text line is the unit of the song, each line usually of four and a half to five seconds' duration. People refer to a particular song by its opening line or lines, many of which are familiar to most Ganda. The performer's task consists of elaboration on the imagery in those lines; he executes his elaborations on different tonal frames, rather like vocal registers, thus producing complex and formal musical and poetic schemes. The manner in which these changes are applied can make the difference between an inspired and a pedestrian performance (Wachsmann 1980:318).

Two performances of one of the most popular historical songs in Ganda tradition are examined here in the light of these remarks.

### **Ssematimba ne Kikwabanga**

Ssematimba and Kikwabanga were two legendary warriors who, during the period of the reign of Kabaka (king) Ssuna (1832–57) achieved notoriety, tinged with some glamour. The theme of the song which recurs or is hinted at in the refrain, is death and the vanity of wordly riches, for mortality is the fate of all. And so, runs the song, one must trust in the providence of God, who watches over all, even lowly chickens as they scratch a living among the withered banana leaves or goats tethered in the open field where predators lurk.

This song was found in the repertory of the various musical ensembles of the court of Buganda, formerly the largest and most powerful of the Bantu kingdom states in the inter-lacustrine area of east-central Africa.



*Some of the former royal flute band of the Kabaka of Buganda. Photographed just before setting off home after playing at the palace on the occasion of the official birthday of the Kabaka (hence the motley collection of coats worn over the traditional long kanzu). November 1965. Ssensamba is holding the long drum, Busuulwa is wearing a tie.*



**Busuulwa's Version**

Example 1 gives a few of the best known lines of the song, transcribed from a solo performance by the late Blasio Busuulwa, one-time member of the *Abalere b'a Kabaka* (the Kabaka's flute band) who later gave valuable service as instructor and instrument maker at the National Teacher's College just outside Kampala. Twelve lines of text were sung in response to a request for the words which he said he would call to mind whenever he played the song on one or other of his six different sized *endere* (notched flutes with four fingerholes)<sup>1</sup>. Many Ganda know the text lines shown in Example 1. Such lines which provide little more than the

Clap x x x x x

Call

Response

1 À-báa - ná b'én - kó-kò bá-ku-lí-rá mù ssá - njá Ká-tó - ndán'á - bá-kuú-mà Kì-kwá-bá - ngá

2 À-báa - ná b'ém-bú-zì bá-ku-lí-rá mù bbá - ngá Ká-tó - ndán'á - bá-kuú-mà Kì-kwá-bá - ngá

3 Á-báa - líá - bân - gí nsi-gá - dde bw'ô-mú Là-bá Ssè - má - tí - mbà nè Kì-kwá-bá - ngá

4 À-bá - sí-bá-é-mbú-zì mù-sí-bí-rá bwè-rê - ré Leè - ró Ssè-má - tí - mbà Kì-kwá-bá - ngá

9 À-líjj - á'e - kì-sá-náa - lì-sá - ngá mù-dii - ró Nze nga lù - ngó-ló - ddé Kì-kwá-bá - ngá

Ex. 1. Ssematimba ... some well known refrain lines sung by Blasio Busuulwa. Tone marks added above words. Slurs under text indicate coalescence of syllables. Since the pitch system consists of large tones the pitches given here are approximate only.

traditional scaffolding which is embellished in various ways as instrumental transformations or used as a departure point for elaboration by practised singers.<sup>2</sup>

**Translation:**

1. The hen's children are raised in withered plantain leaves  
But God protects them
2. The goat's children are raised out in the open  
But God protects them
3. We were numerous but now I am the lone survivor  
See Ssematimba and Kikwabanga
4. You who rear goats do so in vain  
Well now, Ssematimba and Kikwabanga
9. The noonday caller will find me in the living room  
Stiffened by death – Kikwabanga.

Busuulwa tapped the basic clap pulse as he sang, showing that the lines are strictly six claps in duration<sup>3</sup>, that the durations of the call and response phrases are in this case equal and that, as in many Ganda songs, the clap occurs every six syllabic units. The frequent occurrence of three long syllables in succession among a mixture of long and short syllables (e.g. after claps 3 and 6) gives the impression of hemiola effects, but the text rhythm is not autonomous, the clap pulse usually falling on the onset of a syllable be it long (consisting of two *morae*), or short (consisting of one).<sup>4</sup>

Just as the lines show much rhythmic similarity, so a close analysis of the tone patterns of the text shows similarities in tonal outline of phrases; and this is reflected in the melodic contour. The Ganda language, known as Luganda, has two basic tones 'low' and 'high,' with a third possibility of a 'falling' countour tone made up of a combination 'high' and 'low.' Pitch is used in relative, not absolute terms: a high tone need only be higher than the low immediately preceding it.

Typically, in an utterance, intonation shows *downdrift*; so in declarative sentences the norm is a falling intonation curve which means that a high tone at the end of an utterance might be lower than a low tone which is near the beginning. The contour of the call sections of the lines in *Ssematimba* reflects this phenomenon of *downdrift*, though elsewhere *downdrift* may be disguised by octave transpositions, as in the response phrase in lines 4 and 9 where "Kikwabanga" is sung at the upper octave. Tone marks are inserted above the Luganda words (\ = low, / = high and ^ = falling). An examination of them shows that the low tones of the second *morae* in long syllables are often not realised in song, probably because the very act of singing involves stabilising and prolonging pitches.



*Busuulwa (right) and his teacher playing the endere notched flute in front of the hut of the entamiivu (xylophone) ensemble inside the royal enclosure*

The song is pentatonic, probably not equi-pentatonic, though the pitch system of the Ganda has yet to be precisely established. This problem will not be discussed here but it should be noted that Busuulwa's singing has been transposed up approximately one tone to aid comparison with later examples.

Lines 1, 4 and 9 are the lines most commonly found in any rendering of the song at some point or other, and they may be used more than once in any one performance. One might label them refrain lines, but they should then not be confused with the choral response that comprises the second half of each line.

Busuulwa would not have called himself a singer for he was more accustomed to playing than to singing songs, but the line variants (though not identical with the same lines rendered by other Ganda), tell us a good deal about the structure of the song and give useful basic material for analysis of text-tune relationships and for analysing instrumental versions of the song.<sup>5</sup> However, the performance tells us little about how the song sounds when performed by an expert singer-bard.

### **Ssensamba's Version**

This second performance was recorded at the same college in 1976, from Ssensamba, a musician who had been lead singer and *ngalabi* (tall drum) player in the Kabaka's flute band. On this occasion he performed before a student audience (some of whom were assisting him with drumming) a few days after his release from prison. He had been detained there for over a year after the fall of the Kabaka's palace to Uganda Government forces which had crushed the Kabaka's rebellion against the central government. He had come to the college to join his friend Busuulwa, hoping to get some food and drink and to find a little work so that he could earn money to get him home to his village outside Kampala. While staying at the college for several days he gave some inspiring demonstrations of his art as a drummer and singer to trainee music teachers.

Example 2 shows the first seven lines of his singing which was introduced by Busuulwa taking up the song outline on his *ekiwu* flute (the second largest of the six different *endere* that make up a complete consort for the Kabaka's flute band). The first line of Busuulwa's introduction is also included. He played eight lines before Ssensamba entered, it being customary for the flutes in the band to take up a song melody first, then to be joined by the drums and finally by the singer. Busuulwa, as was the custom, continued playing throughout the performance in a somewhat restrained manner that allowed the listeners to concentrate on Ssensamba's delivery. Busuulwa's flute line was essential for maintaining the continuity and identity of the song however, for on this occasion no-one took up the choral response, those present preferring to enjoy listening to the artistry of a professional singer.

x = M.M. 102

Clap x

2

9

A - li - jja e - ki-sa-na a - lin-sa - ngamu - ddii - ro

10

O - jja - ngan'o - ndaba A-ma - zi-ma bwe twa - li - nga

11

Mu-zzu-ku - lu wa Bu-kaa - ju - mbe Ka-ba-ka Ba - sa -mmu-la Mwa-nga

12

A-lu-wa A-ta-juu - ba ne Nda-gi-re Wa-ttu Lu-we-dde O'we Ki-we-nyu

13

O - ta - mbu-la mpo - la o - sii - ra E-bi-ga - mbobi - nso-be - dde eka a nna ddawo

14

A - li - jja e - ki-sa-na a - li - nsanga mu ddii - ro Ng'o-lu-mbe lu - ngo-lo - dde

15

O - mu-ga - nzi o - mu-to o - w'e - ka A-ma - zi-ma ta - kya - li - ndwa etc.

Ex. 2. Ssematimba ... Opening lines of Ssensamba's version (clap tempo M.M. = 102).

## Textual Content

It is rewarding to look closely at a few examples of the linguistic techniques used by Ssensamba, in particular the use of *foregrounding* of salient aspects of his text by the use of the techniques of deviation and parallelism. Deviation involves departing from established norms of usage in the language as a whole, departing from the recurring patterns within a particular text, and therefore catching the attention. Parallelism on the other hand involves creating patterns which are dependent on deliberately restricting linguistic choices and repeating the same or very similar words or linguistic structures even though there exist alternative ways of expressing a particular concept. It must be obvious that such techniques may apply to musical parameters also.

The opening line, one of the refrain lines, signals that this is a *Ssematimba* performance (see Example 2). "The noon caller will find me in the living room" refers to the custom of the corpse wrapped in a shroud, lying in the living room, with weeping mourners present before it is taken out for burial in the early afternoon.

What follows then is unexpected and hence foregrounded. Instead of reference to chicks and goats and divine providence, we hear an invitation to Muteesa (the absent Kabaka) to come and visit the singer. He then asks where princesses Atajuuba and Ndagire are. The latter was Muteesa's queen-sister, whereas Atajuuba was a powerful princess, daughter of Kamaanya (who was Kabaka 1764–94) – probably the most powerful though at the same time the most cruel and tyrannical of Kabakas. In alluding to Kamaanya in this way the singer is reminding listeners of the past military prowess of Buganda. Significantly Muteesa is referred to not directly by name but indirectly as the grandson of Bukaajumbe, Kabaka Basammula Mwanga, who during a turbulent reign (1884–98) was deposed and restored three times by the British. The hero of Baganda nationalists, he was eventually exiled to the Seychelles where he died in 1906.

There are implied parallels between his fate and that of Muteesa II who had been exiled by the British during the 1960s, had later been restored, but was once again living in exile in London after escaping from his palace at the time of its capture by Obote's troops. Muteesa was not only a descendant of Mwanga who lost after a brave struggle but also of Kamaanya who had been victorious. The deviant use of the title 'Kabaka' in respect of dead kings (normally referred to as *ssekabaka*) make the further implication that Kamaanya and Mwanga may be dead but their spirits live.

## Ssensamba's Song Text

9. Alijja ekisana alinsanga mu ddiro  
 10. Ojanga n'ondaba  
 11. Muzzukulu wa Bukaaajumbe  
 12. Aluwa Atajuuba ne Ndagire  
 13. Otambula mpola osiira  
 14. Alijja ekisana alinsanga mu diiro

---

Amazima bwe twalinga  
 Kabaka Basammula Mwanga  
 Wattu Luwedde ow'e Kiwenyu  
 Ebigambo binsobedde eka ... annaddawo  
 Ng'olumbe lungolodde

15. Omuganzi omuto ow'eka  
 16. Bwe yeesiba eddiba ery'engo  
 17. Laba Kiwenyu ow'endege ze  
 18. (Nze) ... babadde basengejja  
 19. Omwenge n'ennyama binyuma  
 20. Bwo'okwata ku ndeku empanvu  
 21. Ng'otandika okuyunyuunta  
 22. Akwogerako n'akalavu  
 23. Akwogerako esamidde eri  
 24. Akwogeta kisaasaali  
 25. Aluwa Nnassolo omuwala  
 26. Nze njagala ndabe ngenze  
 27. Nze ngenda ne nsala ebyange

Amazima takyalinda  
 Amazima takyatula  
 Akeera mu kiro alwana  
 Nga n'embuga eriyo eddawula  
 Mbinywedde biwoomerera  
 Nga n'oluseke lwo ossamu  
 Ng'obudde bugayidde  
 Balo tasekaigumba  
 Asigala takyalama  
 Abaana ba Bukaaajumbe  
 Abadde ki omusengezzi  
 N'e Katikamu nze alindwa  
 Omwenge n'ennyama binyuma

28. Nze sseekalirira na bbanja  
 29. Bwe ndowooza bwe twalinga  
 30. N'ekkubo likuuse nnyo  
 31. Anaamagamaa talaba  
 32. Anaagunyweddeko avaaawo  
 33. Mpita Atajuuba Kyamulabi  
 34. Obwakabaka Bukaaajumbe  
 35. Maama omuzaale wa Nngoma  
 36. Atalijja 'kisana aligenda n'owange

Nga mu nnyumba muli akagigi  
 Omulenzi takyagenda  
 Effumu tokyagalula  
 Nga enngunda bagitutte eka  
 Bwa n'endago zikyayogerwa  
 Omumbejja afuga amasiro  
 Ye muzzukulu wa Mwanga  
 Abaana ba Lumaama badda muluwa?

---

(flute and drums play on for 3 lines)

40. Waalaalaalaalaalaalaala!  
 41. Za Ssebandeke za Kalema za Jjunju z'e Masanafu za Kiweewa  
 42. Za Kabaka Muwenda Za Nnakalyako-ani  
 43. abulako-gw'addiza Z'e Masengere Z'e Luwafu  
 44. Za Nnazzigunidde e Mpereerwe Za Nawatti e Busawuli e Lubbe  
 45. Za Kanaakulya Za Muwenda Za Nnakuni  
 46. Za Chwa Bukaaajumbe Za Davidi Kiweewa Mutebi Luwangula  
 47. Kabaka Muteesa Magulu-Nnyondo Za Muteesa Ow'okubiri  
 48. Ee! Walugembe.

## Translation<sup>6</sup>

9. The noon caller will find me in the living room  
 10. You must come and see me Truly my old companion  
 11. Grandson of Bukaajumbe Kabaka Basammula Mwanga  
 12. Where is Atajuuba and Ndagire? Please Luwedde of Kiwenyu  
 13. You walk slowly, grieving In disarray is my home ...  
 whoever takes my place  
 14. The noon caller will find me in the living room  
 Already stiffened by death
- 
15. My young favourite back home Truly she is restless  
 16. When she dons the leopard skin Truly she never sits down  
 17. See Kiwenyu with her ankle bells She is up and fighting even before first light  
 18. I... they have been straining beer For there is a feast at the court  
 19. Beer and meat are luscious I have consumed both with delight  
 20. When you hold the long beer gourd And you dip in it your straw  
 21. And you start sucking And you are transported!  
 22. -- ? -- -- ? --  
 23. -- ? -- Anyone staying behind no longer makes a will  
 24. -- ? -- The descendants of Bukaajumbe  
 25. Where is the girl, Nnassolo? Why is the person straining beer dallying?  
 26. I must see it, I'm in a hurry At Katikamu too, it is me they wait for  
 27. I go and set my performance fees Beer and meat are luscious
- 
28. I don't burden myself with debt When there is still a curtain in the house  
 29. When I remember my old companion The boy no longer goes  
 30. And the path is well trodden You can no longer brandish a spear  
 31. Anyone not looking fixedly will not see That the long necked  
 beer calabash has been taken home  
 -- ? --  
 32. Anyone who has drunk some  
 of it can go away  
 33. I am calling Atajuuba Kyamulabi The princess who rules the royal burial grounds  
 34. The Kingdom of Bukaajumbe She is Mwanga's own granddaughter  
 35. The lady is Princess of the drum Where did all Lumaama's children go?  
 36. The one who will not come at noon will make off with my beloved  
 (flute and drums play on for 3 lines)
- 
40. Waalaalaalaalaalaalaalaala!  
 41. (I'm ululating) for Ssebandeke, for Kalema, for Jjunju, for  
 Masanafu for Kiweewa,  
 42. for King Muwenda, for Nnaakalyako-ani-  
 43. abulako gwaddiza, for Masengere, for Luwafu  
 44. for Nazzigunide of Mpereerwe, for Nnawatti of Busawuli of Lubbe,  
 45. for Kanaakulya, for Muwenda, for Nnakuni,  
 46. for Chwa Bukaajumbe, for Davidi Kiweewa Mutebi Luwangula  
 47. Kabaka Muteesa Magulu-Nnyondo for Muteesa the Second  
 48. Eh! Walugembe.

Further during the course of the song the singer works with two themes. One is the apparently frivolous theme of food, drink, and merrymaking (not surprising perhaps from one just released from prison and who previously was frequently engaged to perform at ceremonies and feasts when not performing his royal duties)<sup>7</sup>. On the other hand there is the veiled, vain proclamation of the belief that Buganda will rise and be a nation once again. The political message is further elaborated on with many historical references and allusions which would not be obvious to most of his listeners. Making his meaning accessible to all was not always the court singer's primary concern. In Ssensamba's case there is an added reason for the obscurity: having just come out of detention for being a royalist, he needs to be subtle in order not to incur the wrath of the security police.

The central sections of the song are replete with allusions to symbols of kingship (the drum, shield, and the spear for example), and central to the song is the notion of the Kabaka as the embodiment of Buganda itself. In lines 16 – 17a there is the imagery of a favourite young princess donning a leopard skin (another royal emblem) ready to do battle before it is light. The unspoken meaning here is that such is the sense of outrage at recent events that even a princess needs to take up arms, though women traditionally never went to war.

In the final section of the song there is foregrounding through the use of parallelism. Following a long and powerful ululation there is a listing of kings, princes or princesses directly by their names or by allusion to places where they are buried. The syntactic parallelism is obvious and need not be laboured: each phrase referring to a historical personage begins with *za* ('for'), meaning *enduulu za* ... ('the ululation is for ...'). Muteesa himself is foregrounded by using more names and titles than are used for others: *Za Davidi Kiweewa Mutebi Luwangula, Kabaka Muteesa Magulun-Nnyondo* etc.

But the list also contains an ironical and mocking allusion to Obote, twice President of Uganda – a man who is neither royal nor a Muganda and who therefore should not appear in this list. Here Obote's praises are sung in pejorative terms using a Luganda proverb *nnaakalyako ani, abula gwandiza* which means 'trying to share out a bit of food among a multitude leaves everybody famished.' To the conservative Baganda traditionalists Obote's moderate socialist programme meant sharing out misery and poverty. In this instance of foregrounding the irony depends on the incongruity of the utterance in this context. These are just a few examples illustrating Ssensamba's mode of working as a poet, a fuller discussion is outside the scope of this article.



*Kabarega's tomb. Kabarega was a former king of the neighbouring Bunyoro kingdom. The guardian of the tomb displays the drums, shield, and spear – symbols of the royal power*

### **Musical Parameters**

Ssensamba's use of pitch is of particular interest. There is tension between the expected singing patterns of the spoken word and the patterns realised here, despite the fact that the rhythmic and tonal content of many of his utterances would match well the basic contours of the song. After his opening line, one of the song's refrain lines, the expected falling intonation is avoided. There follows a section where he selects the pitch that occurs on the first clap and prolongs it up to the last syllable of both utterances in each line (see Example 2).

This must be what Wachsmann meant by the term "tonal frame." Only at line 13 does Ssensamba revert to the melody normally associated with either phrase, and this takes him into the next section via a return to the refrain line *alijja eki-sana*. One could describe this device of pitch prolongation as a musical means of foregrounding his text utterances and contrasting them with the better known traditional lines. Interestingly, in this performance, the refrain line beginning *alijja...* is the only well known line used throughout the song, and it is placed as a marker each time, dividing the performance into distinct sections.

34 O-bwa ka-ba-ka Bu-kaa - ju - mbe Ye mu - zzukuHu wa Mwa - nga

35 Maa-ma a-mu-zaa - le wa Ngo-ma A - baa - na ba Lu-maa-ma aba - ddamuHu-

36 wa Ataliij a 'Ki-sa- na a - li- ge - ndan'o - wa - nge. (Flute)

37

38

Clap

Amadinda parts

5 5 3 4 1 2 2 4 1 5 1 4 1 1 5 3 3 1  
3 3 5 5 3 2 5 1 2 3 2 1 1 4 3 2 1 3

Ex. 3. Ssematimba ... end of middle section. Amadinda xylophone parts (okunaga and okwawula only) are added below flute lines.

For the long middle section of the song (beginning at line 15) he changes his tonal frame slightly so that his second utterance in each line uses two pitches extracted from the appropriate phrase in the response. Later on in the middle section he makes a further attention-catching change (lines 28-34) by departing from the practice of ending with a fall in pitch on the last syllable of each phrase and instead he prolongs the main reciting note right to the end (line 34 in Example 3 illustrates this). Again the section ends with a surprisingly abrupt return to the refrain line with possibly an answer to the question "Where did all Lumaama's children go?"

The use of the refrain line as a section marker is a further example of parallelism, but it is not used mechanically, for at this point is a case of internal deviation: –

*Atalijja kisana aligenda n'owange*

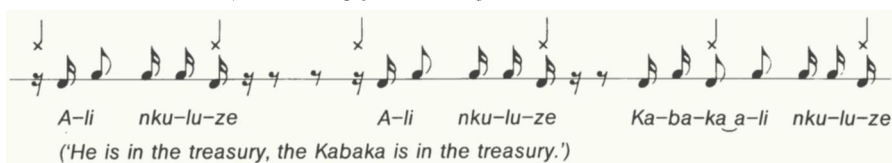
('The one who will not come at noon will make off with my beloved')

There is inuendo here for it would not be difficult for the audience to guess who, during the period in question might be the culprit who snatches people. The modification of the refrain line here involves initially squeezing an extra syllable into the line. Ssensamba is then silent for a few lines, allowing the flutist to continue alone.

## The Flute Part

One saw how at the beginning Busuulwa outlined the song melody with a stream of notes which, incidentally, closely match the stream of notes produced by Ganda xylophonists, harp and lyre players when playing this song. After ensuring the song's identity he settled (from line 5 onwards) on a more economical series of phrases for each line, which avoided beginning where the singer began, instead complementing the singer by filling in the gaps between his utterances and overlapping to some extent (lines 37 and 38, Example 3 illustrate this). But he was very ready to complete line 36 with the appropriate response. Most interestingly also his phrases for the section between claps 3 and 5 do not use the sung pitches but their "harmonic equivalents" akin to those used as complementary notes in one or other of the two interlocking *amadinda* (xylophone) parts given on the line below. The pitches of the flute line are numbered so as to aid comparison with the xylophone version (which is based on Gerhard Kubik's transcriptions of the repertory, see Kubik 1969:56).

The drum accompaniment plays a key role in underscoring the political statement. The rhythm is not *baakisimba* party music which might have been expected but rather the royal drum rhythm used within the palace and at the royal tombs to accompany such songs. The words associated with the rhythm which are understood and accordingly not sung are:



Ex. 4. The drum accompaniment and the words associated with it.



i.e. there is rejoicing because the Kabaka is in the treasury, which symbolizes his wealth and prosperity.

## The Final Section

From line 40 onwards is the climax of the performance, beginning with an impassioned ululation. Ssensamba now abandons a *singing* style and instead adopts a stylized ceremonial voice which is used, for instance, at the end of funeral rites, when the heir is installed and recites his lineage before the clan notables. The same style was also used during the act of *kuwera* when a man, who was being installed as a chief, or was being confirmed as an heir by the Kabaka (in his capacity as *Ssaabataka* – 'lord of the clan notables'), made a vow of bravery and loyalty by brandishing weapons before the Kabaka. The use of this particular vocal style was pregnant with meaning for in this context it was a veiled but nonetheless defiant vow of allegiance to the Buganda crown despite the fact that Uganda was by that time a socialist republic.

Ssensamba's delivery is tellingly enhanced not only by his abandonment of the tonality of the song but also by his deviation from his earlier spacing of utterances, which had always begun at the start of each of the two halves of the song line; the names come out at first in a rapid stream that occupies a complete line, then at various points along the line. Nevertheless the names and the ululation are still timed as if they were sung, fitting in perfectly with the rhythm of the drumming. There is no distortion of speech rhythm involved for in Ganda speech or song the syllable length and tempo of delivery are virtually identical.

In this study an ethnomusicologist and a linguist have joined together in an attempt to understand and illustrate some of the techniques and skills of a professional African singer. His starting point was the brief call-and-response pattern of a well-known song where the tonal patterns of spoken Luganda were reflected in the melodic outline of the song line and where the *mora*, the tone bearing unit of the spoken language, played a key role as a rhythmic unit in the music. But the end results were complex interlocking poetical and musical patterns where the devices of parallelism and deviation combined with allusion and irony to convey a powerful but concealed political message.

*An early illustration of a Ganda endere player*

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The numbers above notes in Line 9 are to aid comparison with the xylophone parts in Ex. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> The use of Wachsmann's term "line" should not be allowed to distort the true structure of the song which is better described as cyclical.
- <sup>3</sup> Many Ganda songs have text lines of this length - giving a duration of about 3.6 seconds per line.
- <sup>4</sup> See Tucker (1962) for further information on the term *mora* in connection with spoken Luganda.
- <sup>5</sup> A discussion of the relationship between vocal melodies and their transformations as played on the *amadinda* and *akadinda* xylophones of the Ganda can be found in Cooke 1970.
- <sup>6</sup> Lines are laid out to give an idea of position along the standard text-line. Some phrases are unclear, or their meaning is not clear, so they are left untranslated.
- <sup>7</sup> According to Kyagambiddwa (1955:160), Ssematimba and Kikwabanga were themselves said to be fond of feasting and had promised to have their finest goat fattened for a feast, if they had returned from their last fateful battle.

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Francis Katamba und Peter Cooke

## **Ssematimba ne Kikwabanga: Musik und Text eines historischen Liedes der Ganda (Kurzfassung)**

Ein Musikwissenschaftler und ein Linguist untersuchen gemeinsam zwei Darbietungen eines Wechselgesanges der Ganda, um die musikalische und textliche Struktur des Grundpatterns, wie es den Refrain-Zeilen zugrundeliegt, herauszuarbeiten und die Kunst und Arbeitsweise eines professionellen Sänger-Barden zu beleuchten.

Bei der Analyse wird die komplexe Wechselbeziehung zwischen Sprachton und musikalisch-melodischer Kontur deutlich und die Schlüsselrolle, welche die *mora*, die den Sprachton tragende Längeneinheit in der gesprochenen Sprache, als rhythmisches Element in der Musik spielt. Berufssänger arbeiten musikalisch mit tonalen Gerüsten: Im Falle der zweiten Darbietung besteht das Gerüst zunächst aus einem einzigen Ton, später aus einem Tonpaar, das der Melodie des Liedes entnommen ist. Es wird dazu benutzt, den Vortrag des Sängers zu tragen und die Abwärtsbewegung aufzuheben oder auszugleichen, die in

der Sprachmelodie und in der Kontur der musikalisch-melodischen Linie zu beobachten ist. Nur selten greift der Sänger auf eine der Standardtextzeilen, die sogenannten "Refrainzeilen", zurück. Er beendet seinen Gesang mit einem lautstarken schrillen Ton und einer rhythmischen Aufzählung von Namen, die in einem besonderen Sprechstil, *kuwera* genannt, vorgebracht wird.

Die Wirkung poetischer Patterns ist vom Gebrauch sprachlicher Parallelismen und sprachlicher Normabweichungen abhängig, mit denen der Sänger etwas textlich in den Vordergrund rückt. Mit diesen Hervorhebungen verbindet der Ausführende im vorliegenden Fall Anspielungen und ironische Bemerkungen, um so einer versteckten politischen Aussage einen wirkungsvollen Ausdruck verleihen zu können.

Schließlich wird auch kurz auf die Art und Weise eingegangen, in der der Flötist und mehrere Trommler bei der zweiten Gesangsdarbietung den Solisten unterstützen.

Francis Katamba et Peter Cooke

## **Ssematimba ne Kikwabanga: la musique et la poésie d'un chant historique ganda (résumé)**

Un musicologue et un linguiste examinent ici ensemble deux interprétations d'un chant responsorial ganda, afin de mettre en relief la structure musicale et textuelle de son schéma de base (les lignes de refrain) et de faire la lumière sur la technique et l'art des poètes-chanteurs professionnels.

Ils relèvent un rapport complexe entre le ton syllabique et la ligne mélodique, et il est évident que le *mora*, c'est-à-dire l'unité de longueur du son dans le langage parlé, joue dans la musique un rôle-clé, en ce sens qu'il forme son élément rythmique. Les chanteurs de métier partent de cadres tonals: dans la seconde version du même chant, qui est exécutée par un professionnel, le cadre comprend pour commencer une seule note, puis une paire de notes extraites de la mélodie du chant, qui servent de support à ce qui est exprimé par le chanteur et annulent le

mouvement descendant de la langue parlée et de la ligne mélodique du vers chanté. L'exécutant n'a que rarement recours à l'un des vers standard (appelés "lignes de refrain"), et il conclut son chant par un hululement puissant et une énumération rythmique de noms, sur un mode parlé au style bien particulier, désigné par le terme de *kuwera*.

L'effet produit par les schémas poétiques est fonction de l'emploi qui est fait du parallélisme et des déviations linguistiques afin de mettre en relief des éléments marquants du texte, que le chanteur combine à des allusions et à l'ironie, de façon à formuler un message politique plein de force, mais dissimulé.

Cet article aborde également brièvement le rôle d'appui du flûtiste et des joueurs de tambour dans la seconde interprétation.