

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction of Western Music Education in Malawi

The teaching of music in the Malawian education system to date might seem satisfactory, considering that there are music teacher's guides, music syllabi and in-service music workshops for music teachers, but this is not the case. On the one side are education authorities who place music last in the tier of priorities, and give inadequate support in implementing and promoting music education. On the other side are musically informed Malawians who want music to be taught and fully supported like the science subjects. Discussions of the history of music in schools indicate that the current controversy about the place of music in the curriculum and the problems of purpose, outcome, content, methodology and support for music education started in mission schools during the pre-colonial period and continued in colonial schools.

Malawi was under British rule from 1891 until July 1964 and during this time the country was called the Nyasaland Protectorate. The early British missionaries came to Malawi in the second half of the 19th century before British rule. The primary aims of the missionaries were to introduce Christianity and to stop slave trade in the country in response to the call of David Livingstone in 1857. In the process of achieving their aims, the missionaries led the Malawians under their charge to accept and follow the European ways of life. The British missionary groups that settled in Malawi were the Universities Mission to Central Africa, now known as the Anglican Church, in 1861; the Free Church of Scotland in 1875; and the Church of Scotland in 1876. The South African missionary group, the Dutch Reformed Church, joined the British missionaries in 1888 in the country. Other religious groups that came to Malawi were the Muslims in the 18th century; the Roman Catholic White Fathers in 1889 followed by the Montfort

Fathers in 1901; and the Seventh Day Adventist Church in 1902. Every missionary group established its own education where subjects of instruction included music.

The teaching of Western music came together with Western education which began and developed first from the initiatives of the early British missionaries in the country. The Malawi Institute of Education (1998:4) notes:

[The British] introduced a Platonic class-oriented education: the best was for the European children; the second best was for the Asians and people of mixed races; finally, the third-best was for the Malawians. This was called ‘education appropriate to the group and its status’.

As seen in the observation of the Malawi Institute of Education, a Platonic class-oriented education was racist by design. Besides placing Malawians in the lowest tier of racial superiority, this education denied them the opportunity to study what was responsive to their cultural situations in education. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1991b:70) observes, “[The] curriculum was unsuited to the needs of the country. Colonial education was aimed at instilling attitudes of loyalty and submission to the colonial values under the guise of christianisation”. This mission/colonial purpose of education is repeatedly noted by the Malawi Institute of Education (1998:4):

The aims of education for Malawian children changed to suit colonial aims and expectations. The aims, practices and uses of ‘African’ education in Malawi were oriented towards facilitating the British ‘civilization’ mission.

The general goal of African education in Malawi was to maintain the indigenous social and cultural milieu of the people (Pauw 1980:153). But, from the observations of the Malawi Institute of Education as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture, it can be established that mission/colonial education was a tool for assimilating Malawians into Western ways of life. A Platonic class-oriented education neither respected nor appreciated the indigenous knowledge systems and values which have been practised, perfected and standardised for

many years of human existence in Malawi. As a result, the creative music skills and knowledge of cultural origin were not taught in British mission/colonial education.

2.2 Music in Mission/Colonial Education

Evidence that Western music was taught in mission/colonial schools in Malawi is readily available. Banda (1982:114) explains that in 1899 the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) opened the St. Michael's teachers' training college in central Malawi. Music studies included topics on composition, transcription and singing. Before Western music education was introduced in the country, Malawians did not read music because they had no written music tradition. Music was learnt and taught orally. The music topic on transcription indicates that the UMCA employed the reading approach which is characteristic of Western music education. The shift in pedagogy, from a rote process, which children were familiar with, to a reading approach, denied Malawians the opportunity to study, promote and sustain the standards of their ethnic aural/oral skills in schools. This denial is noted in Soko's (2000:5) observation:

In most mission stations, such as Livingstonia and Loudon in what is now Mzimba District, music became one of the subjects that were taught in the mission schools. Music notation and composition based on western theory were taught.

As seen in Soko's observation, the reading approach and Western music theory were central in Livingstonia and Loudon mission schools in northern Malawi. There is no indication in the discussions of Soko that indigenous music knowledge systems were taken as proper content for study in schools. The teaching of Western music and theory rather than indigenous music and theory in mission/colonial education is described by Chakanza (2001), a Roman Catholic priest and lecturer in Theological and Religious Studies:

When the Catholic missionaries of the Montfort Fathers came in 1901, they started Western music lessons in education in our seminaries. The

Mass involved the singing of Gregorian chants, polyphonies and motets that used either Greek or Latin words. The church found it appropriate for Christians to sing the songs properly in worship. This is why there was music education.

In this quotation, Chakanza acknowledges that the content of music education was Western in the Roman Catholic seminaries. In addition, he discloses that the purpose of teaching music was to make Malawians expert singers in religious music. Below is a song, Kyrie Eleison, which Father Chakanza explains that his teacher, Father Peter Mol of the White Fathers, used to teach on a topic of note values during his study at Kachebere seminary between 1962 and 1969. The song uses Greek words: Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison (Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy).

Kyrie Eleison

The musical score for 'Kyrie Eleison' is presented in five systems of a single treble clef staff each. The first system begins with a long horizontal line above the staff, indicating a long note value. The lyrics are 'Ky - ri - e_ le - i - son (iii)'. The second system contains two lines of lyrics: 'Chri - ste e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son,' and 'Chri - ste e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son,'. The third system also contains two lines: 'e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son,' and 'Chri - ste e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son,'. The fourth system has two lines: 'e_ le - i - son.' and 'e_ le - i - son.'. The fifth system concludes with 'Ky - ri - e_ le - i - son (iii)'. The score uses various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and fermatas.

Source: Cinyanja Hymns by The Liturgical Commission

As seen in the song above, music lessons involved the study of Western music theory and performance practice: pitch and rhythm notation and expressive instructions as shown by the phrasing and fermata. The study of theory in subjects of instruction has been central to Western education and this is recognised by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (1998:6): “[Western education was] elitist in character with focus on theory and examinations”. This is reflected in the writings of Phiri (1975:7) where a school certificate of Pastor Charles Chidongo Chinula of the Livingstonia mission is shown. This certificate demonstrates that Practice Music and Theory Music were distinct subjects of study. There are no indications in Phiri’s and other writers’ discussions which indicate that other mission/colonial schools offered studies and examinations in music. Phiri observes that the purpose for music education was to help Malawians to compose and perform hymns for worship. This purpose of music education is reflected by Temple and Jones (1969:V) who explain that compositions done by learned Malawians were sung in churches and in schools during the daily worship or prayer.

The observations of Banda, Soko, Chakanza, Temple and Jones as well as Phiri suggest that the purpose, outcome, content, principles and methodology of music in mission/colonial schools were Western. Decisions of what to teach in music and how to teach music had nothing to do with the Malawian views; and had little, if any, meaning and value to Malawians whose ways of life were rooted in indigenous music knowledge systems. Mission/colonial schools were instrumental in implanting the idea in Malawians that the philosophy and content of their culture in the way of music expression were not worthy.

Apart from learning music to sing church songs properly, there are no indications in the discussions of the above writers that explain the additional benefits that children gained in music education in mission/colonial schools. The lack of information on extra-musical purposes in education appears to indicate that the intellectual, moral and physical benefits that derive from creative music practices

were marginalized. The study of music instruments, instrumental music and compositions intended to be used for various social functions seem not to be part of the purposes for music education. Based on the available evidence, mission/colonial education offered limited or partial music knowing which continues to be experienced to date in Malawian education. Besides, a Platonic class-oriented education impressed upon some Malawians to start thinking and acting as the Europeans who did not value indigenous music. To date, the education authorities have perpetuated the relegation of music in Malawian education.

2.3 Exclusion of Achewa Music in Schools

As noted in Section 2.2, the literature establishes that the purpose, outcome, content and methodology of music in education have always been Western in mission/colonial schools. In the context of Achewa of central Malawi, Steytler (1939:197) shows that Chinyanja, also known as Chichewa or Nyanja (vernacular language of Achewa), was the only aspect of Achewa culture which was included in music education. In his study of Achewa, Steytler observes that the missionaries excluded Achewa music in education. Instead, they encouraged the Achewa to compose Chinyanja words to fit Western tunes which were the content of music in schools. This implies that the missionaries denied the Achewa school children the chance to practise and develop their potential in composing ethnic tunes.

Below is an example of a French folk tune called Frère Jacques (Brother John) which was set to Chinyanja words with the title *Yafa Nkhumba* (The Pig is Dead). This tune is selected and discussed because its origin is traceable. As a school child in standard one, I sang the song as a two part round at Chikowi primary school in southern Malawi.

Yafa Nkhumba

French Folk Tune

$\text{♩} = 90$

Fré - re Jac - ques, Fré - re Jac - ques. Dor - mez vous?
 Ya fa nkhu mba, ya fa nkhu mba. Ti ka dye ko?

Dor - mez vous? Son - nez les ma - ti - nes, Son - nez les ma - ti - nes,
 Ti ka dye ko? Pa me ne ta khu ta, pa me ne ta khu ta,

Ding ding dong, Ding ding dong.
 Mi mba tu tu mbe! Mi mba tu tu mbe!

In the transcription of the song, the Chinyanja words are not a translation of the French text which derives from a non-tonal language. They are written below the French words to show how the French text was substituted. The Chinyanja words are:

<i>Yafa khumba</i>	The pig is dead
<i>Tikadyeko</i>	Let's eat it
<i>Pamene takhuta</i>	When we are full
<i>Mimba tutumbe!</i>	The stomach inflates!

In Steytler's study, there are no discussions that show the impact of the process of composing Chinyanja words to fit European tunes. In addition, there are no indications that explain whether music and language were important aspects of music studies in schools. However, as seen in the song, the French folk tune and the Chinyanja words are compromised. The rhythm pattern of Frère Jacques is altered (tones in ellipse shaped circles) in measures three, four, seven and eight to fit the syllables of Chinyanja words. In measures three and four, the *-ko* (locative syllable) was added to the word *ti-ka-dye* which has a high tone on the *-ka*-syllable to give an emphatic effect. This resulted in splitting in half the original

minim, on beat three of measures three and four, to complete fitting in *ti-ka-dye-ko* (which has three distinct high tones on every syllable of the word *ka-dye-ko*). Besides, a rhythmic activity in the last two beats of these measures was created. However, the fitting of *ti-ka-dye-ko* at the ascending melodic contour offsets the tone of the locative syllable, giving the word four possible meanings when sung. It may mean requesting permission to go and eat the pig; pointing to a place where a pig is to be eaten; everybody is to have a share of the pig's meat; and not all the meat will be eaten. The multiple meanings of this word as a result of fixing it at the ascending melodic contour, give an impression that issues of tone in Chinyanja were overlooked in the process of composing Chinyanja words to fit the tune of Frère Jacques.

Steytler (1939:203-204) observes that the converted Achewa Christians held the view that the function of the school was to teach what was unknown. Because ethnic music was well known, there was no need for children to perform the music again in schools. This view contradicted the principle that urges teachers to move from known (indigenous music) to unknown (Western music). The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2003:35) notes that Nyanja was well known and yet it was taught in schools. During the colonial era, Chichewa and Tumbuka languages were used as the medium of instruction in schools. Chichewa was used in southern and central Malawi and Tumbuka in northern Malawi. English was introduced in the third year of the primary education and became the medium of instruction in the senior primary and secondary education.

The converted Achewa Christians considered the school as a place for serious business, and 'playful' indigenous music, especially the hand clapping and stamping of feet, did not characterize such serious business. Ironically, the same music accompanied by hand clapping and stamping of feet was central to teaching morals to children; and in serving various functions at social gatherings before the coming of the missionaries. Before mission/colonial education, matrilineal ethnic groups were establishing initiation institutions for boys and girls. For the Achewa,

mgule wamkulu was for boys and *thimbwidza* for girls. The initiation institutions were established in order to train the youth when they came of age. The elders attempted to inculcate wisdom, customs, beliefs, laws and values into their children's minds through music which was well known. This was one of the Achewa's assessments of the value of music. The initiation institutions and the use of music for moral teaching continue to date among the Achewa. The discussions of Steytler suggest that consultations happened between the school authorities and converted Achewa Christians on their views about ethnic music. It appears that the ideas about ethnic music as 'playful' and 'well known' as the basis of excluding it in music education were imposed views on the Achewa by Christian leaders. These views derive from the belief that there was something sinful in Achewa cultural music because this music was part of the converted Achewa Christians' pagan life they had forsaken. It is likely that these Christians disliked their own music based on the teachings of the missionaries. Consequently, they supported and encouraged mission/colonial education in Achewa areas to ignore cultural music. Probably, they also denied their children participation in Achewa cultural music outside school. This signals that an Achewa generation that disliked their indigenous music was being prepared.

2.4 Application of Western Principles to Indigenous Music

Strumpf (2001:5) notes that by the early 1900s Scottish missionaries at Livingstonia mission used tonic solfa notation, a Western system, for creating Christian hymns from indigenous tunes. This reinforces earlier recognition that Malawians who received music education in mission/colonial schools started to sing by reading rather than by rote. Strumpf's observation reflects the practice of Europeans to write music on paper so that the same music can be instantly available for the performer in future. Europeans write music as one way of preserving it and they also use this preserved music to teach and analyse. According to Strumpf's observation, it is argued that the application of tonic solfa notation to indigenous music writing undermined the creative potential of this

oral/aural music. Indigenous music belongs to the improvising tradition which involves adding, skipping and subtracting elements of the tunes during performance. The application of tonic solfa notation to indigenous tunes fixed them in a medium that restricted what performers could do with these tunes. Thus, tonic solfa notation manipulated the creative practices of indigenous music such as rhythms, pitches, style and other music idioms. In this respect, the vitality and creative possibilities responsive to the cultural situations of Malawians evoked by indigenous tunes in their oral/aural tradition were repressed and unappreciated. The non inclusion of such music in the curriculum undermines the philosophy, content and outcome of music education enunciated in the policy goals of the Ministry of Education and Culture (1991c:iii): “Help preserve Malawi’s cultural practice; [and] develop an appreciation for the practice of one’s culture”.

Nzewi (2001:1) observes that there are disadvantages in employing Western models in music education in Africa: “[They produce] critical problems of purpose, content and method besetting modern music education in Africa right from inception. The result is the continued mis-education of the African child and adult”. Nzewi’s observation is noted by the musically informed Malawians as that any inclusion of the principles and content of indigenous music in the music syllabus is compromised by the Western principles. This confuses the purposes for which Malawians created music.

2.5 Dualistic Attitudes towards Indigenous Music

Researchers and scholars have, in various ways, undertaken discussion of dualistic attitudes of the missionaries, colonial administrators and Malawians towards indigenous music. The discussions in this thesis should, therefore, be seen in the context of the existing literature. Before colonisation in Malawi, formal or informal indigenous education was a means to learning about family and community work as well as social responsibilities; acquiring expected spiritual as well as moral values; and instilling a spirit of practical participation in

community life. Thus, indigenous education came as a package of integrated experiences that included intellectual development, physical training and morality building. Indigenous music was an important component in this education.

2.5.1 Negative Attitude towards Indigenous Music

Ross (1996:81) observes, “Christianity came to Malawi during the heyday of the Western imperialism and social Darwinism, when there was a powerful tendency to consider African culture and religion to be primitive and backward”. The Christian tendency to believe that Malawian culture is primitive has divided Malawians in the way they view ethnic music. The research I did in 1998 among the converted Yao Moslems of Mpili area in Machinga district indicates that some Moslems followed and still follow *Chinasala’s* view (i.e. the Islamic view) of Yao indigenous songs, dances and music instruments as ‘passports to hell’. This kind of view was and is held by some Christians and it has created controversies among Christians about ethnic music.

Soko (1986:10) discusses that the colonial administrators and the missionaries gave powers to Malawian chiefs to arrest *vimbuza* dancers as well as to confiscate their drums. *Vimbuza* is a dance that helps to cure spirit illnesses among the Ngoni and Tumbuka people in northern Malawi. But, Christians who were found participating in *vimbuza* dance were excommunicated from the church. Kamlongera et al (1992:99-105) note that both the Europeans and the European minded Malawians persecuted indigenous music in the colonial era. Jones (1936:1) stated, nearly seventy years ago, that Westerners are predisposed to think that their own music is the only real music, while other music is barbaric and less perfect.

At the Blantyre Mission Native Conference 1901, the Presbyterian Church elders representing twelve different churches countrywide assembled to discuss, among many things, matters of native dancing. The church elders included Cedric

Kalaliche (Blantyre mission), Thomasi Cheonga (Domasi mission), George Maganga (Mlanje mission) and Yuraya Chatonda (Livingstonia mission). Ross (1973:15) reports, “There was evident feeling that Christians should not only hold aloof, but discourage native dances by every means in their power. The native dancing in this country is to Christianity what darkness is to light”. In the Roman Catholic Church, the feeling of the Presbyterian Church elders is reflected by Chakanza (1972:1-2), “In the field of religious music, there was apparently little effort made to foster the musical idiom of the people. [In addition,] being unable to execute properly the European tunes, Malawians tended to corrupt them to suit their tastes and singing abilities”. This inability to execute properly the European tunes is noted by Kidney (1921:119), “I have heard the younger natives singing, or rather murdering, good old English hymns and tunes, and the children are ignorant of the wild music of their fathers”. Kidney’s writings as well as Chakanza’s relate to the findings of Hertherwick, as quoted by Rattray (1907:v) that the “Native life, habits and customs [were] rapidly disappearing from the country before the advance of civilization and the work of Christian missions”. Hertherwick’s findings suggest that the religious groups and mission/colonial education were succeeding in oppressing ethnic music of Malawians.

The report by Ross and observations of Chakanza, Kidney and Hertherwick establish that indigenous music was not a source of inspiration and pride in church music. Because the leaders of the churches controlled schools, indigenous music was undermined in these schools. The above reports and observations indicate worrisome trends: indigenous music knowledge systems were rapidly disappearing; children were becoming ignorant of these knowledge systems; and efforts were not undertaken to sustain the standards of indigenous music knowledge systems. The churches and mission/colonial schools were pressing hard to make Malawians acquire the knowledge, experience and sophistication of Western music which they did not immediately understand and appreciate. This may explain why Malawians were “corrupting European tunes” and “murdering good English hymns”.

The desire of the Europeans and the European minded Malawians to deny Malawian children studying music of their cultural origins in schools is noted by Pauw (1980:153). Pauw discusses that from 1900 the Overtoun Institute at Livingstonia began to offer Malawian children the type of education that European children received in arts (including music) and classical languages. In 1909 the Livingstonia Mission Council (LMC), composed largely of Malawians, perceived the arts course as being very idealistic and not relating to the general goal of African education in Malawi: “To maintain the indigenous social and cultural milieu of the [Malawian] people”. The move by the Europeans and European minded Malawians to teach both the native and European children the Western music was felt to alienate Malawians from their indigenous music knowledge systems. The LMC recognised this move as misleading and it recommended the abandonment of the European arts courses intended for Malawian children. But, Pauw explains that the European minded Malawians successfully objected to the recommendation, which they interpreted as a major decline in education standards. Pauw’s observations reinforce earlier discussions that Malawians who acquired and followed the Western ways of life undervalued, scorned, underrated and denied their music genius of cultural origins. They prevented Malawian children from practising, studying and sustaining their creative capabilities in indigenous music, either in church or in mission education.

Some educated Malawians had reserved a negative attitude towards their home songs, dances and music instruments. In his quotation of Serman Chavula, Soko (1986:11) observes that Reverend Charles Chidongo Chinula believed in purifying and preserving Malawian cultural customs such as music rather than neglecting and destroying them. As seen in Soko’s observation, Chinula reflects the mission/colonial attitude that indigenous music is indecent, but with some reservations. These reservations (e.g. denial to destroy ethnic music) urged some products of mission/colonial education to call for a need to ‘purify’ indigenous music. However, neither Chavula nor Soko discusses what was to be done to

‘purify’ indigenous music. It is assumed that the term ‘purification’ meant ‘improvement’, as noted from Kubik (1967:3):

The most dangerous one of all popular opinions about African music is the belief that the Traditional African music requires “improvement.” This attitude is still frequently found among people with a teaching mission, i.e. teachers and missionaries, and also among the young Africans with similar professions.

Although the term ‘improvement’ is not elaborated as seen in Kubik’s observation and discussions, it is speculated that it means additions and subtractions of certain features of ethnic music to bring it to a Western standard. Kububa (2003), a 38-year-old singer and composer of religious songs, holds that indigenous music requires ‘refining’. He sang a song, *Kalumaluma*, as an example of indigenous music that he ‘refined’ (changed) into a religious song called *Chipulumutso*. *Kalumaluma* is the same song that I recorded from a performance led by Dan Chiwaya (see page 2-23). Figure 2.5.1.1, below, shows a transcribed excerpt of the song *Chipulumutso* derived from Kububa’s process of ‘refining’.

Figure 2.5.1.1

Chipulumutso

Sosten Kububa

♩=80

1

Ti sa bwe re rembu yo nku ta ya. Chi pu lu mu tsocho

Ti sa bwe re rembu yo nku ta ya. Chi pu lu mu tsocho

Ti sa bwe re rembu yo nku ta ya. Chi pu lu mu tsocho

Ti sa bwe re rembu yo nku ta ya. Chi pu lu mu tsocho

Chord Progression: i N6 i6 v7 i
4

1 | 2

pe za pe za. pe za pe za.

I did the transcription of this song based on the Zomba Holy Cross Choir (ZHCC) audiotape. The words of the song are:

Tisabwerere mbuyo nkutaya

We must not turn back and lose

Chipulumutso chopezapeza

The acquired salvation

As seen in Figure 2.5.1.1, Kububa removed certain features of *Kalumaluma* and these are: special effects created by syncopated tones, call and response form, rhythm patterns, handclapping, tempo, texture (monody) and text. Instead, he applied Western principles to the tune of *Kalumaluma*. As an example, the analysis of chord progression for the segment in the rectangle in *Chipulumutso* is summarized and shown in Figure 2.5.1.2, below:

Figure 2.5.1.2

Summary of Chord Progression

1 | 2

i N6 i6 v7 i

4

According to Western theory, Kububa applied a Neopolitan sixth chord (N6) by altering pitch B of the supertonic triad (BDF) of the A minor scale to pitch B^b. This alteration changed the diminished triad (BDF) to a major triad (B^bDF). As noted in Figure 2.5.1.2, the chord progression is faithful to the practice in Western art music where a Neopolitan sixth chord is followed by a tonic six four and then a dominant seventh chord, before resolving into the tonic. The raising of pitch G by a semitone to pitch G[#] gives a feeling that *Chipulumutso* used a harmonic minor scale where the seventh tone is raised. In Figure 2.5.1.1, the circled triad (AC[#]E) in the second ending illustrates the use of the Picardy third with the minor triad (ACE) becoming a major triad (AC[#]E). Kububa used this technique to conclude a section of *Chipulumutso*.

The features discussed above are not found in *Kalumaluma*, but they substituted the idioms of *Kalumaluma*. Kububa (2003) argues:

To use traditional music in religion or for entertainment we must ‘clean’ it first by changing the rhythm and the text that excite immoral deeds. Like the way we put salt in *ndiwo* [relish] to get a good taste, we must harmonize the music to sound nice. You know you eat *kalingonda* (wild beans) after removing its poison by boiling it in water for hours.

As noted in Kububa’s quotation, the analogy of poison to indigenous music idioms emphasises a disturbing impact that Western civilization has left on some Malawians. It is not explained how call and response, rhythm patterns, hand clapping, tempo and texture of *Kalumaluma* excite immoral deeds. The lack of explanation suggests that local musicians such as Kububa are simply predisposed to think that cultural music is pagan. Kubik (1967:3) urges Malawians to explore and find “beauty and artistic integrity” in their indigenous music. This music started at least 2.5 million years ago in Malawi.

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (2003:2) notes: “Archaeological research has shown that Malawi has had human occupations for a long period. The discovery of Malawi’s first hominid called *Homo rudolfensis* had confirmed

that Malawi's cultural origins are at least 2.5 million years". This shows that indigenous music is the result of the collective intelligences of the Malawians of the many past generations. The songs, dances and music instruments come from the souls of the Malawians and they carry with them the valued records of customs and beliefs. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1991c:iii) recommends the safeguarding, preserving, valuing, promoting and studying of indigenous music in education in Malawi.

The attitude which denies the development of purposes, outcomes, contents and methods of music education which are responsive to the cultural situations of Malawians can also be noted from the thoughts of some student-pastors. As a hired music teacher at Zomba Theological College, I set and administered the end of academic year music test to fifty-two students on September 13, 2003. One of the questions that students answered was: "The teachings of some foreign religions in Malawi argue that indigenous songs, dances and music instruments have something evil in them. Therefore, religious people should not perform them. Discuss your opinion". Students were allowed to answer in either English or Chichewa in order to present well-articulated answers. Out of fifty-two students, fourteen representing 27% indicated that indigenous music is evil. A few grammatical corrections have been made to some of the students' answers as follows:

Mughandira (2003:2)

Indigenous songs, dances and music instruments have something evil in them. For example, people dance most of the traditional dances half naked. This arouses sexual feelings to the dancers themselves and spectators who in the end of the dance may engage in unacceptable sexual practices. This makes the songs and dances evil.

It can be noted in Mughandira's opinion that not all indigenous dances are performed half naked. It is imagined that there are culturally relevant dance practices that deserve acceptance in creative practices in churches or in schools.

Juma (2003:2)

Nyimbo ndi magule achikhalidwe chathu zimakhala zoyipa ndi zonyasa zikalowa chikunja. Kuvina kodula chiwuno, kugwedeza matako moyipa ndi mwachikoka ngati ali akazi, mavalidwe oyipa owonetsa maliseche kapena nsonga zamatako zimapangitsa nyimbo ndi magulewa kukhala oyipa. (Indigenous songs and dances are bad when performed in a pagan way. Wiggling of the waist and the buttocks in a bad manner especially by women as well as the dressing that shows nakedness or the edge of buttocks makes songs and dances to be bad).

Juma's view suggests that if indigenous music is performed in a non-pagan way, the music could be recognised as good. The nakedness and its related attributes are seen to be the aspects of evil. The presence of these aspects in dance performances qualifies the dance as evil. It is noted that Juma does not emphasise the nakedness and wriggling of men as being evil. Like Mughandira, Juma has said nothing on songs and music instruments.

Mughandira's and Juma's opinions indicate that the misguided Malawians in matters of indigenous music knowledge systems are blind to recognise that there are appropriate songs, dances and music instruments of cultural origins that are worth including in churches and schools. This indication was noted by thirty-eight students, representing 73% of the students who answered the above test question. The sample answers of the thirty-eight students are discussed from page 2-25 under the discussions of positive attitude towards indigenous music.

To date, some musically informed Malawians believe that the practices of some radio stations, churches and the television station promote the negative attitude towards indigenous music. Likombola (2003:7) notes, "Radio 2 FM tends to feature programmes where young Disc Jockeys feature Western music". She explains that since these programmes are aired regularly and weekly, they impress upon Malawians that Western music is the best. In turn, children are urged to appreciate Western music and in the process they acquire a negative attitude towards ethnic music. Likombola's observation is noted by Phiri (2002): "My concern is we get tunes from South Africa and East Africa. Malawian music is not

given much air time”. Phiri further observes, “Malawian music can be studied as folk music and individual composition. The country is rich in traditional music which is being purloined by other composers”. The observation of Phiri that there is a tendency to ignore Malawian music by giving little attention to it is described by Graham (1989:294) that Malawian artists take home much of the popular music from Zimbabwe and South Africa. This practice is reflected by Fellows (2002) who notes that Martin Chilimapunga, the controller of the MBC Radio 2, expresses anger in response to the large quantity of foreign music, especially reggae, which is being played on the national radio. Chilimapunga asks: “Why should we sound more Jamaican than the Jamaicans themselves”? Fellows recognises that on his part, Martin Chilimapunga encourages Malawian musicians to incorporate indigenous Malawian sounds into their music by featuring some of the Malawian music in the weekly Top 20 Music Programme.

The concern of marginalizing Malawian music is also noted from some staff at Television Malawi. Mkandawire (2003), a television presenter, discusses, “Channel O is for Africans and not for Europeans. As such, more songs aired on this channel should be those done by Africans and those promoting our African culture”. She elaborates that Channel O, an all music television, has a few programmes that feature traditional African music compared to other programmes that feature Western music. Malawians who watch Channel O have more time to see and listen to the Western music than the traditional African music. As a result, Malawians tend to consolidate their appreciation of Western music and continue undervaluing African music. She admits that Television Malawi gives inadequate time coverage for indigenous music:

With the lack of music education from which we would learn to appreciate African music, I wish Television Malawi had given more time to African music. We have Zakwathu and Music Splash programmes that feature Malawian music, but additional or more of these programmes would be helpful.

2.5.2 Positive Attitude towards Indigenous Music

As noted in Section 2.2.1, each missionary group prepared a Malawian generation which denied its own indigenous music. However, the available literature also shows that some missionary leaders encouraged their converts to use their ethnic tunes for church music. William Koyi and Donald Fraser of the Synod of Livingstonia Church of Central Africa Presbyterian included indigenous tunes in worship. In his preface, Colvin (1997) discusses that William Koyi, the South African Xhosa evangelist, initiated indigenous hymn writing in the church in northern Malawi. Although the writing of Malawian aural/oral music traditions compromised certain idioms of these traditions, the converts were not forbidden to make music of their cultural origin.

Taylor (1959:3) notes that Donald Fraser, the Scottish missionary, encouraged the Christians to compose hymns from Ngoni “old fine tunes”. Between 1890 and 1900, Fraser consolidated and authenticated the indigenous tradition of Christian composition. Phiri (1975:49) observes that Donald Fraser held choir festivals where he introduced new hymns set to indigenous tunes and biblical stories. He also gave prizes to students who arranged hymns based on Ngoni songs. Mphande (1967/71:19) explains, “Scots missionaries admired Ngoni choral singing and encouraged Ngoni converts like Daniel Nhlane to take melodies from the tribal stock, even war songs, and create hymns”. But, there are no indications in the discussions of Colvin, Taylor, Phiri and Mphande that either show the kind of harmonic principles that the Christians applied in the indigenous tunes or whether Koyi and Fraser encouraged the integration of indigenous music in music education. However, Christians may have employed Western theory in harmonising the indigenous tunes because they received a Western music education.

Figure 2.5.2.1, below, shows a harmonised tune which Temple and Jones (1969:81) discuss as having been arranged from a Tumbuka wedding song by Ben

Nhlane. Temple and Jones note that the words of this tune conform more closely to the original words of the Tumbuka wedding song. But, the words of the wedding song are not included in the writers' discussions and are not available in the national archives and libraries in the country. Colvin (1997) admits that Ben Nhlane arranged "O Praise the Name", but he explains that the hymn was created from an old Ngoni wedding tune about 1890. Colvin's observation contradicts Temple's and Jones' on the ownership of the hymn on the basis that the Ngoni and the Tumbuka are two different ethnic groups. These contradictory observations suggest a need for further study in order to establish reliable historical accounts of the hymn. Currently, the hymn is sung in Chitumbuka and English languages in churches.

Figure 2.5.2.1

O Praise the Name

From a Tumbuka Wedding Song

♩ = 80

Leader

O praise the name of Je - sus,

Chorus

O

praise the name of Je - sus, our King.

praise the name of Je - sus. Our King our

Our King our

our King, our King. O praise the name of
King, our King, our King, our King.

Je - sus, O praise the name of Je - sus, our
King, O praise the name of Je - sus, our

King.
King.

Temple and Jones (1969:80-81)

There are indications in the discussions of Colvin, Taylor, Phiri, Mphande as well as Temple and Jones that not all the Europeans and Malawians disliked indigenous music. This attitude towards indigenous music is described by Soko (1986:10-11) who discusses that in the 1920s Malawian intellectuals, consisting of Christians and Church Pastors, felt the banning of indigenous music was not good for Malawians. Christians started again to participate in indigenous music secretly for fear of being excommunicated from the church if the leaders of the church knew of their participation. The return to indigenous music challenged the Christian's oppressive belief that this music was sinful. Soko notes that indigenous music continued to play a central role in the many aspects of life among the people of various cultural groups.

Soko's observation is reflected in the discussions of Chiwaya (2003), the 82-year-old singer and traditional player of *ching'wenyeng'we* (a traditional fiddle), that

Yao indigenous music survived the condemnation from *Chinasala* (Islam) and converted Christians. Chiwaya sang the song, *Kalumaluma*, (see Figure 2.5.2.2) as an example of home music that continues to play a significant role in the lives of the Yao people in initiation ceremonies until today. He learnt to sing the song in 1927 during his initiation rite. The song is in the Chinyanja language as a result of interactions between the Yao and the Amang'anja of Zomba district. In the text, the term *yaya* is the Amang'anja generic name for a woman.

Figure 2.5.2.2

Kalumaluma

Manganje Song from the Yao

♩=80 Leader

1 Wo_ ye! Ka lu ma lu ma nju chi

Wo!

Hand clapping

4 we ya_ ya. Ka lu ma lu ma nju chi we.

Wo!

Song Recorded at Mbatata village on February 20, 2003

The words of the song are:

Woye! Wo!

Vocables

<i>Kalumaluma njuchiwe</i>	The sting of bees
<i>Yaya</i>	Generic name for woman
<i>Kalumaluma njuchi</i>	The sting of bees

The words of the song, which are figurative, are as old as the tune itself and they warn the initiates of the danger of mixing and staying together with the opposite sex before the right time. The words urge the initiates to keep social distance from the opposite sex so as to avoid pre-marital sex.

The lead singer begins the singing of the song with an introduction, *Woye!*, and the chorus answers with the vocable, *Wo!* According to Chiwaya, this introduction imitates a cultural practice where a visitor who comes to a house shouts *odi* (a call) and the owner of the house replies with *e* (vowel for Yes) as a sign of granting the visitor permission to enter the house. In this song, permission or agreement to perform the song is dramatized in the introduction. During singing, it was noted that the performers stressed tones which have an accent symbol below them. The stressed tones, in measures three and five, offset the normal accentuation pattern. This gave a feeling of syncopation characteristic of the singing style of *Kalumaluma*. Some of the elements of *Kalumaluma* are discussed on page 2-15.

The 1965 Vatican II order of the Roman Catholic Church urged the implementation of vernacularism of the Mass and the entire Catholic liturgy. Such vernacularism influenced music in the Roman Catholic Church in Malawi. Interest in music shifted from performing the melodies of the Gregorian Chants to singing indigenous tunes such as *manganje* and *tchopa* in worship. The indigenous music is explored as part of the processes of composing songs and dances for religious services. Beneti (2003), the Dean of Studies at St. Peters Major Seminary, notes that the idea of vernacularism was intended to stop the estrangement of people from their culture by foreign values. To date, the Catholics, who constitute about 20% of the population, have advanced in

exploring the indigenous music for worship purposes. The church's initiative to explore indigenous music for performance purposes was a change in attitude towards indigenous music and this is reflected by the student-pastors of the Zomba Theological College as follows:

Ponchisi (2003:2)

Indigenous songs and dances have nothing evil in them at all. There are indigenous songs that express grievances and requests for peace in times of crisis. It was by these songs that God listened to people and supplied rain in times of drought. If there were some evil in them God would not have answered their prayers at all. There were songs and dances for approaching God at rain making shrines during sacrifices of thanksgiving for good harvest.

Phiri (2003:2)

Everybody sings local songs more easily than foreign songs in the church. Many people feel something and get moved if they are singing what is their own or what they know and understand. If you ask me, I will tell you that there is nothing evil in our indigenous songs, dances and music instruments. History tells us that within the same group of missionaries they were divided. Others saw our music to be good.

The observations of Ponchisi and Phiri seem to indicate that despite the existing dualistic views towards indigenous music, indigenous tunes could be used for worship purposes. It may be noted that the generalisation of indigenous music as bad does not give a true picture of the music. Indigenous dancing has been an occasion of healing, joy, thanksgiving and praise to chiefs or heroes. The Tonga people perform *mashawe* as a therapeutic dance for sick people. The Lomwe of the Zomba district perform dances as forms of prayers and supplications for help from God in times of droughts. The dances are intended to bring the rains down for the good of the people. Christian Literature Association in Malawi (1975:6) observes:

The local African tunes are in no way inferior, or "pagan", or fit for use only in villages or at funerals or at women's meetings. The African tunes

should most certainly be used at public worship in our churches, so that our singing can be lively and joyful, out of the hearts.

The observation of the Christian Literature Association in Malawi shows the attitude of new leaders of the Presbyterian churches in both British and Scottish missions against the oppressive views of the past leaders toward indigenous music. The positive attitude towards ethnic music is also observed in schools during the postcolonial period. Chimombo (1987:1) notes, “Malawian folklore studies in the sixties and seventies have been characterized by a turning to indigenous culture ... a defence of culture ... storage and protection of indigenous art forms”. As noted in Chimombo’s observation, the turning to indigenous culture recognised the importance of traditional Malawian customs and values. Folklore studies included documentation and analysis of the nature, content and uses of indigenous music. However, many researchers in the sixties and seventies seem to have limited capacity to handle issues of indigenous music in depth and scope. This derives from the fact that many researchers were not music professionals and their drive to study indigenous music was limited to analysing the texts of the songs.

Given the recognition of the importance of indigenous music, it is observed that the music has not been studied to understand its theory, teaching and learning processes, performance styles and creative processes. The observation is noted by Kimble (1982:11-12), the former Vice Chancellor of the University of Malawi: “One important facet of our culture has been neglected by the University, namely music”. Kimble urged music educators and professionals to include the following aspects of indigenous music in the music education courses of Chancellor College:

A study of the ulimba or xylophone, documenting traditional methods of how this instrument is taught locally will lead to a guide/method book for students from other areas to learn, and to appreciate, a different musical expression. Similar studies will be made of various drumming styles, playing of indigenous instruments such as the gourd-trumpets or the mbira or thumb piano. We need to build up a well-documented collection of

Malawian songs, transcribed and analysed for study, preservation, and performance by soloists and choirs.

With his urging, Kimble suggests the importance of exploring indigenous models in studying indigenous music. Kimble's recommendation to analyse home music is reflected by Strumpf (1983:7), the founder of music programme at Chancellor College:

It is important for African scholars to define as only they can, what African music really is. This is necessary not only as a significant contribution to the study of an important area of world music, but also to give other African individuals greater insight into their own music.

The outcome of Strumpf's and Kimble's recommendations is not felt to a large extent at Chancellor College where to date indigenous music instruments such as xylophones, gourd trumpets, *mbira*, drums and other cultural instruments are not available for study. Normally, every department of the college submits a budget of requirements to college administrators annually. The records of the department of Fine and Performing Arts (FPA) show that every year a budget on the requirements in music is submitted. The answer the FPA receives from its budget submissions has always been that there is no money.

Recommendations such as Kimble's are well known by the authorities of Chancellor College, the University of Malawi and other professionals, but the documentation of methodologies of playing cultural music, production of method books on the same and a collection of transcribed and analysed cultural music are not done because of the lack of funds. With limited personal resources, music lecturers and their leadership have only made audio/visual recordings of some songs, dances and instrumental music as well as analytical studies of certain music genres on a small scale. Not much has been done to analyse and promote indigenous music and this is noted by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (2003:12):

Activities such as music, dance and drama should be intensified. Though rich in all of them Malawi has not adequately promoted them. To promote

them properly government shall establish [the] Cultural Council whose functions will include ensuring that standards are maintained in the teaching of fine and performing arts.

As noted in the above quotation, the facilitation of teaching the fine and performing arts (music and dance included) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (MYSC). The responsibility is shared by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (1991:vi) when it states,

Senior secondary education will be terminal for most of the students, therefore the study of music and dance will help these students to get employment in the music industry or be self-employed.

From the quotation and MYSC's, the two ministries endorse the importance of teaching fine and performing arts, yet in primary, secondary and teachers' training education music is not taught. As observed by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture, schools are yet to see the impact of the Cultural Council.

Another activity that has shown a positive attitude towards ethnic music is the establishment of the cultural laws. Kamlongera et al (1992:105) observe that the Commercial Advertising (Traditional Music) Control Act of 1978 to protect *mbumba* music was established. *Mbumba* music refers to political songs and dances that women performed at political rallies during the rule of Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the former Head of State in Malawi. Kwilimbe (2003), the Director of the Department of Arts and Crafts, indicates that this cultural law derived from a presidential decree. Banda made the decree at a rally when he was informing Malawians of his response to the intention of a German company to record *mbumba* music. Banda described *mbumba* music as "sacred or holy" and therefore could not be recorded by any foreign company.

Nevertheless, he allowed the Malawian state-owned national radio to record and broadcast this music. Banda also encouraged indigenous music through his policy of reviving banned and abandoned indigenous dances. Soko (2000:7) observes,

“[Hastings Banda] disagreed with the imposition of western music traditions and promoted a return to indigenous music”.

Kwilimbe (2003) explains that the Ministry of Sports, Youth and Culture established the Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 that is intended to develop and study the arts, crafts and folklore. But, this Act has been confined to collections and preservations of indigenous music through audio and visual recordings. These recordings are stored in the National Archives, Museums and Departments of Antiquities. The National Dance Troupe organized by the Department of Arts and Crafts performs some of the recorded songs and dances. The observation of Kwilimbe suggests that the study aspect of arts, crafts and folklore stipulated in the Arts and Crafts of 1990 is not yet implemented.

The observations of Kwilimbe as well as the above discussions appear to establish that proper interpretation of the cultural laws within the framework of the policies of the Ministry of Education in the country is lacking. Probably communication does not exist between musicologists or music theorists and professionals working in the cultural departments. The departments are: the Department of Antiquities from 1967, the Museums of Malawi since 1957 (as a statutory organization and since 1981 as a government department), the National Archives of Malawi from 1947, the Censorship Board from 1968, the Department of Fine and Performing Arts of Chancellor College since 1982 and the Copyright Society of Malawi from 1992.

According to the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (2003:6), the activities of the cultural departments are intended to uphold and promote the Malawian culture by recreating, studying, conserving and preserving it for national identity and posterity. In the context of indigenous music, the above discussions appear to indicate that emphasis has been on preservation and performance of this music. But, preservation and performance of indigenous music alone cannot help to develop the theory, philosophy, pedagogy, psychology and creative processes of

this music without research and analytical studies. In this respect, it is imagined that music does not receive adequate support from education authorities and other professionals in policy making decision because it does not seem to have substance worthy for study.

2.6 Research in Music Education

Several researchers in a variety of disciplines have studied indigenous songs, dances and music instruments of Malawi. The sub-discipline of music education, either Western or African, has been given less attention than fields such as musicology and ethnomusicology. Although Kubik (1974:72,75) lists Zanten (1971) and Hooker (1971) in his bibliography as writers on Malawian music education, published literature of these writers is not available in the national archives or libraries of the country. The available literature which was published in the colonial era shows that researchers did not orient their studies in the disciplinary area of music education. However, the contents of this literature may relate to matters of curriculum for music education.

Rattray (1907) collected and discussed the customs, stories, songs, dances, riddles and proverbs of the Malawians of the Dowa and Dedza districts. He documented the indigenous chants and songs that were sung at funerals or during story telling. Kidney (1921) focused on the texts of the Malawian travelling/road songs, harvest, 'passionate' (e.g., love songs) and boat songs. In addition, he discussed the music instruments such as the metal rattles, sticks, lute-like instruments and drums. He discussed issues of antiphonal singing style, the pentatonic scale and the two 'classes' of the male voice. The 'classes' are high pitch that he claims is similar to falsetto, and baritone, which he argues is close to Western baritone.

In the 1930s, Read (1937:1-35), the English anthropologist, compiled and discussed the old Ngoni songs such as lullabies, *mthimba* (marriage songs), *izibongo* (praise songs) and war songs which represent events in the lives of

Malawians. Chakanza (1950:158-161) described the text of the songs, which Malawian boys and girls sing around the fire at night.

Discussions and descriptions of the types of songs, dances, chants, music instruments, performance styles and scales by the above researchers show the nature, uses, contexts and content of cultural music of the past that relate to curriculum materials which Malawian children were denied in mission/colonial schools. Unlike the post-colonial period where home music practices are documented also by audio/visual recordings, the cultural music materials of the colonial period are presented in text form only. The text form has left gaps if a music history for Malawi is to be developed with samples of how the past songs sounded and dance routines were executed. On the basis of the gaps, modern music educators might lack substantial information in comparative studies of past and present home music in areas of performance styles.

Information about the teaching of songs, dances and music instruments, both outside and inside African formal education, is observed in some music publications of the postcolonial era. Kubik et al (1984:22-35) note *Wankwangu ali koswe* (my husband is a rat) as a mnemonic formula for teaching a five-stroke twelve-pulse time line pattern on *ngwasala* (percussion beam) and *mangolongondo* (log xylophone). Kubik and his colleagues studied the application of this type of asymmetric time line pattern on *ngwasala* and *mangolongondo* outside formal education (traditional initiation schools) of the Yao of Makanjila area in Mangochi district. With its humorous meaning, *Wankwangu ali koswe* matches the accent structure of this five-stroke twelve-pulse time line pattern. This matching facilitates the memorization process in learning to play *ngwasala* and *mangolongondo*.

The observations of Kubik et al that the five-stroke twelve-pulse time line pattern is universal for the Yao in Malawi contradicts a study I did among the Yao of Mpili area in Machinga district in 1997. Yao songs I recorded in this area show

that the five-stroke pattern fell within the four-pulse time line pattern. Items 6a and 6b, tracks 13 and 14, on the CD (included at the back of thesis) are two songs in which the hand clapping produces a five-stroke four-pulse time line pattern. The pulse cycles are produced by the hand clapping pattern. In addition, *ngwasala* was not found outside the formal education system (outside initiation camps). The mnemonic phrase that Kubik and colleagues noted was observed in Mpili area but it was expressed in a different sentence: *Chakwelekwe chinangwa* (cassava hurts my stomach). However, the discussions of Kubik and colleagues about mnemonic formulae, organization, structure and history of formal Yao education where the young learn morals through the medium of music, indicate matters of methodology, purpose of music, infrastructure and curriculum.

My study of the Yao of Mpili area shows that the Yao have a formal music education in initiation camps. The content of music lessons is derived from cultural music and includes *misyungu* songs (didactic songs) and *kungwe* songs (graduation songs). Figure 2.6.1 is an example of *kungwe* song namely, *Njinga*. It is an old Yao traditional tune which is sung by female initiates.

Figure 2.6.1

Njinga

Girls' Initiation Song from the Yao

♩ = 73

Solo 1

Nji nga_ ji pi te mchi la ga ja mo to.

Solo 2

Ja_ mchi la ga.

Chorus

Ja mo to.

Nji nga_ ji pi te mchi la ga ja_ mchi

Ja mchi la ga ji pi te mchi

Ja mo to.

la ga ji pi te mchi la ga ja mo to.

la ga ja_ mchi la ga.

Ja mo to.

The words of the song are:

Njinga jipite kulaga

The bike has gone suffering

Jamoto

The motorcycle

Ja kulaga

It's suffering

Jipite kulaga

It's gone suffering

These words use symbolic language. This is a characteristic feature of *kungwe* and *misyungu* (didactic songs) songs. The text of *Njinga* has a hidden meaning. It is about the squeaking sound that comes from the non-oiled joints, brakes or damaged parts of the motorcycle. This sound is perceived as a sign that the motorcycle is 'feeling pain'. Symbolically, the initiates consider themselves as a motorcycle as they think about the pain and crying they experience in initiation camps. This reflects the views of the initiates on punishment as a destructive device in music and moral education during the initiation passage.

The Yao use respect for Islam on Thursday and part of Friday, concept of self-esteem, need for social approval and punishment as motivational devices for the initiates to learn music and morals. On every Thursday (an important day in the Islamic faith) and part of Friday, there are no music lessons and activities in the initiation camps. The absence of music lessons and activities is viewed as a loss of opportunity to learn. This encourages the teachers and the initiates to resume their classes with vigour after the break.

The need not to lower self-esteem, endure scolding and receive punishment urges the initiates to work hard in music lessons. In addition, the initiates know that at the end of the initiation passage, their ability to sing and dance well pleases their parents, guardians, relatives and the community. As such, the anticipation of the community's approval makes the initiates to work extra hard in music lessons and other music activities.

The music teachers (*Alombwe*) consider punishment as a useful device to intensify the initiates' efforts to accomplish singing, playing music instruments such as *ngwasala* and dancing as taught to them. Whipping, beating and slapping are some forms of punishment which inflict pain to the initiates as they go through music and moral education. The symbolic meaning of "Njinga jipite kulaga" is "Music and morals are learned along with suffering". *Njinga* is sung at the graduation function of the initiation passage. The song may also be sung, outside the initiation passage, at the water well or the river bank where women and girls meet to draw water or to wash clothes.

Alombwe (music teachers) are responsible for selecting songs and music instruments such as *ngwasala* (percussion instrument made from a bamboo) to be used in the camps. Below is a transcription of a sample music lesson recorded on audio tape at Issa village on December 24, 1998 from 6:11 p.m. to 9:39 p.m. The lesson was recorded by the lady research assistant since men would not be allowed to enter the female initiation camp. There were 21 girls in the camp and

this transcription is taken from a section of the recording. The lesson was taught in Yao language.

Key

L = *Lombwe* (music teacher)

C = Children

CI = Child

N = *Nakanga* (Name of president of the camp)

Music Lesson

L: *Tujinjile nyumbamu...e...mumsondo.*

Let us get inside the house...eh...the camp.

(Enter the camp)

Ana mpaka akumbuchile nyimbo situwele tuli kwimba sila?

Can you remember the songs we have been singing?

C: (Laugh, noise) *E! mpaka tukumbuchile.* (Laugh, noise)

CI: *Iyayi...une...* (Silent)

No...I...

L: *Wikukumbuchila tijimbe. Wingukutumbuchilamwe tilijiganye kutinombe mjimbe.*

Those who remember will sing, while the rest who have forgotten will learn again.

Sambano kwende tujimbe wawili wawili. Nsagule mjenu jwakwimba nawo.

Nsagule nyimbo jenu jimpaka mjimbe. Nsagule soni mbali jimpaka kombole kwimba.

Now sing in pairs. Select a partner to sing with. Select a song you are able

to sing. Also select your parts (e.g. a leader or a respondent)

C: (Do as instructed)

L: *Wawilimwe mtande...Hadija...ni...Patuma...Mtwe wa nyimbojo wakuti chi? Nambi chimlokmete mnyimbomo chi?*

You two start...Hadija...and...Patuma. What is the title of the song? What lesson do we draw from the song?

CI: *Waseche wangaumbala*

Laugh at the uninitiated.

C: (Sing and clap while sitting)

L: *Mjimbeje mwamachili! Kwimba mpela nginilya!*

Sing with energy! You sing as if you have not eaten!

N: *Nambo wanache ateunandi nambo tajimbepe.*

But these children are young. However they will sing.

CI: *Mjanguju Patuma akulepela kwimba mbali jwake.*

My partner Patuma is failing to sing her part.

L: *Chambone, chinjigale mbali jakwe kuti alijiganye.*

Well I will take her part so that she learns.

L+CI: (Sing while others listen)

L: *Sambano mjimbeje maka pakuti...e... (Demonstrates for Patuma)*

Now sing especially this part...eh...

C: (Sing)

L: (Ululating and hand clapping) *Eya mkukombola, mpitilisye.*

Yes you are doing well, continue.

As noted in the music lesson, a synthesis-analysis-synthesis process in learning music occurred. Children listened attentively as the teacher sang the whole song with Hadija. This allowed children to gain more information on inflections and semantics of the text, the pattern of increasing and decreasing frequency (melodic contour), form, vocal timbre and rhythm of the song. Patuma attempted to reproduce the singing of the song heard; in the first place, she sang it wrongly.

When errors were made (as in Patuma's case), children heard the song once more from the teacher. Children then attempted to sing it further, gradually mastering it. The teacher singled out short phrases of the song that gave trouble to Patuma. More listening and learning were therefore provided. After polishing the phrases, they were placed back in the context. The singing continued and ultimately the music was mastered. The teacher praised Patuma who was later singing well. Figure 2.6.2 is a transcription of the *misyungu* song (didactic song), *Asekeni*, which Hadija and Patuma sang.

Figure 2.6.2

Asekeni

♩ = 90

Lead Singer

Yao Girls' Initiation Song

A se ke ni le ro. A se ke ni le ro.

Lead Support

A el

Chorus

(Chanting)

He! He!

3
A tu ka ni re ba ba.
A e!
(Chanting) (Singing)
U lu! Se ka sa u mbala.
5
A tu ka ni re ma ma.
(Chanting) (Chanting) (Singing)
He! He! U lu! Se ka sa u mbala.

The words of the song are:

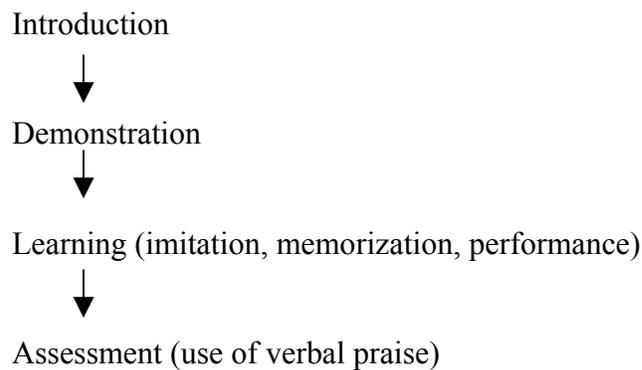
<i>Asekeni lero</i>	Laugh at them today
<i>Seka osaumbala</i>	Laugh at uninitiated
<i>Atukanire baba</i>	They have insulted my father
<i>Atukanire mama</i>	They have insulted my mother
<i>Seka osaumbala</i>	Laugh at uninitiated
<i>Ae! He! Ulu!</i>	Vocables

From the words, children who offend the elders are ridiculed and considered as uninitiated. The song seems to show the demerits of being uninitiated and it implies that the initiated children behave well.

During the learning process, the music phrases were isolated from the song for purposes of mastering them. This seemed to establish that a conscious attempt of

a synthesis-analysis-synthesis process of music learning was done. Besides, motivational device (verbal praise), active participation in music making, imitation, practice, trial-and-error and repetition as components of the learning processes are noted in the above lesson. Below is a diagram that shows the music lesson structure.

Music Lesson Structure



During the initiation rite, every initiate is given a song to learn and explain its meaning. When they work in pairs they are asked to choose one song at a time from either partner of the pair.

On a different note, Kubik (2002) observes another mnemonic formula that is used in teaching a Malawian guitar:

For teaching guitar the teacher employs syllabic patterns to characterize sound and accentual units in the rhythmic-melodic patterns taught, i.e. ke-nje-nge-nje ke-nje-nge-nje for a guitar pattern to accompany Jive and Twist.

As seen in Kubik's observation, "ke-nje-nge-nje ke-nje-nge-nje" represents the sound of rhythmic patterns played on a guitar. Unfortunately, though, samples of audio/visual recordings or notations of how "ke-nje-nge-nje ke-nje-nge-nje" actually sounds are not available in the national archives and libraries in Malawi.

Some publications of the postcolonial period also discuss certain theoretical concepts of indigenous music. Zanten (1980:107-125), a mathematician, analysed the indigenous music of the Sena people, showing that the Sena tuning model has equal intervals between the seven notes within an octave. He also demonstrated the differences between the Western major scale in which major 3rds or minor 3rds exist and the Sena major scale where the 3rds have equal intervals. This Sena tuning model is challenged by a scale pattern of a Sena song, *Malembo*, on page 4-11. *Malembo* is discussed in Chapter Four, pages 4-8 to 4-11. In addition, Zanten identified the classification of tones and discusses the Sena music concepts such as *fala*, denoting octave.

Chilivumbo (1972), Friedson (1991) and Msiska (1981) studied the role of music and dance as therapeutic aspects in traditional healing practices of spirit illnesses in Malawi. The three writers focused upon *vimbuza* illnesses of the Tumbuka of northern Malawi. Malamusi (1991:55-71), an ethnomusicologist, studied the solo musician, Mário Sabuneti. He studied how Sabuneti tuned his set of eight drums to a xylophone scale; how he plays all the drums by himself; sources of composed songs; names of the eight drums; purpose of his music; and how he teaches a student to play the drums. Katundu (1993:53-55) discussed a historical portrait of the first popular recording artist, Black Paseli, in Malawi. Figure 2.6.3 is a transcription of Black Paseli's song called *Napolo*. The song is an example of the early popular music of Malawi. The song is sung with the accompaniment of an acoustic guitar.

Figure 2.6.3

Napolo

Black Paseli

Solo

Na po lo ehl a ma_ ma.

Wa tenga mu dzi ku Nti ya. Ku ka u ta ya ku nya nja.
Po bwe ra Mlumbena li ra ma yo wa cha_
be. Wa cha_ be. Wa cha be!

The words of the song are:

Napolo wa chabe

‘Napolo’ (Dragon that comes out with flash floods) is bad

Watenga mudzi ku Ntiya

It has taken Ntiya village

Kukautaya ku nyanja

And thrown it into the lake

Pobwera Mlumbena lirama yo!

‘Mlumbena’ (name of village chief) comes while weeping ‘mayo’ (onomatopoeic sound of a weeping person)

Wa chabe

It (Dragon) is Bad

The above song gives a historical record of the flash floods that swept through Ntiya village in 1946 when Black Paseli, the traditional composer of the song, was a young boy. Many people died and property was destroyed by the floods. *Napolo* is a name that is given to a dragon that has no tail and no head. This dragon is believed to be the cause of floods that generally occur at night.

From the writings of the above researchers, matters of scales, tuning, uses of music and teaching processes constitute foundations of music theory and methodology as well as matters of curriculum content. In Malawi, there is a

proverb, *Chete chete sausa nyama* (Silence does not make animals come out of their hiding place). The analogy is that the lack of informed studies in music education and the lack of exploring as well as utilizing the available research materials have aggravated the marginalization of music education in Malawi.

2.7 Summary

The early missionaries who came to Malawi in different groups from various countries such as Britain introduced music education in mission schools in the country. Among the goals of the missionaries were to introduce Christianity and to stop slave trade in Malawi. The missionaries achieved these goals.

Christianity, Islam and the colonizers described Malawian culture as primitive and backward. This divided Malawians into three groups: the converted Christians and Moslems who prevented the awareness, preservation and development of indigenous music in areas under their control; the converted Christians who felt a need to ‘purify’ or ‘improve’ cultural music; and converted as well as non-converted Christians and Moslems who sustained the oral/aural music traditions. These three groups with different views about ethnic music still exist in Malawi.

Religious leaders controlled mission/colonial schools and as a result, indigenous music was excluded in these schools. The exclusion denied native Malawians attending these schools the opportunity to appreciate the collective Malawian genius, logic, system, beauty, beliefs and customs embedded in indigenous songs, dances and music. This denial created Malawians who do not know their cultural music practices and when they are in positions of influence such as education authorities they are unable to make informed decisions regarding music education.

The literature indicates that each missionary group ran its own education to suit its aims and concepts regarding education appropriate for Malawians. It is noted that some missionaries taught and examined Malawians in Western music and theory. Other missionaries encouraged Malawians to use indigenous tunes for singing church music but not for education. In other mission schools interest was in applying the local language to Western tunes. The literature gives the impression that the purpose of music education was singing and writing of indigenous music or composing songs for church music. The emphasis on singing has been retained in postcolonial education and it appears that the current education authorities are satisfied with the trend.

Pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial literature all contains certain information about the nature, uses, content and principles of teaching and learning indigenous music. A study of this literature to discern workable and useable materials for music education has not yet been done. If music educators and education authorities are not aware of what constitutes Malawian music and if they are not developing alternative but useful ideas for music syllabi, methodology, philosophy, psychology, outcome and content, the colonial models will continue to prevail in music education which may then continue to be viewed as an unnecessary component in Malawian education.