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GRUPO LOKITO

A practice-based investigation into contemporary links between Congolese and Cuban popular music

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2011

School of Oriental and African Studies

University of London

Declaration for PhD thesis

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ABSTRACT

There is a longstanding historical and cultural relationship between Congo and Cuba via the slave trade and the 'return' of Cuban music to Africa, a relationship that has apparently been very scantily documented. It is acknowledged that Congolese roots are present in Cuban music but there is little musical analysis of the actual elements concerned.

This thesis addresses this imbalance. Using a performance-as-research methodology, it charts the formation and experience of the fusion band Grupo Lokito. Through bringing Congolese and Latin musicians together in a performance situation, I explore the ways in which musicians from the two traditions recognise and assimilate each other's groove. This dissertation investigates whether the historic connections enable contemporary musicians from both worlds to recognise similarities in each other's music.

Also included is a historical overview of the Congolese arrival on Cuba, how Congolese musical practices were preserved and assimilated into Cuban music as well as an overview of the evolution of twentieth-century Congolese music.

Existing research has focused on issues such as the return of Cuban music to Congo (Topp Fargion 2004), the emergence of rumba Lingala in the 1950s and 1960s (Kazadi 1970; Stewart 2000), and the subsequent development in the 1970s and 1980s of Congolese music away from the Cuban era (Stewart 2000; Ewens 1994).

However, this thesis argues that, rather than diverging from the 1970s onwards as is frequently thought, Congolese and Cuban music retained commonalities that can be recognised by musicians immersed in the two styles.

An analysis of the musical structure and instrumentation of well-known Cuban and Congolese songs is included, as well as original compositions by Grupo Lokito, with further audio and video available on the separate CD and video. The accompanying CD Rom details the process of creation of material and outlines relevant musical structures.

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[1] See CD Rom on seben for explanation of terms. 2 Temps is the chord progression I, IV, V, I.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

I was led to this research topic through my development as a musician. My career as a salsa piano player spans almost twenty years and six years ago, under the guise of learning Congolese guitar, I entered the world of Congolese musicians in the UK. I soon became adopted as one of the main keyboard players on the Congolese music scene. It was apparent that my approach to music and my understanding of rhythm, largely developed by my work in salsa, enabled me to pick up Congolese styles and performance practice relatively easily. In the subsequent years of working with Congolese bands I have learned and played a vast repertoire from the complete history of Congolese popular music.

But at Club Afrique, a night club in East London where I was a member of the house band for five years, there was one kind of music the audience were waiting to hear. I and the other musicians in this large house band would often play a few older *rumbas* before launching into full-on modern *seben à la* Wenge Musica complete with dancers and *atalaku*[2]. This was the music that the East African audiences were waiting to hear. In addition I was provided with a unique opportunity to observe and be part of the first-hand contemporary performance practice of Congolese music, albeit once removed from its country of source.

It became clear to me that, in common with many musical genres, the music that the 'home' audience wanted to hear was quite distinct from that presented to a world-music audience. My discovery of what I suppose could be termed 'authentic' Congolese performance in the UK excited me. Club Afrique was filled with an African crowd with a house band playing the latest hits from Kinshasa, something I had not encountered in a club or concert outside the community.

I also noted that the Congolese musicians had some knowledge of salsa tunes. The older generation clearly had quite a large repertoire, but even the majority of the younger musicians knew several tunes and a few 'Spanish' expressions.[3] In addition, the modern stars regularly included what they termed '*charanga'* and quite obviously modern-style salsa tunes in their albums, with constant reference being made to salsa as part of the musical canon of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I wondered whether this stemmed from an

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[2] These words are drawn from Lingala, the lingua franca of the DRC. I explain them in detail in Chapter Three but in brief: 'seben' is the hot, dancing, final section of a Congolese song and the 'atalakus' contribute shouts and sung raps over the seben to which the dancers respond. Since the mid-1990s the group Wenge Musica has dominated the Congolese popular music scene, in what is now termed the 'fourth generation'.

[3] During the early days of Congolese rumba it was fashionable to sing in Spanish and mock Spanish and singers would also shout out Spanish expressions to add to the ambience.

adherence to a longstanding cultural link or merely from a need to include a pastiche of a popular world-music style.

In sharp contrast to the reverence for, and knowledge of, salsa music that the Congolese musicians displayed, it was striking that most Cuban and Latin musicians I knew in London and particularly in Cuba were almost totally ignorant of Congolese popular musical styles. In modern-day Cuban culture, 'Congo' signifies the group of Afro-Cuban religions derived from Congolese Palo and the related music. This is not to belittle these faiths. Afro-Cuban religious beliefs are widespread and run deep in Cuba. However, I found a nostalgic and antiquated image of the Congolese, far removed from my experience of modern Congolese musicians and their music.

Once I had became established enough in the UK Congolese scene to know most of the musicians and be respected for my keyboard playing, I began working with a Congolese singer on a tentative songwriting project. We found working together very easy and wanted to take the project further. Having inside knowledge of both the Latin and Congolese musical worlds in London helped us select musicians we thought might be appropriate and the band Grupo Lokito was born. I realised that what had developed was a promising vehicle for the investigation of the links between Congolese and Cuban music and of the musical interactions between the two groups of musicians.

It may be surprising to an outsider that the two communities of musicians had coexisted in the same city without crossing paths; it may well even be the case that some had played at the same festival without noticing each other. However, London is a melting pot of many cultures, each with their own communities and social centres. Over the past 15 years there has been a decline in performance opportunities to culturally mixed audiences. In many instances, musicians have been reduced to playing mainly or even exclusively within their own communities.

The Congolese often have to contend with issues of legalities and documentation leading people to feel more comfortable staying within their community. This serves to create a bubble from which only those who have the skills, confidence and papers with which to integrate into the wider UK community will be able to leave.

For these reasons their work with Grupo Lokito provided the first opportunity for any of the two sets of musicians to come across each other.

TERMINOLOGY

T.1 Places and People

This study into the link between Congolese and Cuban music covers history from the fifteenth century to the present day. In defining place names and nationalities I have chosen to follow the names in use at the time of the period discussed.
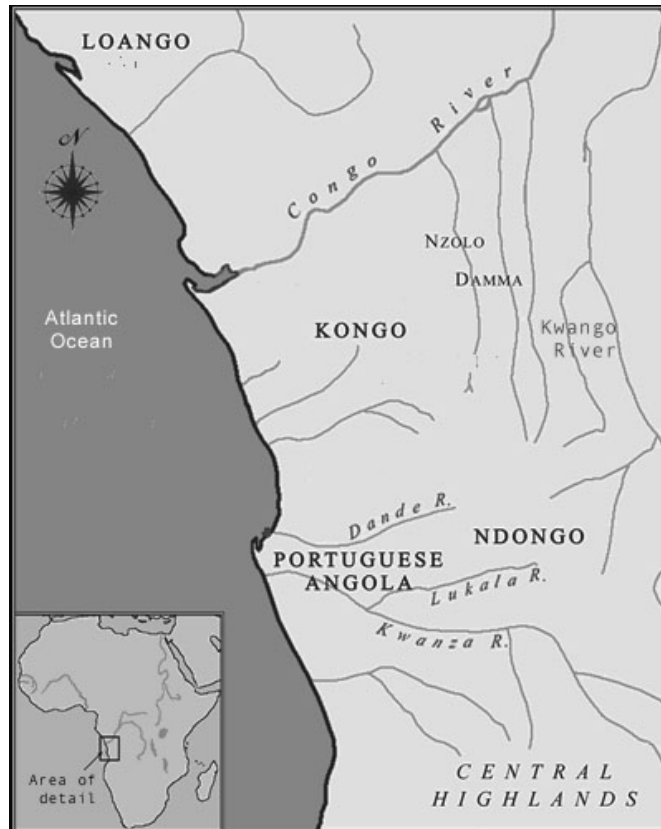
Source: McGuinness adapted from Wrenn

Figure T.1: Map of the Kongo Kingdom

In the fifteenth century the Kingdom of Kongo stretched from the River Congo (formerly called the Zaïre) and the rivers Dande and Kwango in the south and west respectively. The western border was the sea. This covered modern-day Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Cabonda, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon and northern Angola. Initially slavers used the term 'Kongo' just for the Bakongo people; as the slave trade expanded and they reached further inland for slaves, the term became used for anyone they took from the west coast of Central Africa to the Americas. (Thompson 1983: 103; Fryer 2000: 158). The people of this region spoke Bantu languages belonging to the Benue-Congo subfamily. In Cuba the terms 'Bantú' and 'Congo' (now spelt with a 'c' rather than a 'k')

became used interchangeably (Castellanos and Castellanos 1987: 101-105) as reference to Cuban ethnographic writings will clearly show (Ortiz 1906; León 1984). In my writing I will use the term 'Congo' to refer to the people taken to Cuba from this region.

In later history when dealing with the Democratic Republic of Congo I have chosen to use the names in use at the time: 'Belgian Congo' for the colonial period, 'Congo' following independence up until 1971 when the country became Zaïre under President Mobutu and then 'Democratic Republic of Congo' (DRC) post-1997.

T.2. Music

T.2.1 Cuban Music

Of the vast outpourings of music from the island of Cuba, my focus is on *son*. When writing about son the terms 'son' and '*son montuno'* are used interchangeably both within Cuba and throughout the Diaspora. Although there are distinctions between son and salsa, a derivative of son mixed with other styles, in the Diaspora the term 'salsa' is often used to encompass son. I have chosen to use the term 'son' when referring to the musical style.

The term 'montuno' itself is used to denote several features. Literally meaning 'from the mountain', it is the name of the final section of a son and salsa song. Montuno is also one of the names given to the ostinati played on piano, tres and bass. Another term for the rhythms played on both the melodic and percussive instruments is '*tumbao'*. This is most commonly used for the conga pattern but equally can be applied to the bass and piano or tres. In North America the word '*guajeo'* is often used for bass, piano and tres montuno, although I have found 'montuno' and 'tumbao' to be far more common among musicians with whom I have worked. I have accordingly chosen to use the terms 'montuno' and 'tumbao' in my work.

T.2.2 Congolese Music

When talking about the structure of Congolese music there are two versions of the spelling for the term referring to last part of the song, the seben. I have chosen to spell the word 'seben'. I have observed that older writings on Congolese music use '*sebene'*, which I believe must be a French spelling of the word. In a recent work on music-making in Kinshasa (White, 2008), Bob W. White opted for 'seben'. I concur with White as 'sebene' is not a Lingala spelling of the word and, in my experience of working with Congolese musicians, communication has been in Lingala. Indeed several of the musicians have little or

no French. I have always heard the word pronounced 'SE-ben', with the emphasis slightly on the first syllable. In Lingala, 'sebene' would be pronounced 'se-ben-ay', which I have only heard in the 1948 recording of Marie Louise by Henri Bowane and Wendo Kolossoyi. Adamant opinion of the modern-day Congolese musicians I canvassed suggests the spelling should be 'seben'.

Another confusing term in Congolese music is the use of the word 'folklore'. As I detail in Chapter Three, one result of President Mobutu's policy of authenticity was the creation of the notion of folklore, encompassing the many folkloric styles from within Congo. The folklore that is commonly referred to by popular musicians is the urban folklore that emerged in the capital Kinshasa and was fed into popular music. It appears to be used as a blanket term for all the folkloric styles that shaped this urban form.

Many Congolese musicians have stage names by which they are commonly known. I have chosen to use these names in my text. Where I have quoted and interviewed musicians I have referenced them by their surnames where possible. An example is the Congolese guitarist Kiamfu 'Burkina Faso' Kasongo who features heavily in my writing. I refer to him as Burkina Faso in the text and in references.

T.2.3 Transcriptions

In my work I have made extensive use of transcriptions. When transcribing Cuban music I have used the convention of two bars to a clave.
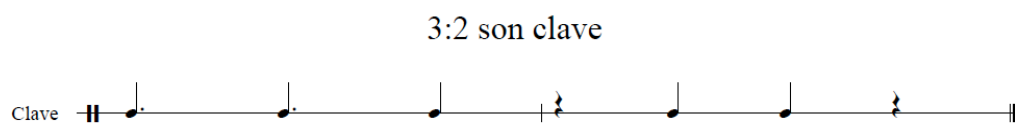
Figure T.2: Clave as notated in Cuban music

I have never seen Congolese music transcribed - the musicians do not work from written music. However I have transcribed the music as it is counted i.e. one cycle of the *cavacha* rhythm to a bar.

Cavacha snare pattern

Figure T.3: Cavacha snare pattern as counted in Congolese music

At times this creates confusion when drawing comparisons between Congolese and Cuban music so, where appropriate, I have re-scored parts in the same metre to aid the process.

Comparison of 3:2 son clave and cavacha snare
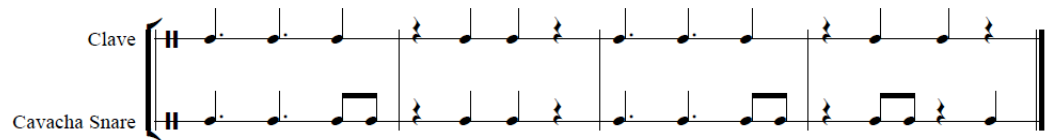
Figure T.4: Clave and Cavacha notated in the same metre for ease of comparison

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KEY TO SCORES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Getting in the Groove

This is a project about groove, about two distinct groups of musicians coming together and recognising the groove in each other's music. I maintain that the two styles of music are, if you like, branches of the same tree, built upon the same roots and sharing concepts of musical organisation and structure.

It is easy to talk about groove: the challenge lies in defining it. I approach the concept of groove from my perspective as a musician. Groove is something that we do not need to explain. It is a magic that is reached during the process of making music. You play and you are no longer an individual. You are part of the group and it feels so right. Groove is articulated in many ways. In his explorations of groove, Charles Keil talks of 'vital drive' and rhythmic fluidity' in music (Keil and Feld 1994: 59). Musicians often talk about 'swing'. Cubans can be heard to describe someone as having '*bomba*' ('heart' in Spanish), usually accompanied by a fist placed over the heart. Meanwhile Grupo Lokito guitarist Burkina Faso talks about '*moto*' ('fire' in Lingala). Keil quotes jazz musician Paul Bley:

> "There has to be a groove to get into. That's the hard part. Once you're into it you don't have to keep deciding whether the next phrase is going to be good or not." (Keil and Feld 1994:58).

Cuban son and Congolese rumba are both dance musics and as such, as Burkina Faso points out, groove is of paramount importance. His explanation of groove is simple and to the point: "If there is no fire people can't dance" (in Lingala: "*Soki moto e za te, batu ba koki ko bina te*") (Burkino Faso, Interview with Author, 2011). As musicians, we feel it in a performance, and then we notice that the public feel it too. The communication is non-verbal; we play, the music grooves, people dance. When the music is 'in the groove' the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Cuban son band Sierra Maestra epitomises for me the concept of collective groove. When Sierra Maestra play I love observing the joy on the faces of the audience. The group strike up and there is magic in the air. They appear to play their instruments effortlessly; some of the constituent parts look simple but result in a glorious sound. In sharp contrast to the collective sound of Sierra Maestra is an experience I had some years ago of listening to a group of students learning a reggae piece. As a lover of reggae music it was almost unbearable to hear, the notes were technically in the right place but this sound was completely lacking in 'fire'.

These contrasting examples point towards an explanation of groove, which Stephen Feld posits using the concept of participatory discrepancies. He talks of the interplay

between musicians with some pulling against the pulse, others playing straight on the beat, others laying back, with the tension between the parts providing the groove of the music. He describes it as 'rhythmic feel: rhythmic feel equals bomba equals fire' (Keil and Feld 1994: 96).

Whilst it may be easy to identify whether groove is present or not, pinpointing what it is that creates any differences in groove is complex. In discussions about Cuban son, bandleader Arsenio Rodríguez (1911-1970) is attributed with having '*estilo negro y macho*' ('black, masculine swing') as opposed to the '*estilo blanco y feminino*' ('white, feminine swing') of other bands of his time. His popularity with the people of Cuba is attributed to the 'Africanness' that was felt to be present in the groove of his music (Garcia 2006: 56-58). In Congolese popular music the two main schools that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s (African Fiesta and OK Jazz, later known as TPOK Jazz) developed distinct differences in terms of groove. Both had 'swing' inextricably linked with notions of identity, class and schooling.[4]

The musicians I brought together in my exploration of Congolese and Cuban music are the product of these two worlds. Of the many different qualities they brought with them, one underlying factor they all had in common was a keen sense of groove.

1.2 The Background to My Research Project

My decision to research the contemporary links between Congolese and Cuban music grew out of my experience as a practitioner in London working with musicians from both genres. As an introduction to my research paper I will explain how my work as a musician developed into a systematic research project and outline the challenges I faced in designing the form that my research would take. It was clear from the outset that I was approaching the topic very much from the 'inside': my perspective was distinct from conventional research models which involve observation alone. With this in mind I decided to develop a research project that would capitalize on my insider knowledge, focusing on the skills that I had, to unravel my topic.

Before I delve into the details of my research I give an overview of the history of Congolese and Cuban music and existing research therein. I then outline my background in the field and the development of this project. I consider what I am hoping to achieve, the best way to reach that goal, and to what outputs my research is best suited.

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[4] OK Jazz formed in 1956. In 1968 the band changed it's name to TPOK Jazz-TP stood for 'Tout puissant"(all powerful) (Stewart 2000:145)

Contemporary scholarship in ethnomusicology has made frequent reference to the links between the music of Congo and Cuba (Stewart 2000; Sublette 2004; wa Mukuna 1992; wa Mukuna 1999). Particular attention has been paid to the African market for Cuban music that opened up in the 1940s, to the resultant exposure of Congolese musicians and audiences to Cuban musical styles, and to the clear links between the development of early *rumba Lingala* and Cuban son. There is also recognition of the conscious move away from Cuban elements in Congolese popular music with the age of *authenticité* in the early 1970s and the emergence of the youth bands. (Stewart 2000; Ewens 1994; wa Mukuna 1999; White 2008).

The Cuban music that Congo was listening to in the middle of the twentieth century had grown out of a complex mesh of imported cultures. Scholars have entered into much analysis and debate on the roots of Cuban music; charting its exact lineage is problematic for much of this musical development occurred before the advent of recording or the use of ethnographic research methods. In addition, records of the distribution of slaves and their origins are vague and inaccurate. Those that do exist give slaves assumed identities loosely based on their port of embarkation (Bergad 1995; Grandío-Moraguez 2008; Kiple 1976; Ortiz, 1975). However, there is no doubt that the music of slaves taken to Cuba from the Congo basin played a huge role in the development of Cuban music (Cabrera 1981, Garcia 2006, Ortiz, 1975, Sublette, 2004).

Today Cubans recognise the African heritage in their music and culture. Afro-Cuban religious belief and practice is widespread in Cuba with the Congo-derived Palo religion, whilst less visible than those based in Yoruba culture, being one of the dominant faiths. Cuban culture preserves a retrospective view of African culture, retaining the image of African slaves and their dances and traditions without reference to modern-day Africa. Indeed, perhaps partly due to the predominance of Cuban music and the island's relative isolation, many Cubans that I have encountered have scant knowledge of Congolese, or indeed any contemporary African music.[5]

The mix of people and social conditions in Cuba has yielded an astounding musical output. Aided by the island's proximity to the USA and the growth of the global recording

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[2]The USA trade embargo that has been in place since 1962 has served to isolate Cuba to a great extent from much of the outside world. Through conversation with numerous Cuban musicians and dancers I have discovered the lack of awareness of modern African music and dance. Of particular interest were the views of folkloric practitioners, as exemplified by Jesus Morales Martinez, principle dancer with top rumba ensemble Clave y Guaguancó. He had a nostalgic view of Africans and their music and dance practice, appearing to believe that they still dressed and danced in the way represented in Cuban folkloric displays. I found his ideas to be in keeping with other Cuba-based artists. On a visit to London I took him to a contemporary Congolese performance which completely shattered his illusions; the modern electric guitar-based music and designer outfits took him by surprise.

industry, Cuban music has had a huge impact on the development of music worldwide. Whilst there are numerous musical styles that have emerged from Cuba the name 'salsa' has, among the wider international audience, become the generic term used for Cuban son and related music from Cuba, Latin America and the USA. In reality salsa, a style of music commonly associated with Cuba, was developed in Puerto Rico, New York and South America. Its roots are in Cuban son with inputs from Puerto Rican and South American popular music and its instrumentation is inspired by Jazz big bands.

Congolese rumba with its modern but distinctly African sound and melodious vocals, aided by a thriving record business, swept to popularity throughout East and Central Africa from the early 1950s onwards. Not surprisingly success and opportunity bred intense competition in both Zaïre (now the Democratic Republic of Congo, DRC) and Congo-Brazzaville. One strand of competition was the division between schooled and unschooled musicians - those who had access to some education and schooling were considered to be higher class then those without education. This started with the success of early guitar hero Jhimmy the Hawaiian (considered to be schooled) in the 1950s, and was a thread that continued through the parallel success of the two main groups of the 1960s and 1970s: African Jazz and its various offshoots (schooled) and Franco and OK Jazz (unschooled).

The history of the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaïre) with its vast natural resources and the attention they attract is a long and continued tale of suffering and exploitation. This has led to the dispersal of huge communities of Congolese people throughout the Diaspora, serving among other things to widen the spread of Congolese music and keep the spirit of intense competition alive. Congolese music has moved on since the days of Franco and African Jazz. Yet I have found the schooled/unschooled divide remains embedded in the musical landscape of Kinshasa, Congo's capital city and musical hub. Schooled musicians openly look down on the lack of formal music education - a matter of pride for many popular musicians - denoting authenticity and 'village' groove. The education debate feeds into the class divide felt very keenly throughout many areas of Kinois society.[6] Salsa and jazz are clearly seen as the domain of the educated musicians, popular, unschooled, musicians are considered unable to play such styles.[7] The popular musicians maintain that their roots in village groove,[8] untainted by non-Congolese elements, is largely responsible for the powerful groove of contemporary popular music.

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[6] 'Kinois' is the term applied to people from Kinshasa.
[7] This educational divide was a constant theme in conversations with musicians from both camps during my visits to Kinshasa.
[8] Popular musicians bring devices such as damped rhythmic patterns derived from *likembe* and *marimba* patterns and folkloric rhythms in the contemporary music they play.

Existing research into the links between Congolese and Cuban music has to date focused on the roots of Cuban music, the input of Cuban music into the development of rumba Lingala and a limited amount of research into Afro-Cuban religious music. Cuban music and its derivative salsa and Congolese music continue to be two of the great world musics. I felt that there was scope, some 40 years after the 'golden years of rumba', to revisit the topic and investigate the links in contemporary Congolese and Cuban music.

1.2.1 My Research Question

Whilst the links between Cuban music and Congolese rumba from the golden era of Congolese music (the 1950s to 1970s) are clearly identifiable and have been dealt with by other performance and research projects, as noted previously there has been little investigation to date into contemporary links between these two musical forms. In this dissertation I focus my research on contemporary music, which is the domain of the musicians to whom I have access. By bringing popular musicians from the worlds of salsa and Congolese music together, I investigate what, if any, commonalities remain that can be recognised by musicians from the two traditions. Given the strong historical connections - the fundamental input of the music of the Congo basin in the development of Cuban musical styles and the part that Cuban son played in the evolution of Congolese rumba - I want to discover what vestiges, if any, remained of the Congo-Cuba link. Bearing in mind the role of Congolese folklore[9] in both the formation of Cuban music and the development of Congolese popular music, I also test the commonly held belief that salsa is the domain of the schooled Congolese musician by working with popular, unschooled, musicians.

In recognition of the increasing importance of seben as Congolese music progressed through the generations, I focus, in particular, on its structure and performance practice. I question whether there could be parallels drawn with devices used in the montuno section of a salsa song.

1.3. My Position as a Musician and Researcher

1.3.1 My Musical Background

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[9] One outcome of the Mobutu drive for cultural authenticity was the all-encompassing concept of folklore which the Congolese adopted. I deal with this in Chapter Three.

In order that the reader has some idea of what lies behind my assertion that I am musically qualified to undertake such a project, I will give a brief summary of my musical background and involvement in salsa and Congolese music.

i. Involvement in Cuban Music

In my professional career as a keyboard player I have played salsa and Cuban music for over 20 years, being an integral part of the UK salsa scene. I am not an academically trained musician; I learned to play salsa and Cuban music through personal study and work with other musicians. During the path of my career I have become a bandleader and played piano with numerous salsa bands both in the UK and abroad. I teach Cuban music both to individual musicians and to ensembles. Through my educational work I have discovered how to identify and isolate the essentials that make a style of music work. During the course of my career I have had the great fortune to develop close personal and working relationships with many great Cuban musicians, giving me further insight into the creation and performance of Cuban music.

ii. Involvement in Congolese Music

In 2004 I began to work with Congolese artists based in the UK, initially choosing to learn guitar with Kawele Mutimanwa, a Congolese guitarist based in London. My relationship with the Congolese music community grew as I began to engineer recording sessions for Congolese artists and eventually, in 2005, I started playing keyboards with Congolese bands on a regular basis. In order to communicate with the Congolese musicians - many of whom spoke very little English and patchy French - I learnt Lingala (the language of the Democratic Republic of Congo). As with salsa music, I created my own program of study by seeking out Congolese musicians in the UK, Europe and Kinshasa to teach me the intricacies of the style. My inclusion in the UK scene and my knowledge of the language provided me with an introduction to Kinshasa- and Paris-based Congolese musicians which I would not have had as an outsider approaching the subject. In addition, the fact that I showed sufficient interest in Congolese music to travel to Kinshasa and seek out musicians there appeared to increase the respect that UK-based Congolese musicians showed to me.[10]

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[10] Congo's long history of violence and unrest has led to few foreigners visiting Kinshasa, those who do are usually working for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or the United Nations (UN) and tend to stay in the upmarket areas of town, frequenting bars and clubs aimed at the wealthy and foreign clientele. The majority of Congolese that I know have sought, or are in the process of seeking, asylum. They are not free to travel or have no desire to return to Kinshasa. However, musical links remain strong. In Kinshasa I met with musicians and visited concerts, rehearsals, studios and bars away from the rich area, where the Congolese congregated and few, if any, foreigners ventured to go. On my return I found that my Congolese friends were keen to hear details of my experiences and proudly boasted to others about my trip and the connections I had made there.

iii. Inclusion in Community

Writing about my inclusion in the two musical worlds has led me to consider what makes an individual a member of a community. Groups of musicians are no different from other groups of people, communities are formed and without making a conscious decision one becomes a member. I am without doubt a member of the UK salsa music community. Without seeking out gossip I am kept informed about musical activities within that community: formation and dissolution of bands, changes of personnel, new venues and performance opportunities as well as personal matters such as illness, problems, and conflicts between musicians. As clubs and performance opportunities come and go, and with changes in communication and use of the Internet, the landscape is constantly changing but the community remains.

On reflection I realise that I am also included in the community of Congolese musicians. I was fortunate to have played in a band called Sound Afrique for four years, the house band in Club Afrique, a large East African club in Canning Town, East London. For much of this time the club was thriving and was very much an important social hub. A great deal of social exchange and interaction went on there, it was easy for musicians and the public alike to keep up with and discuss developments within the musical community. I discovered that I became known to members of the East African public as 'the keyboard player from Club Afrique'. I also played (and continue to play) in many of the other, predominantly East London, clubs which host live Congolese music, with a variety of bands featuring a combination of the musicians on the scene. I found that I was clearly accepted as one of the regular musicians. In my experience the community of Congolese musicians in the UK spend more time actively discussing developments and interactions than the salsa scene, the favoured tool of communication being the mobile phone. I realised early on that my activities (real and imagined) had become part of that ongoing discussion. I found that I was abreast of developments within the scene and became party to inside knowledge about relations between and opinions concerning musicians and musicianship. I also found that musicians would ring me up to discuss developments and offer advice on issues that I was facing with musicians in my band.

I have attempted to define inclusion in a musical community, as I realise that my inclusion (or not) in the community impacts greatly on how I am perceived by musicians with whom I work and therefore on my role within my fusion project. Whilst there is no physical evidence to prove that I was admitted into these communities, I argue that actions and attitudes of musicians demonstrate that I am considered a member. Whether or not my concept of community and inclusion therein is accepted, it cannot be denied that as a

professional musician working in both fields of music I have built up relationships with the musicians over time. Our many shared experiences over the years, both musical and social, have served to forge a close link and a level of mutual understanding.

As my role within the Congolese music community became established I realised that I had, almost unwittingly, placed myself in a unique position for working cross-culturally with musicians from the worlds of salsa and Congolese music. I had come from the position of being a salsa musician. As I became familiar with Congolese music performance, my appreciation of the commonalities both musical and in performance practice grew and I had the idea to form a fusion band. Having experienced both the Congolese music to which world-music audiences were listening, and the music that the East African and Congolese audiences wanted to hear, I was very clear that the area of particular interest for me was contemporary performance, with a focus on the music that was popular with the home audience. The case of salsa music was quite distinct from that of Congolese in that, particularly with the worldwide popularity of salsa dance, the salsa audience was diverse and inclusive, and familiar with a wide range of salsa and Cuban music. Whilst this brings up many issues surrounding authenticity, informed choice and awareness of musical style, the same clear-cut home/foreign audience divide was not present.

The skills that enabled me to undertake this project are summarised as follows:

– I was in a unique situation in that I am a salsa piano player and a credible player of Congolese music with a passionate interest in learning and developing fusion between the two styles

– As an experienced bandleader, I had the management skills to work through the challenges and complications of running a band.

– As I was firmly established on both the salsa and Congolese music scenes I had access to outstanding musicians, whose skills were crucial to the trajectory of the band.

– My extensive experience as a musical director enabled me to work with the other musicians, maintaining constant involvement in the development and direction of the music.

– As an experienced composer/arranger I had the ability to bring original compositions to the band as research material.

1.4. Why Performance as Research?

I have outlined my musical background in this chapter in order to lay the foundations for my role as a researcher. Conventional research often considers the performance as the raw material upon which the scholar conducts their research. Performance itself tends not to enter the arena of scholarship unless represented and written about by the scholar. The term 'performance as research' challenges this in that it places the scholar in the performance as a participant; the lines between performer and scholar are blurred. It has become recognised that this is a valid method of research, which allows access and insight into performance quite distinct from that obtained through research as an observer (Richards 1995). However, breaking down the boundaries between researcher and performer raises several issues about the nature of the research carried out, including its accountability and appropriate presentation. Performance may offer the opportunity to research from the inside as well as from the outside. However, this brings dilemmas of closeness and distance that challenge the traditional prerequisite of objectivity. The process of maintaining a distance between researcher and the subject of research is threatened.

Performance as research covers the whole process of preparation for performances as well as the performances themselves. Exact details will vary depending on the project. In view of the complex nature of performance as research and the numerous different ways in which it could be interpreted, it is essential that the researcher maintains a clear idea of the relationship between the performance and the research being carried out. This approach to research has been more commonly used in the field of drama than music; therefore it is not surprising that the bulk of research and scholarship on the nature of performance as research focuses on theatre rather than music performance (Richards 1995).

In a discussion paper on the topic, presented to the Australasian Drama Studies Association Annual Conference in 1995, Alison Richards stated:

> "Performance research requires an acknowledgement of and familiarity with the characteristics and the contexts of the performance event and its contributory processes. Almost as important is an appreciation of the structures and modalities by means of which and through which performance is organised, the practices by means of which it may be made manifest and the sign-systems or "vocabularies", including the non-verbal, employed by its practitioners." (Richards 1995: 11)

In the case of my research and the formation of a fusion band, this most certainly held true. There are numerous musical and social issues that arise from creating a cross-cultural collaboration and it would have been foolish to approach such a task without a great deal of preparation. This applies particularly to the Congolese: many play exclusively within their own community and the best musicians are not necessarily those who have the capacity to make themselves known to the wider audience.

The fact that I was immersed in both styles meant that I was aware of whether the groove was working and this meant that when we felt the groove could be improved I was well placed to evaluate the reasons and suggest adjustments. In addition the two groups of musicians communicated musical ideas in quite distinct ways; having worked extensively within both systems I was able to mediate and to include all participants in the creative process. Working with a combination of musicians from different cultures threw up numerous complexities, and as the project developed I discovered that I had greatly underestimated the amount of effort and time that was required to resolve social and cultural issues. Negotiating the social aspects of maintaining a team of people with a range of social needs and vastly different standards in terms of organisation, time-keeping, trust and reliability proved to be one of the overwhelming challenges of this project.

1.4.1 Methodology – Action Research

Having established that my research was practice-based, I considered methodology. Discussion among practice-based researchers acknowledges that there is scope for a wide range of research methods, reflecting the diverse nature of practice-based research projects ("Stepping Out of the Shadows: Practitioners becoming Researchers", Conference, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, 2011). A distinct advantage of the practice-based researcher is their insider knowledge of the field, a knowledge which enables them to design and adapt a methodology best suited to the project as opposed to an 'off-the-shelf' model. The researcher needs to decide what the best way of doing what they want to do is and to what outputs it is best suited.

One research methodology that many practice-based researchers have chosen to use is that termed 'action research' (McNiff 2009, Reason 2001). The origins of action research lie in scientific research, more specifically the work of psychologist Kurt Lewin (Greenwood and Levin, 1998). It has become the preferred research model in many areas of social science research. In a 1946 paper Lewin introduces action research as

> "A comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action ......using a spiral of steps each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the results of the action." (Lewin 1946)

Through my interaction with other practitioner-researchers it became apparent that many developed action research models for their research ("Stepping Out of the Shadows: Practitioners becoming Researchers", *ibid*). I developed my research model based on contemporary literature about action research (McNiff 2009).

ACTION RESEARCH FLOW CHART

FROM PREVIOUS STAGE   TO NEXT STAGE

PLAN

REFLECT   ACTION

COLLECT
DATA
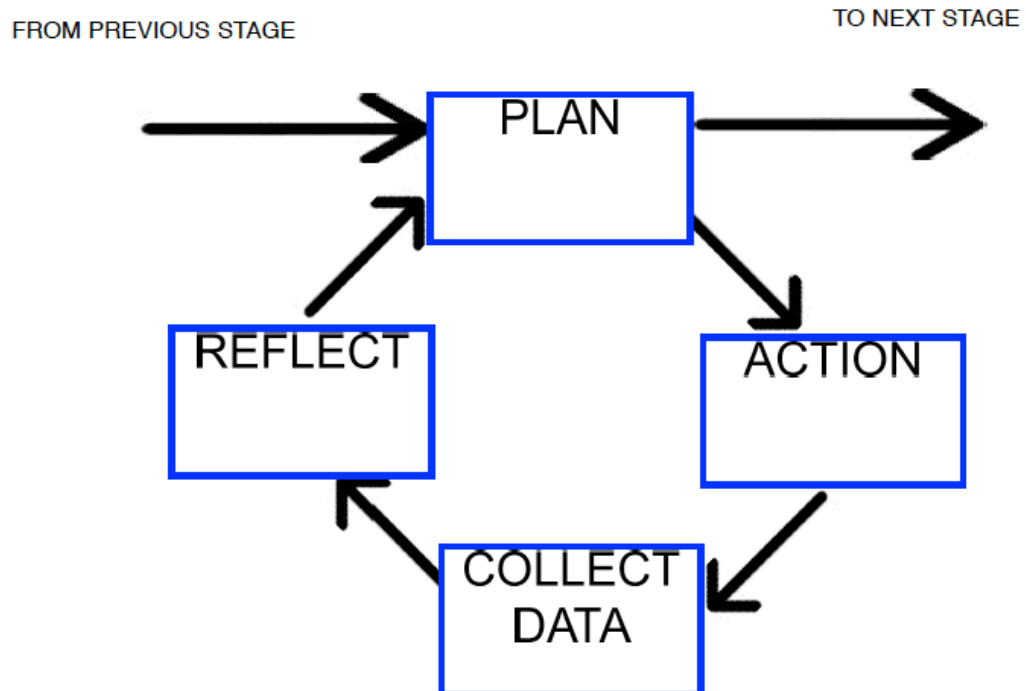
Source: McGuinness

Figure 1.1: Action research flow chart

I considered that the process of action-reflection-reaction described what I was doing in my project and so built on this basic model to devise a process appropriate to my research. As I designed my research model I realised that the process was in essence no different from what I, as a musician, was already accustomed to doing; in my experience bands developed material in this cyclic, reflexive manner. In response, I reflected on what, if anything, I was doing that made this a research project as opposed to just a working band.

This project was distinct for me from others in which I had been involved for several reasons. Although I had set up and worked with many bands before, this was the first time that I had deliberately formed a band with the express purpose of combining two distinct groups of musicians. My focus was to create material that drew on their two musical styles and developed it. I did not bring other styles into the mix. In addition, I was very careful to draw all participants into the creative process to ensure their voices were heard. Although the project was not designed with 'success' in mind, the band became popular. The knock-on

effect of this was that the band needed to keep producing material and developing, providing still more material for research. The question of whether I would have done things differently had there not been a research element to my work is not an easy one to answer. This raises the issue of whether musicians can be considered researchers. I argue from my perspective as both a musician and researcher that musicians invest time and effort into continuous research into their art. This combined with constant critical analysis and practice is what allows them to grow as artists.

The distinction between the stance of researcher and that of the musician may lie in the analysis of outputs. Even here things are not clear cut; as a musician the analysis would be to a large extent non-verbal for concepts such as 'groove' and 'performance magic' can only be described in words up to a certain point: the best description is to hear and see the performance itself. In addition to this the researcher would present analysis and writings about the outputs.

It is important to note that I formed the band, which was called Grupo Lokito, and carefully guided the project in a particular direction with my research goals in mind. Had this been a regular band I would have allowed more scope for diversifying and bringing in other musicians and musical ideas. Analysis and reflection on the results was over and above that involved in a normal musical project. In addition to the usual musical process of informal analysis I encouraged the musicians to give extensive feedback and looked in detail at the musical devices and their origins.

MY ACTION RESEARCH MODEL
DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL IDEAS THROUGH PERFORMANCE

STAGE 1 Compositional idea worked on by 2/3 collaborators.

STAGE 2 Ideas brought to the band and developed.

STAGE 3 Ideas performed and further developed in Performance

STAGE 4 Having developed songs through Performance, recorded.

IDEA

SKELETON

REHEARSE

ADJUST

REFLECT

PERFORM

REHEARSE

REFLECT

ADJUST

RECORD

Source: McGuinness

Figure 1.2: My action research model

<u>Stage 1</u>

IDEA – Original compositions were created as a palette for the band to work with. The initial framework was created by myself and one to two other band members. I attempted to maintain a balance of musical styles through intentionally writing with a particular Congolese or Cuban style in mind, working in collaboration with different musicians and keeping an overview of the balance of repertoire as a whole.

SKELETON – The musicians in the band were given copies of the outline of the song to learn. Those who preferred to read music were also given the relevant scores.

<u>Stage 2</u>

REHEARSE – Compositions were brought to a rehearsal where the band worked on them both in sections and as an entire group.

REFLECT – The rehearsals were recorded in order that the songs could be taken away and reflected upon. There were several things to consider when listening to the recordings. The fundamental factor was whether the song was going to work at all. If this were the case, there were numerous arrangement and musical factors to take into account. These might include: length of sections in the arrangement, instrumentation and individual parts within the arrangement, vocal harmonies, tempo and rhythmic devices used within the song. The process of reflection was ongoing and took place through several channels grouped as follows:

a. Individual reflection by studying the recordings and notes made during rehearsal;

b. Group discussion with band members both formal and informal. We would often discuss material whilst waiting for and travelling to concerts and rehearsals;

c. Musical reflection in which musicians would often work on details of the piece and return to the band with ideas to develop.

ADJUST – Alterations were made in response to suggestions from band members. This work was done in small groups of musicians or brought to rehearsal by an individual for consideration.

The rehearse - reflect - adjust cycle continued until it was felt that the composition was ready for performance.

PERFORMANCE – Following the same reflexive cycle as at the rehearsal stage, songs were played at live performances, which were an ideal forum for evaluating whether the composition worked.

REFLECT – Presenting the material in public provided further points for reflection. Examples include the audience and band reaction, the accessibility of the material, and most importantly whether the song grooved. Performance provided a feedback loop: the band could judge whether the song was working and what needed to be adjusted. It was accepted that new material took a while to be 'played in': this was taken into account when assessing the success of the performance.

REHEARSE – In rehearsal there was the opportunity to adjust the song where necessary, be that deconstructing it, changing it or even decided that it did not work and should be put aside.

Stage 4

RECORD - When a song had settled into being what the band termed a success, it was recorded.

Although the traditionally held view of musicologists is that that musicians do not research and reflect, my experience is very much to the contrary. Both the musicians I work with and I myself have arrived at our skill level through a process of hard work, research, reflection and adjustment. Although the modes of communication may be at times non-verbal, we display a deep level of understanding of what we are doing and why.

My research model, being a cyclic process, never reached a definite end. There are certain markers where a stage of the development finished: the performance of a finished piece, the recording of a CD. In practice development of material continued on past these markers. This is not to say that the research was invalid since I consider that the process was as important as the end result.

1.4.2 Factors that Contributed to the Momentum of the Project

One factor that made the research project develop in a dynamic and exciting fashion was the band's increasing commercial success as the project developed. The band performed regularly in London and increasingly around the UK to a wide variety of audiences. This provided the opportunity for the development of material, performance practice and group

dynamics. Indeed, there was pressure on the band to keep developing and bringing out new ideas. The fact that musicians were making money and getting recognition through playing in the band gave them a reason to be committed to the project. As it became clear that the music we were writing was well received, band members became more focused on the concept of the Congo/Cuba link, my core reason for forming Grupo Lokito.

I would argue that the success of the band was largely due to the fact that the music we were creating and developing was not a contrived 'new' idea, we were merely exploring and bringing out the long-standing links that were there.

1.4.3 Presentation of My Work

I refer back to my starting position and the question of groove. The answer to whether the music of Grupo Lokito grooves or not lies in the music itself. As such, the main output of my research project is in performance of the music which I present in the form of DVD footage of live shows, and a CD of the band. In conjunction with this I have produced a CD Rom detailing the process of creation of material and outlining relevant musical structures. The written element is designed to draw the project together and is divided into two distinct sections. The first details the development of the two musical styles; the second details the process of forming the band and draws conclusions about the music produced.

THE LINK BETWEEN THE THREE ELEMENTS OF MY RESEARCH

PERFORMANCE
Structure
Melodic/Harmonic Ideas
Groove
Performance Practice
Interaction

CD ROM
Musical Structure
Musical examples
Development of material

DISSERTATION
Background and Context
Research Methodology
Historical Links
Social and Musical considerations
Conclusions
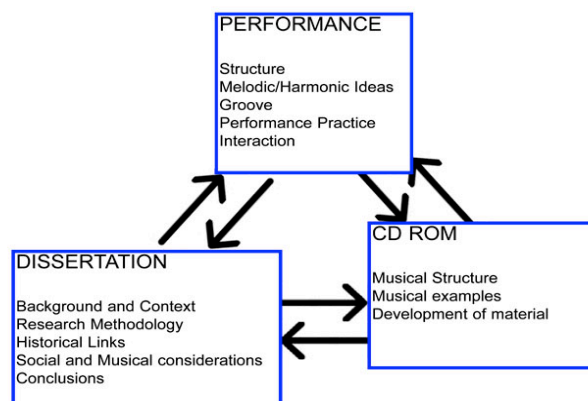
Source: McGuinness

Figure 1.3: My research outputs

1.5 Summary of Chapter

       I have always felt privileged to be included in the roster of UK-based Latin musicians. My work has led to encounters with a host of wonderful musicians and incredible music. I began to delve into the world of Congolese musicians with no prior idea of what lay ahead. It was with awe that I discovered the parallel existence of this community of musicians and began working with them. I realised that there was something familiar to me in the music and I found that the Congolese musicians appreciated my playing style. This inspired me to investigate further the common elements that I experienced in the music. My access to both groups of musicians allowed me to bring together a band with which I could explore the musical links. I identified that little research had been done on these contemporary links, the area in which I was most interested as I was playing with contemporary popular musicians. Coming from the perspective of a performer researching from 'within,' I designed a research project based on an action-research methodology. Over the course of four years I developed the project as a working band, commercial success of which gave an added incentive to the research element of my work. The project proved to be an exciting and enlightening journey into two great musical styles and the lives of the musicians making that music.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CUBAN SON

2.1 Introduction

> "El que no tiene de Congo tiene de Carabali" - Cuban Saying
>
> ("He who doesn't have Congolese blood has Carabali"[11])

The story of my modern-day fusion project begins with a consideration of how and when Congolese[12] people arrived in Cuba in order to trace their input into the Cuban music that was reabsorbed in twentieth-century Congo. The history is a cruel tale of the slave trade and forced migration of many thousands of people over several centuries. There are two central issues that I address: the extent to which slaves in Cuba originated from the Congo, and the way they were able to preserve aspects of their culture in Cuba. Having established the Congolese presence in Cuba, I then focus on features in the development of Cuban popular music that share musical devices with Congolese music.

The first part of the chapter focuses on the slave trade in an attempt to piece together available information about origins of slaves in Cuba. I found a constant theme in the literature and slave records I studied to this end: the lack of clarity concerning the precise origins of people who were taken as slaves. Nevertheless, I provide an overview of the literature on the slave trade to Cuba, laying the foundations for my assertion that the Congolese presence in Cuba was a significant one that began in the sixteenth century and continued throughout the whole period of slavery.

I then consider the contribution that these people of Congolese descent made to the development of Cuban music. The wide-ranging origins of immigrants to Cuba, both forced and voluntary, and the varying strands of slavery and settlement of ex-slaves resulted in a complex mesh of musical and social inputs into the development of Cuban music. Whilst it would be simplistic to imagine that the origins of musical devices can be easily defined, there is a body of evidence that leads the researcher to identify African and European inputs into Cuban musical forms. I have endeavoured to highlight the Congolese input into Cuban

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[11] 'Carabali' is the name that was given to people who arrived in Cuba from the Calabar region, now western Cameroon and southeastern Nigeria. This saying shows the dominance of West Africa, and Congo in particular, upon the society, culture and mindset of the Cuban people.

[12] See the introductory section on terminology for an explanation of names.

music with a particular focus on son - the music that travelled back to Congo in the mid-twentieth century.

2.2 The Slave Trade

Whilst the slave trade and slave experiences in the Americas have attracted a great deal of scholarly attention, there is little detailed information on the ethnicity of slaves and how they came to be in captivity. However, it is known that slaves from Congo were imported to Cuba from as early as the sixteenth century as a result of a trade agreement between the Manikongo, the 'King' of Kongo, and Portuguese slavers. This continued until slavery in Cuba ended in 1886. The Portuguese had not invented slavery; rather their slavers took the practice over from the Muslim traders they had previously bought slaves from. With Spain focusing on conquering the Iberian Peninsula, Portugal, left with little land, looked out across the seas for expansion. Whereas the Muslim traders had brought slaves over land from the north coast of Africa, the Portuguese took slaves by boat from along the coast of West and Central Africa (Sublette 2004: 32).

When the Portuguese arrived in the Kingdom of Kongo in 1482 they formed a relationship with the ruler, the Manikongo. He converted to Christianity in 1491 and his people developed a fascination for European goods (Sublette 2004: 177). Nzinga Mbemba Affonso, who became the Manikongo in 1506, converted to Catholicism and learned Portuguese, his close relationship with the Portuguese leading to a developing trade in captives.
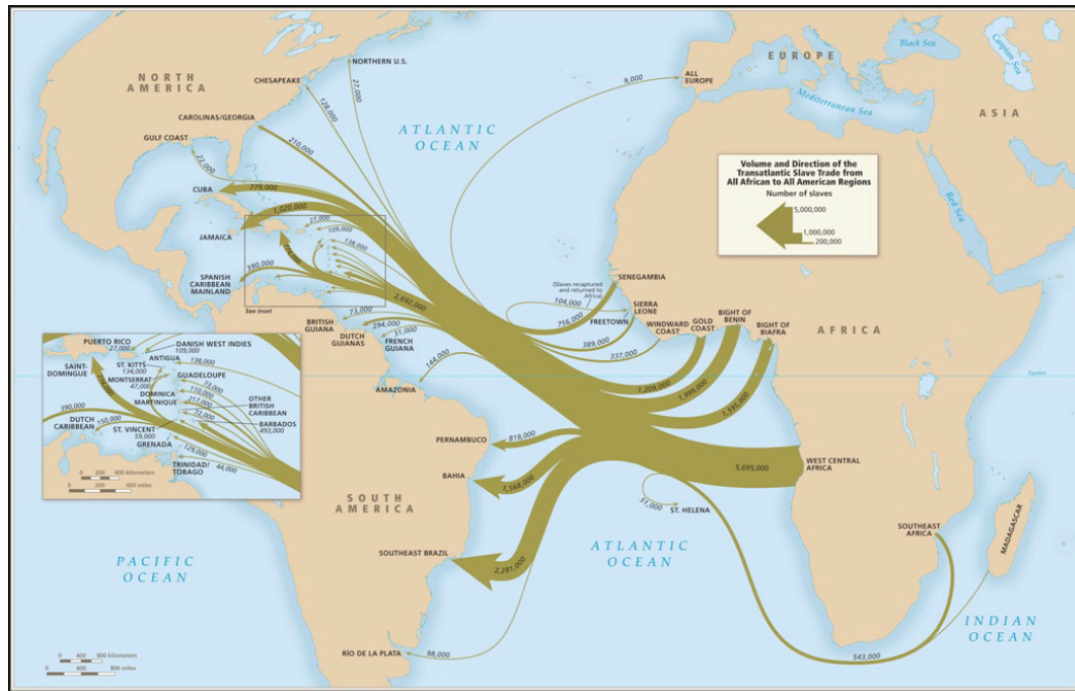
Figure 2..1a: Map of Trans-Atlantic slave trade (totals for all years of slavery)
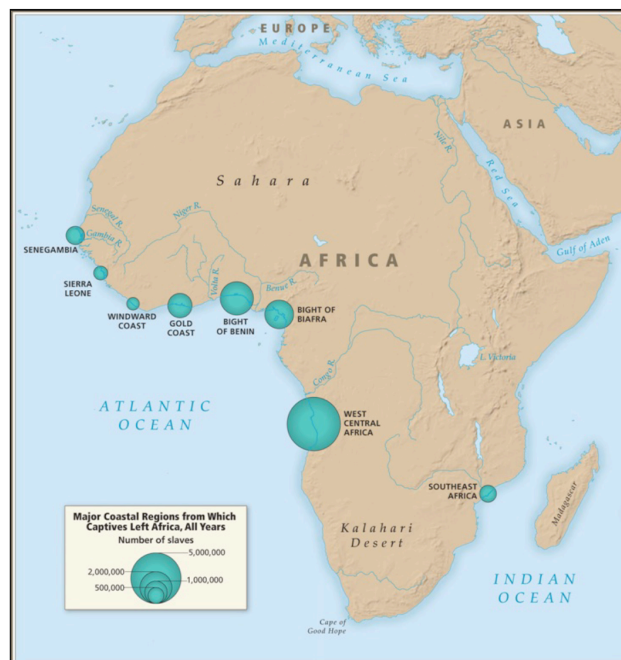
Figure 2.1b Major coastal regions from which captives left Africa, all years of slavery

Slave departures from Africa were concentrated on roughly a dozen embarkation points along the African coast (Grandío-Moraguez 1998: 179). Captives from a wide range of ethnic groups were brought from inland to these ports; people who would not normally have mixed were grouped together in coastal holding areas, forging new bonds. These relationships were further secured during the crossings. Whilst many of the captives taken to one port would speak languages from the same language group, this was not always the case. People whose language had nothing in common would also be grouped together in one of several examples of where the practices and perceptions of the slave handlers themselves both impacted people's sense of cultural identity as well as obscuring their true cultural origins. Out of necessity people communicated through whatever linguistic commonalities existed. People speaking languages from the Bantu group had settled over vast areas of Central Africa and were embarked not only from the Congo basin but also from the region termed 'Carabali', now covering areas of Benin and Nigeria, leading to some speakers of Bantu languages being mislabelled as Carabali.

Records of the ethnic origins of slaves arriving in the New World are not always reliable. There was no standard for the compilation of records and slaves were usually identified by imputed rather than actual nationality. Philip D. Curtin cites two main tendencies in the creation of slave records: the first was the European tradition of defining nationality by the port of embarkation; the second was to pick one ethnic or linguistic term to identify a larger, heterogeneous group. Thus the term 'Congo', referring to 'Bakongo' people, grew to be the term used for all people embarked from west Central Africa (Curtin 1976: 322).

2.2.1 The Foundations of Afro-Cuban Society in Cuba

Cuba was established as a Spanish colony in 1511, and remained under Spanish rule, bar a brief period of British control in 1762, until it was ceded to United States custody in 1898. The Spanish Government imported very few slaves themselves, preferring to trade with slavers (Sublette 2004: 77). In the early days of the colony the Spaniards' fierce brand of Catholicism played a large part in shaping Cuban society. Back at home Spain had conquered the Iberian Peninsula, and the Spanish Inquisition that began in 1478 drove out vast numbers of Jews and Muslims. In 1493 Pope Alexander VI had commanded Spain to conquer and "convert the Pagans of the new world to Catholicism" (Suarez 1999: 109).

But not only were the Spanish keen to uphold and promulgate their own religious faith, they were also indisposed to buy Islamicised slaves. The Spanish had been at war with Islam for centuries on the Iberian Peninsula and around the Mediterranean. In addition, there

had been an Islamic presence in West Africa since the eighth century (Hill 2009: 1) and in 1522 the first New World slave rebellion took place on the island of La Española. It involved Senegambian Islamised slaves. This prompted King Carlos of Spain to declare that "there not pass to the Indies any black slaves….. who had been raised with Moors" (Sublette 2004: 77). This prevented slaves being imported to Cuba from Muslim areas of Africa, in particular, Senegambia. In his comprehensive book on the history of Cuban music, Ned Sublette cites this decree as a significant factor in the early development of Cuban music (*ibid*):

> "The critical mass that would have been necessary for establishing an early musical presence of that Islamised Sahelian sound (which so heavily marks African American music) did not come to Cuba." (Sublette 2004: 77)

Being customers of the slavers, the Spanish were in a position to chose which slaves they wanted. Thanks to their trade agreements with the Manikongo, the Portuguese had a ready supply of slaves from the Congo basin who had apparently accepted Christianity. Therefore, whilst slaves were imported from other parts of Africa, in the early days of the colony there was a significant Congolese presence in Cuba. The Spanish organisation of slaves further impacted the preservation of the latter's musical traditions as slaves were organised on ethnic lines into *cabildos*, mutual-aid organisations. By the time that the slave trade was in full flow in the eighteenth century, there were already well-established Congolese cabildos throughout Cuba, the first being reported in the second half of the sixteenth century (Sublette 2004: 89).

There were two distinct periods of slavery in Cuba: before and after the sugar boom that began towards the end of the eighteenth century. In the first 250 years of slavery, owners usually had very few slaves and worked in close contact with them, building personal relationships and allowing slaves the opportunity to integrate with the wider community (Sublette 2004: 89). As I have detailed above, a significant number of these slaves were of Congolese origin.

The pattern of slavery changed with the advent of the Haitian revolution (1791-1802). With reduced sugar production in Haiti, the sugar industry in Cuba ramped up production. This produced the need for more slaves in Cuba, but also bred fear of slave revolt. With the sugar trade came large plantations and the housing of large groups of slaves in barracks ('*barracones*' in Spanish), changing the relationship between slave and master. With the increased demand, free importation of slaves was declared, allowing slaves to be imported from wider areas of Africa including Muslim regions. As a precautionary measure the Spanish colonisers chose to keep slaves within their perceived ethnic groups both at work and within the cabildos, to avoid the groups unifying and outnumbering the whites. One

outcome of this was that Africans were able to preserve their cultures and traditions, eventually leading to a consolidation of African culture in Cuba (León 1984: 11-14, Cabrera 1958 (1970): 12)

But it was not only in the barracones that musical practices were preserved; Cuban cities became a cultural magnet for ex-slaves and their traditions. According to Spanish law, slaves in Cuba had the right to enter into a contract termed '*coartación*' to buy their freedom. Spain was the only European country with such a law and this impacted significantly on the Afro-Cuban population of Cuba. It led to a lack of second-generation slaves and the continued need to import slaves direct from Africa creating communities of ex-slaves, many of whom gravitated to the cities (Sublette 2004: 89).

2.2.2 Writings on Slavery in Cuba

Although evidence points to the predominance of Congolese slaves in the early days of slavery, as slavery progressed the origins and distribution of the Afro-Cuban population became less easily defined prompting a debate about their exact origins that has spanned a century. Early attempts to inquire into origins of slaves included works by authors such as Esteban Pichardo. He focused on linguistics and the influence of African words on Cuban Spanish, attempting to summarise what he considered to be the characteristics of each African nation (Pichardo 1835: 6). Henri Dumont, a French anthropologist, attempted a more detailed study of the Afro-Cuban population of Cuba, which was published in 1915. His work continued on the theme of identifying characteristics of different Africans. It contains few facts and figures on ethnicity, focusing on racist anecdotal evidence of ethnicity (Dumont 1915).

It was not until the early twentieth century that anything that could be considered an anthropological study of ethnicity of Afro-Cubans began with the publication of an article by Pérez Beato, **"**Procendencia de los Negros en Cuba", in 1910 (Beato 1910).However, his writings did not link the origins of Afro-Cubans to African regions. This was first done in a seminal study by Fernando Ortiz in 1916, *Los Negros Esclavos*, where he linked ten of the ethnic denominations amongst Afro-Cubans to precise geographical locations in Africa (Ortiz 1916). Ortiz continued to produce several studies of Afro-Cubans. His work followed on from Dumont in attributing characteristics to Afro-Cuban ethnic groups. Initially Ortiz was of the opinion that black Cubans and their culture were primitive. He felt that of the Afro-Cubans, the Yoruba were the most intelligent, with a superior civilisation and religious system, and the Congolese were inferior. However as his research developed, his respect for

Afro-Cuban culture grew. Ortiz thought that the largest number of slaves arriving in Cuba was Yoruba in origin (Ortiz 1916:74).

Lydia Cabrera, a student of Ortiz, continued with research, producing several important studies into Afro-Cuban religions. The Cuban revolution of 1959 opened the doors for, and encouraged, Afro-Cuban study. A new wave of Cuban researchers emerged and journals such as *Actas del Folklore*, founded by the musicologist Argelier León (León 1961), appeared. Whilst more in-depth study was emerging on Afro-Cuban culture, most researchers based their figures on Ortiz's assertion that the Yoruba were the largest Afro-Cuban group. This appears to have remained the assumption until Alejandro de la Fuente published an article in 1986. De la Fuente researched the Cuban National Archive and Havana Cathedral archive and identified 42 ethnic groups. His findings challenged Ortiz's theory that Yoruba people formed the largest group of slaves. He concluded that in the seventeenth century the majority of slaves were from Angola, Arara and Congo (De la Fuente, 1986: 75-96). This was furthered by research of baptismal records from 1817 to 1886, showing the strong presence of eight main African nations, with Congo being the largest group at 32.4 percent (Gomez Abreu and Martinez Casanova 1986).

More accurate data became accessible with the publication in 1999 of the "Transatlantic Slave Trade Database" by a consortium of academics led by a team at Emory University (www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces) in the United States of America. This gave researchers access to far more reliable data on the point of origin and destination of slaves. Whilst not complete, a study of the shipping records combined with records of imports to Cuba allowed for a more accurate estimate of origins on slaves. A 2008 study by Oscar Grandío-Moráguez used the database to draw several interesting and relevant conclusions. He demonstrated how the export of slaves fluctuated in relation to factors such as the enforcement of abolition by the British driving slavers out of areas of West Africa, asserting that throughout the period of slavery a significant proportion of slaves taken to Cuba originated from west Central Africa (Grandío-Moráguez 2008).

Not only were Congolese people arriving in Cuba continuously throughout the period of slavery. The situation in Congo made it difficult for freed slaves to return there. The ending of slavery in Cuba occurred shortly after King Léopold's acquisition of the Congo region when the Europeans carved up Africa in the 1884-1885 Berlin West Africa Conference. Naming the territory 'Congo Free State' he proceeded to plunder the country for its wealth, ruling the people with a 23-year reign of terror and extreme cruelty. For the many Congolese who gained their freedom in Cuba, return to Congo was not a desirable choice.

Instead they remained in Cuba, many of them swapping the barracones of the plantations for the *barrios* of the cities.

2.2.3 A Summary of Slavery in Cuba

In piecing together evidence on the origins of slaves taken to Cuba, with a particular focus on those from the Congo basin, we find that, although there is an absence of accurate records, evidence suggests that there was a constant flow of slaves from the Congo to Cuba that began early in the sixteenth century. This continued throughout the whole period of slavery. During the first 250 years of the colony, various factors contributed to Congolese slaves becoming a dominant group in the Afro-Cuban population: King Carlos of Spain had prohibited the use of slaves from Islamised areas of Africa, Portuguese slave traders had developed a relationship with the Manikongo that led to a thriving slave trade with the Kongo kingdom and, as a bonus for the fervently Catholic Spaniards, the slaves from Kongo were perceived to have embraced Catholicism. The large proportion of Congo slaves led to a significant Congolese input at the formative stages of Cuban music.

The nature of early slavery meant that not only were slaves from Congo preserving their existing musical practices, the organisation of slaves into cabildos along ethnic lines assured that there was a forum in which they could practice and develop their African traditions. They were also experiencing a degree of cultural cross-fertilisation with the wider community since there were just a few slaves per household working in close proximity with their master. In addition the Spanish practice of coartación (see Section 2.2.1) whereby slaves could buy their freedom led to a growing population of free Afro-Cubans in Cuba as well as ensuring the need for a constant flow of new slaves from Africa.

At the end of the eighteenth century there was a huge increase in the demand for sugar leading to a need for large numbers of slaves. At this stage the laws determining the origins of slaves were relaxed and slaves were brought in from both Islamised and non-Islamised African ports. People were grouped together on plantation in their assumed ethnic groups in an effort to contain resistance to the Spanish colonialists. Slavery ended in 1886, but whereas some freed slaves chose to return to Africa, this was not a serious option for the Congolese due to the tyrannical rule of King Léopold in the 'Congo Free State', created in 1885.

In summary, the period of colonial rule in Cuba had produced a large Afro-Cuban community with a significant proportion of people of Congolese descent. The dominance of Congolese slaves in the early sixteenth century provided a Congolese input to Cuban culture from the early days of the colony and the continued need for slaves ensured that generations

of Congolese were transported to Cuba over a period of almost 400 years. With the end of slavery many people of Congolese descent had been in Cuba for generations.

2.3 The Emergence of Son

The focus of my research is the Cuban music that went back to Congo, namely son. Having established the significant presence of people from Central Africa in Cuba, I will now draw some conclusions about their input into the development of Cuban son.

Whilst it is widely accepted that Cuban music developed out of a vast repertoire of African and European musical roots, it would be simplistic to imagine that one could cleanly extract clear African and European features of Cuban musical forms. Discourse on the analysis of African music warns against falsely dividing elements to reduce them to easily identifiable African and European features (Behague 1994, Nketia 2005). African roots cannot be identified simply as reproductions of the original neither in instrumentation nor form, as out of necessity they will have been changed and adapted. Kazadi wa Mukuna considers there to be three phases in the assimilation of African elements in the music of the New World: cultural inventory where people of different origins discover and define common cultural denominators, their evaluation according to a new set of norms and values, and then their re-interpretation and transformation, retaining or rejecting cultural elements in the process (wa Mukuna 1994: 406).

In the upheaval of removal to the New World, recreation of musical and cultural practices would have been crucial to the establishment of identities in the new environment. Many slaves experienced a crisis of identity when they were displaced from their homeland and regrouped in Cuba. Gerhard Kubik considers that identity only becomes an issue when people are placed in a situation where their identity becomes uncertain (Kubik 1994: 28). Slaves brought their instruments and musical organisation to Cuba. With re-grouping and new assumed identities they would have recreated and built upon their secular and sacred practices. This was aided to an extent by the ruling classes grouping them together in cabildos; these were designed to contain and control the slaves but provided a forum for transforming and continuing creative practice with social factors contributing to the cultivation of musical expressions of identity (León 1984: 11-14, Cabrera 1958(1970): 12) The altered circumstances required people to create new devices using both African and non-African resources that became an integral part of the musical experience of people in Cuba; new instruments were designed and European instruments appropriated and used in music making by people of African descent.

2.3.1 A Review of Writings on the Development of Cuban Music

Previously in this chapter I have referred to writings on Afro-Cuban culture in my efforts to determine the origins of slaves taken to Cuba. I now consider writings and scholarship that focus on African inputs in the development of Cuban music, noting the dichotomy between how academicians have characterised musical elements and how the musicians I have worked with experience them. I have drawn attention to Fernando Ortiz as a prolific writer and researcher of Afro-Cuban culture. With numerous publications covering the period from 1906 to the late 1950s he has received recognition as the instigator of Afro-Cuban study in Cuba (Moore 1994: 32). Ortiz's work is significant to any study of Cuban musical development as his attitude towards, and analysis of, the development of Cuban music laid the baseline for subsequent Cuban research.

This is not to say that his thinking was static during the decades of this output: it is of note that his analysis of the African input into Cuban music changed radically as his research progressed. Ortiz's early works displayed racist assumptions towards Afro-Cuban culture which he would later reject and apologise for. His book *Los Negros Brujos* (1906) was the first publication to approach the study of Afro Cuban culture in a scientific way (Sublette 2004: 314). Ortiz's theme of cultural evolutionism in his early writings gradually shifts towards a more nuanced and more sympathetic appreciation of Afro-Cuban culture, and the notion that all Cubans have the same potential. In sharp contrast to his early work, the 1945 publication *El Engaño de las Razas* refutes all arguments linking race to inherent attributes. His paradigm shift reflected the zeitgeist: in the 1920s international appreciation of black literature and culture was growing with the emergence of organisations such as the Harlem Renaissance movement in New York. In addition the period was a critical time in Cuban history, with economic and social problems fuelling an increasing discontent with American policies. In a climate of growing nationalistic sentiment a number of organisations promoting Cuban culture and arts emerged, all established in part by Ortiz. These included: the Junta de Renovación Nacional (1923), Sociedad del Folklore Cubano (1924) and the Sociedad Hispanocubano de Cultura (1926) (Moore 1994:39). But despite the fact that Ortiz had shifted from believing that Afro-Cubans were inferior, to consider that all Cubans had the same potential, his early works still stood as reference for other researchers.

There was another way in which Ortiz's thinking impacted subsequent discourse on the origins of Cuban music. In the early 1940s Ortiz formulated the term 'transculturation' ('*transculturación*' in Spanish) to describe intercultural change and exchange, publishing his first book on the subject *El Contrapunteo Cubano del Tabaco y Azucar* in 1940. In his work Ortiz ascribed 'African' and 'European' features to music in a binary manner; he considered

that African cultures provided drums and percussion whilst melody and harmony were European.[13] This set the standard for future Cuban musical research leading to many assumptions about the origins of musical features, of varied accuracy.[14] There has been widespread discussion of the works and legacy of Fernando Ortiz focusing mainly on the binary paradigm, transculturation and his shifting views on Afro-Cuban culture (Font and Quiroz 2005).

Subsequent Cuban literature draws heavily on Ortiz's writings and theories tending to subscribe to the binary categorisation of African and European musical features. Researchers most commonly acknowledged the African input into Cuban music with a focus on religious music and ceremony. Within this there is notably less attention paid to the Congo-derived Palo religion than the Yoruba Lucumí religion, reflecting the opinion put forward in Ortiz's early writings of the superiority of Yoruba religion and culture. Cuban researchers include Argeliers León (*Música Folklorica Cubana,* 1964, *Del Canto y el Tiempo,* 1974), Miguel Barnet (*Biografia de un Cimarrón,* 1966, *Cultos Afrocubanos,* 1995) and Maria Teresa Linares (*La Música y el Pueblo,* 1974). Cabrera did extensive research into Afro-Cuban religions, her publications relating to Palo include *Palo Monte Mayombe: Las Reglas de Congo* (1979)*, La Regla Kimbisa del Santo Cristo del Buen Viaje,* (1977) and *El Monte* (1954). Her work was interesting as she chose to record rather than analyse, giving the informants a voice and providing detailed transcriptions of interviews. In 1999 María Elena Vinueza contributed an article (*Presencia y Significación de lo Bantú en la Cultural Musical Cubana)* focusing on statistical information on the Congolese presence in Cuba and its input into Cuban music. Although not geographically correct, this exemplifies the common Cuban practice, which became the norm, of using the terms 'Bantú' and 'Congo' interchangeably when referring to people brought from the west coast of Central Africa and their culture (Garcia 2006:168).

It is no accident that I have only mentioned Cuban sources thus far since the relative isolation of Cuba following the revolution of 1959 made it difficult for outside ethnographers to obtain access to the island and its history. The situation changed to a degree in the mid-1990s when, following the collapse of the Soviet Bloc and the consequent loss of economic

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[13] There are countless reports of melodic instruments from sub-Saharan Africa, contradicting this notion. Examples from the Kingdom of Kongo are cited by Peter Fryer in *Rhythms of Resistance*: Portuguese 'historian' Ruy de Pina (1496-1570) reported ivory trumpets, in the seventeenth century there were reports of Angolan xylophones and the *nsambi*, a bow-lute.

[14] It was only upon researching this project that I became aware of the fact that researchers considered melody and harmony in Cuban music to be European features: an example of the divergent perceptions of observers and practitioners. As a salsa piano player I had always assumed that the way that the piano is used in Cuban son had more in common with African than European roots. My understanding was in line with the thinking of musicians with whom I worked and studied.

support from this quarter, the Cuban tourist industry opened up. Conversely the international success of salsa has ensured a great deal of research into this son-derived musical form. Many publications acknowledge African roots in the music whilst not focusing on the detail of the actual input (Gerard and Sheller 1989; Boggs 1992). A more recent publication directly relevant to my research is Ned Sublette's detailed study of Cuban music *Cuba and its Music* (2004). Sublette draws together numerous strands of research to produce a detailed account of the history of Cuban music from the sixteenth century up until the 1950s, placing musical developments in the social and political context of the times. Also looking at music in its socio-political context is Robin Moore's work *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940* (1997) in which he writes on the relationship between Cuban music, race and politics in highlighting factors that impacted on the transformation and transmission of Cuban musical styles. There are two other works relevant to my research that examine the Congo-Cuba link. In his 2006 book on Cuban musician Arsenio Rodríguez, *Arsenio Rodríguez And The Transnational Flows Of Latin Popular Music*, David F. Garcia references the Congolese input into Cuban musical development (Garcia 2006) while Robert Farris Thompson's book *Flash of the Spirit* focuses on Afro-Cuban religions, drawing relevant conclusions about Congolese linguistic traits in Cuban musical terminology (Thompson 1983).

2.3.2 A Summary of Writings on Cuban Music

The work of Fernando Ortiz laid the foundations for research into Cuban music and culture, shaping the form of subsequent research within Cuba. Following his lead there is a tendency to categorise musical styles and features neatly into African and European traditions. A large proportion of research from outside Cuba concentrates on social and political frameworks and personalities rather than tackling the daunting task of looking at musical features. The diversity of academic discourse into Cuban music and musical practice is acute reflecting the complexity of the subject but often overlooking viewpoints that are assumed by musicians immersed in the music. Approaching the field from the perspective of a practitioner I was hitherto unaware of the academic debate on musical features and I realised that my musical colleagues and I had made assumptions that many academics had not considered. One example would be the way that the piano, my instrument, was appropriated and played in an 'African' style in son.

2.4 The Development of Cuban Son

I find myself at the crossroads of two worlds: musicians with whom I work find similarities between Cuban and Congolese music that to their mind need little explanation, whereas academics delve into and debate these similarities and their origins. As I have argued, it is simplistic to ascribe precise roots to musical features of Cuban music and I have discussed the binary representation of Cuban music promoted by Ortiz and his successors. Whilst there is a strong argument against a simplistic representation of African and European inputs into Cuban music, I consider that there is still some merit in delineating geographic origins of musical features in Cuban music. Neither academics nor musicians debate the existence of links between the music of Congo and Cuba and what follows is an examination of some of the musical features they share.

The African continent contains a vast range of musical traditions, and there has been a great deal of scholarly debate around the issues of representation of African music (Agawu 2003; Waterman 1991). J.H Kwabena Nketia writes about African music as:

> "A network of distinct yet related traditions which overlap in certain aspects of style, practice or usage and share common features of internal pattern, basic procedure, and contextual similarities. These related musical traditions constitute a family distinct from those of the West or the Orient in their areas of emphasis." (Nketia 1974: 4)

My study calls for a consideration of musical devices that Congolese musicians of the 1940s onwards would have found familiar when son 'returned' to Congo. I do not need to prove that those devices originated in Congo: it may be that there were features of son common to several African musical styles and features which themselves were imported to Congo from other areas of Africa and Europe. In my research I will look at the development of son, detailing devices that show strong similarity with Congolese musical features and attempting to clarify the common ground using musical examples and transcriptions.

2.4.1 Musical Structure and Organisation

It is in the realm of musical organisation where I have found most similarities between the music of Cuba and Congo. This is one of the elements in which the Latin and Congolese musicians in Grupo Lokito recognise as familiar when playing each other's music.

This is in keeping with the analysis of Nketia who suggests that African features of music of the Americas are best considered in terms of structure and organisation of the music rather than in instrumentation (Nketia 2005:319). In contrast with early twentieth-century Cuban analysis, he points out that whilst musical ideas may be transported onto different instruments, the music may still sound familiar to African ears; conversely African

instruments used and organised in a non-African way will sound foreign (Nketia 2005: 318-336).

i. Interlocking as a Central Feature of Cuban Son

The first structural characteristic central to Cuban son I wish to consider is the principle of interlocking, the creation of harmony by a continuous stream of interlocked notes. This is a musical device that occurs in a range of musical styles globally and is found extensively in sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed scholars have repeatedly argued that interlocking is an essential musical approach on the African continent (Kubik 1994; Nketia 1962; Arom 1984, 1991).

In her work on Cuban piano style, Juliet E. Hill describes interlocking as, "an approach to musical performance that foregrounds shared participatory movement and rhythm over block harmony, and the separation of sounds over their sounding together" (Hill 2008: 31). Nketia describes interlocking as the principle of voice separation It is a device that can be applied on many instruments and combinations of instruments. Through a series of interlocked notes a rhythmic pattern is created: where the constituents are tonal this can produce an ostinato: a repeated melodic line. The interlocking may be performed by an ensemble of musicians playing one or several instruments or by a solo musician on one instrument.[15] Interlocking requires a democratic approach to music-making, the individual part only makes sense in relation to the whole. wa Mukuna describes percussive interlocking as, "each pattern contains holes that provide 'receptacles' for other patterns" (wa Mukuna 1997: 242), identifying a mode of organisation that relies on shared musical responsibility. As I will detail in this chapter, interlocking and ostinato are central structural features of son.

In his analysis of African musical organisation, Nketia identifies the concepts of timeline and grading of rhythmic parts as common features of African musical practice (Nketia 1974:133). A multi-part section combines to produce the rhythm of the music, reinforcing the basic pulse. The rhythmic parts are graded in complexity depending on their role as accompaniment, response or lead voice. The arrangement of the constituent parts results in an interlocking pattern. The parts are organised in relation to a timeline. This may be in the form of a basic pulse but it often a more complex rhythm to which all parts relate (Nketia 1974: 132).

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[15]Of the numerous incidences of interlocking from within Africa I mention a few by way of example: ensembles include players of the 22-note *akadinda* xylophone of Uganda and the Ghanaiain hocketing flute ensembles. Solo interlocking styles include several chordophone techniques: the *mande kora* is played using interlocking thumbs and index fingers, the *ngoni* is played by interlocking thumb and index finger, a technique which has been transferred onto the guitar (Charry 2000: 189). Central African lamellophones are played using interlocking thumbs and fingers, the details varying between instruments.

A consideration of the rhythmic organisation in son demonstrates the features of interlocking, ostinato and rhythmic organisation.

Figure 2.2: Organisation of son

Audio Example 1: *Esa China Tiene Coimbre*

This 1948 recording by Arsenio Rodríguez displays several features typical to son musical organisation. The timeline of the music is the 2:3 son *clave*[16]**,** with the emphasis on the on-beat in the first bar and the off-beat in the second. All the other instruments in the ensemble and the vocals play rhythmic patterns that refer to the clave. In this example all the instruments and the vocals accent the 2½ beat of the second bar of the clave known as the *bombo* beat. Central to the organisation of son is the emphasis on the last beat of the bar. In this extract the piano and tumbadora both play 4 and 4½ on the first bar of the pattern and stop on beat 4 of the second bar (the '3' side of the clave), known as the *ponche*. This has the effect of emphasising this beat. Typical to son, all of the instruments and voices play the ponche.

With regard to grading in this example, the piano plays the lead role within the ensemble with the most complex rhythmic part and the *campana* (cowbell) reinforces the clave with the omission of the 2½ in the first bar and inclusion in the second bar. The basic

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[16] Whilst the timeline of son may be in 3:2 or 2:3 clave, the majority are in 2:3.

bass pattern is the same in both the second and third bar with embellishments that accompany the piano line.

ii. Call and Response

Cuban music makes frequent use of the device of call and response, a structural feature common to a wide range of African musical styles. Nketia details the use of this mechanism in vocal and instrumental music of Africa (Nketia 1974: 53, 140-143). In his 1960 study of traditional vocal music of the world, Alan Lomax identified characteristics of what he termed 'African gardener culture', the style of singing attributed to sedentary farmers of central Africa. This featured call-and-response singing with a lead vocalist's call answered by a chorus' response (Lomax 1970: 182-189). Whilst Lomax received much criticism for his research methodology and some of the assumptions he made, there is no doubt that he listened extensively to a wide range of music and his ideas merit critical consideration (Sublette 2004: 55, 56). Call-and-response vocals are a central feature of a number of Cuban musical styles including son and rumba. In addition there are numerous examples of call-and-response singing in Congolese folkloric and religious musical styles, such as that identified by Simon Bockie in his investigation into Kongo spirituality (Bockie 1993: 68).

iii. Percussion Instruments and Playing Styles

Academics have detailed the dual African traditions of playing drums both with sticks and hands. For instance, both Nketia and **Bland** detail the variety of drum playing styles encountered in Africa (Nketia 1974: 87-89; Bland, Interview with Author, 2010). However in slave times striking a drum by hand was taken as a signifier of 'Africanness'. In Cuba, in keeping with most of the New World and Europe, the authorities imposed this distinction between African drums, played with the hands, and European drums, played with sticks. This led to constant persecution of percussionists and at times to the playing of drums by hand being banned, such as in 1900.[17] (Sublette 2004: 162-3,168, 312). This reinforced the perception and concept of hand drumming as an African feature of Cuban musical styles such as son and rumba.

iv. Linguistic Traits in the Music and Musical Terminology

Whereas analysis of musical devices is complex and contentious, an examination of language provides a clearer picture of transculturation. There are numerous examples of Bantu linguistic traits in Cuban words. Many of them are used as musical terms and

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[17] In similar fashion the British had banned drums in Barbados in 1699 and drums were also banned in mid-eighteenth century America.

instrument names. Common sound clusters are 'mb' and 'ng' as found in names including *'bongó', 'tumbador',* and *'timba'*. In his study of Congolese culture in the 'New World' Robert Farris Thompson maintains that the word *'mambo'*, which was coined as a musical style by the Cuban musician Perez Prado, derives from the Kikongo word *'mambu'*, which has several meanings and was translated in Cuba as 'song' (Thompson 1983: 110). Ortiz notes seventeenth-century reports from Africa of Congolese performing *quisangui*. He claims that 'sanga' means "to dance or jump with joy" in Congo and suggests a link between this and *'changüí'*.18

2.4.2 The Instrumentation and Development of Son

The music that went back to Africa and was embraced by the Congolese is son, and as such I now focus on the emergence and development of son. I have discussed the ongoing debate on research into the roots of Cuban music. I write from the viewpoint that the instruments and musical styles have developed out of a complex blend of mainly European and African roots. This complexity is reflected by the fact that there are many strongly held yet divergent opinions among researchers and musicians about the exact roots of certain musical devices and instruments. Many Cuban researchers follow on from the work of Fernando Ortiz in perpetuating the binary view of African and European in Cuban music. Certainly, there are some instruments and musical styles in which the links to the roots are easily identifiable. But the majority is more complex. Regardless of this detailed debate on each feature, common sense dictates that there was an African influence on music developed in Cuba: I have considered the patterns of slavery in Cuba in order to demonstrate the ongoing significant influx of Kikongo and related people. Given that there was a significant presence throughout slavery it follows that there would have been a significant input into cultural and musical developments in Cuba. This combined with numerous other African and non-African inputs into son.

In considering the development of son instrumentation and structure I refer back to wa Mukuna's paper on the assimilation of African instruments in the New World. He said,

> **"**Out of necessity instruments and musical devices will be adapted, those that can't adapt will be lost." (wa Mukuna 1994: 406)

The instruments used in son were a mixture of adaptations of African and European instruments and new instruments created in Cuba. It is important to remember that

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18 In Lingala 'esengo' means joy and verbs start with the suffix ki-, making this translation highly plausible.

instruments were not necessarily used in the traditional way, but were appropriated and used in a manner that suited the music being produced.[19]

In the early days of settlement the Spanish were focused in the east of Cuba. Here, in Oriente as it was known, was where the early slaves, predominantly Congolese, were brought. As previously discussed, these slaves would often work closely with their masters and, being in small groups, were able to integrate to a degree with wider society. But theirs was not the only incoming influence on the island. In the late eighteenth century, as a result of the Haitian revolution, there was a huge influx of people from Hispaniola, the majority of them non-white (Lapidus 2005: 238). These French Creole and Afro-Haitian immigrants also had a significant impact on cultural development in Oriente (Lapidus 2005: 239).

Son emerged in Oriente in the second half of the nineteenth century. Three styles are reported as early variants of son: the *kiribá*, *nengón* and changüí. Structurally nengón and kiribá consisted of a simple repeated ostinato with call-and-response vocals. Changüí had a two-part structure with a *largo* verse section and a montuno section again featuring call-and-response vocals.

i. The Earth Bow

The nengón was reported as early as 1868 in the hills around Baracoa, the site of the first Spanish settlement (see map). Instrumentation in nengón was the Cuban *tres* guitar, the bongó and an adaptation of an earth bow called the *tingo-tilango,* which provided a simple bass pattern and was in all probability Congolese in origin. The tingo-tilango was constructed by placing a piece of bark over a hole in the ground and tensioning it with a chord (León 1984: 76). Laurenty substantiates the Congolese origins of this instrument in his comprehensive organology of the instruments of Congo, where he cites the use of earth bows amongst several people originating from this country (Laurenty 1997: 9-13).

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[19] The concept of replacing an instrument by another one or playing an instrument in a manner that suits the music whether or not it is the traditional playing method is familiar to most musicians. In my experience of music-making, this frequently happens in many styles of music. Instances in Cuban music include the use of drawers and cupboards as drums in rumba when percussion instruments were banned, the use of the piano in son, the replacement of the *timpani* by the *timbales* in danzón. The guitar has been appropriated in several African traditions to play the repertoire of traditional instruments. Eric Charry discusses the use of the guitar in *mande* music to replace the *ngoni* and *balafon* (Charry 1994:36) and Thomas Mapfumo replicates the *mbira* on guitar in Zimbabwe.

Photo n° 2.
Arc-en-terre nkutu kubidi.

11
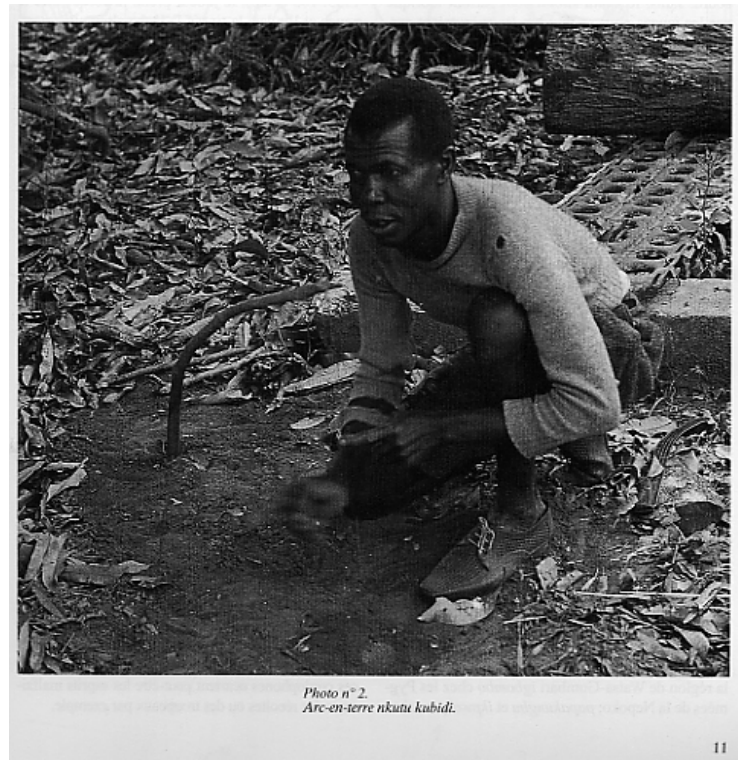
Figure 2.3: Earth bow (Congo)

ii. Bongó

The *bongó* are an instrument created in Cuba and used in son and changüí. They are played with the hands providing a bi-tonal accompaniment and lead solo notes. Whilst Rogelio Martínez Furé likens this to the percussion of the Congolese secular music *yuka* (Martinez Furé 2001: 35), it is recognised as a feature of several African musical styles (Nketia 1974: 137). However the roots of the instrument itself are not clear. The bongó used in changüí were larger and deeper than those used in son. In addition they were played with the lower drum positioned on the left, the opposite way around than in son, signifying possible differences in origin. Some claim that the changüí bongó are derived from Congolese drums whereas the smaller son bongó were a derivative of an Arabic drum (Bland 2010). Benjamin Lapidus discusses the possibility of the bongó in changüí being derived from the *tumba francesa* music and dance from Haiti. The adoption of bongó in early son music around 1895 marked the introduction of Afro-Cuban drumming into Cuban popular music (Ortiz 1996 b: 278).

Figure 2.4: Bongó

iii. The Tres

The harmony of son was provided by the tres guitar. A Cuban adaptation of the guitar, the tres has three sets of double strings with a large spacing in between the pairs, and is played with a pick. It is thought that the tres was invented in Baracoa in the east of Cuba, it being first reported in the 1890s (Ortiz 1996 b: 313). There are two usual tunings of the tres: A-D-F# or G-C-E, with the outer pairs being in unison, and the middle pair tuned an octave apart.
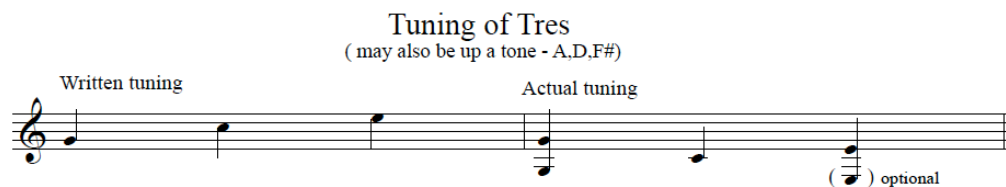
Figure 2.5: Tuning of tres

The tuning and the wide spacing of the pairs of strings lends the tres to a style of playing quite different to that of the guitar, an ostinato - short rhythmic pattern that repeats endlessly - forming the basic rhythm and harmony of the son songs. The ostinato became known as the guajeo or montuno and was later taken on to the piano.

Photo: McGuinness

Figure 2.6: Tres, Santa Clara, Cuba, February 2008

Many researchers think that instrument itself may be adapted from a European instrument, probably the *bandurría,* popular among peasants of Spanish origin, which also had double strings and was played with a pick (Sublette 2004: 336-7). However the bandurría had six pairs of strings tuned in ascending fourths. Whilst the physical design of the tres may have European roots, the interlocking playing style with an ostinato providing the harmony fits clearly into African musical organisation as discussed in this chapter.

Figure 2.7: Transcription of a nengón [20]

Audio Example 2.2: *Para ti Nengón*

This transcription of a nengón shows a repeated ostinato played by the tres with a timeline provided by clapping and a repeated bongó pattern. The tres is the lead instrument with the bongó, bass and clapping in supporting roles; these parts show the idea of grading. Throughout the piece there is little variation in the parts with call-and-response coro and lead vocals throughout.

Figure 2.8: Transcription of *Asi es el Changüí*

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[20] This is a modern (2001) recording of Nengón, hence the use of contrabass as opposed to the tingo-tilango.

Audio example. 2.3: *Asi es el Changüí*

Changüí has two sections: verse and call-and-response chorus. In the verse section the tres follows the vocal melody. In the chorus the tres plays the rhythmic ostinato accompaniment. This transcription is of the chorus section.

The rhythms in changüí are denser than those in nengón and show more variation. However, it is clear that the organisational features of interlocking, rhythmic grading and ostinato are still present. The bongó style in changüí contains a great deal of improvisation. The extract features one pattern to which the bongó returns several times during the song. There is emphasis on beat 4½ in all of the instruments and vocals.

The origins of the ostinato being played on the tres are a subject for debate. There is a school of thought that claims it is derived from the *sanza* of central Africa. For instance, María Elena Vinueza discusses evidence of the use of the sanza among the Congo people in Cuba to accompany solo or group singing. She maintains that, through a process of syncretism, the function of the sanza was taken onto the tres and the guitar.

> "The acoustic possibilities of stringed instruments, such as the tres and the guitar, in providing melodic support for singing allowed them to replicate the function of the sanza, as used by the Africans." (Vinueza 1999: 21) (Author Translation)[21]

Sanza are hand-held lamellophones made with wooden bodies and with metal or bamboo tunable tongues. They occur in a variety of local adaptations throughout vast areas of central and southern Africa. The portability of the sanza facilitated its geographically widespread uptake, carried as it was by migrant workers on their travels. Of the several varieties in Congo, the likembe has travelled particularly well, spreading through the whole territory of central Africa (Laurenty 1995a: 47). Laurenty attributes its broad uptake to the soldiers from the first wave of colonialism who were primarily Bakongo and Bangala people (Laurenty 1995 Vol II: 47), and brought it along with them on their campaigns. It is highly likely that the likembe travelled to Cuba with slaves from central Africa.

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[21] "Las posibilidades acusticas de los instrumentos de cuerda, como el tres y la guitarra, para convertirse en suporte melodico del canto permitian prescindir de esa antigua funcion de la zanza para el africano." (Vinueza 1999:21)
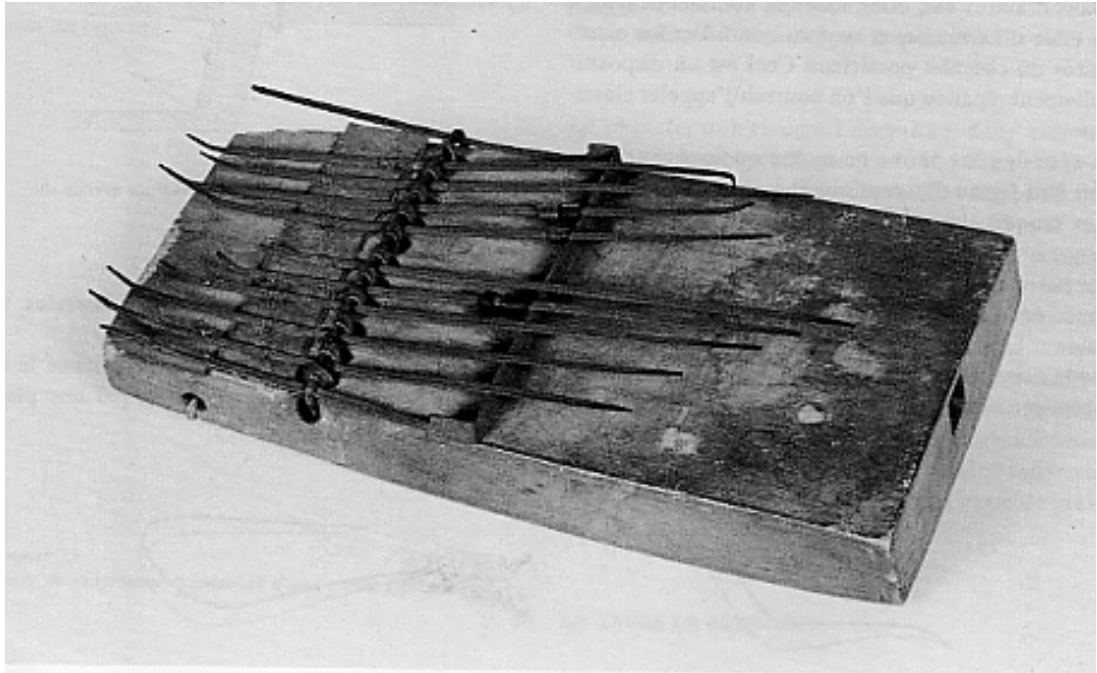
Figure 2.9 Likembe fluvial (Congo)

In a study of likembe players in Angola published in 1994, Kubik analyses the tuning system used by the players he was studying. The likembe is tuned in two sets of harmonic thirds and fifths, slightly removed from western harmony's thirds and fifths. The lamellophone is not laid out in an ascending or descending scale but has a low note in the middle (Kubik 1994: 384-403). This is similar to the tuning of the tres.

The Cuban musicologist Olavo Alén disputes the theory that the tres style comes from the likembe, arguing that if this were the case the instrument itself would have survived. He attributes the playing style to drum rhythms, placing emphasis on the rhythm as opposed to the harmony of the instrument. He points out that there is no ethnomusicological record of the development of the tres and its playing style (Alén, Interview with Bates, 2011). He does make the pertinent point that the tres uses three notes, a recurrent feature of percussion ensembles which he explains as follows:

> "Most African musical ensembles have basically three drums: they call it '*hembra*',
> '*macho*' and '*quinto*' in the rumba. When you have three pitches and you bring that into a
> plucked string instrument, what you are thinking of doing musically is not harmony,
> because you are not thinking of our chords, because that is not African thinking, that's
> not African musical behaviours." (Alén, Interview with Bates, 2011)

Another theory on the origins of the tres is provided by Juliet Hill in her study of Cuban son montuno piano style. Hill argues that there is a link between both the tres as an instrument and its playing style, and West African inland chordophones.

I consider that, as with many Cuban instrumental styles, it is not accurate to ascribe the roots of tres playing to one African tradition. It is likely that the montuno style grew out of a blend of cultural inputs. But whether the roots of montuno playing style are directly from Congo or elsewhere in Africa, the organisational features would have been familiar to an African audience. As son modernised and piano joined the son ensemble it echoed the tres style, playing a cyclic, rhythmic montuno pattern which became established as a central device of Cuban son and its derivative, salsa.

iv. The Marímbula

An instrument apparently adapted from the sanza and brought into son was a bass instrument known as the *marímbula* (Vinueza 1999: 21, 22). A large lamellophone with only three tongues, the marímbula provided a three-note repetitive bass line, the limitations of the instrument preventing anything more complex. In the early days of son this or the *botija*, a jug into which the player sang, were used as the bass instrument.

Source: McGuinness

Figure 2.10: Son group, Trinidad, Cuba, February 2011 (Instrumentation L-R: maracas, bongó, guitar, tres, marímbula)

2.4.3 A Summary of Oriente Son

Cuban son emerged in Oriente towards the end of the nineteenth century, its mix of Creole, Spanish and African instruments and musical devices reflecting the degree to which their respective cultures were integrating within the community. The style incorporated African concepts of musical structure and organisation which were to be carried forward as central features of Cuban popular music. The montuno section of the song was based around an interlocking ostinato on the tres with call-and-response vocals. Rhythmic organisation of instruments was based around a timeline with graded percussive parts. As for the instruments, the introduction of the bongó was of particular significance; the drum was played with the hands in a bi-tonal syncopated manner typical of African music. The tres was a Cuban instrument possibly modelled on a European instrument but with an African tuning system and concept of playing. The bass instruments, initially the tingo-tilango earth bow and later the marímbula, were both direct descendants of central African instruments. Whilst they were later replaced in large part by the contrabass, the playing style was initially mimicked on the instrument.

2.5 The Effect of the Sugar Boom on Slavery and Musical Development

2.5.1 The Roots of Rumba and Afro-Cuban Religious Music and their Input into Son

As with any musical style, son did not develop in isolation: it cross-fertilised with other emerging Cuban musical styles. Some were clearly linked to assumed African identities; others were considered to be Cuban developments. I have discussed the difficulties inherent in ascribing roots to musical devices in the development of Cuban music. I shall, however, consider the changing social conditions under which the music developed. I pay particular attention to the emergence of rumba as this had a direct input into the development of son.

In the first section of this chapter I stated that there were two distinct periods of slavery: before and after the Haitian revolution. As I have detailed, at the end of the eighteenth century, during the latter period, the laws forbidding Islamicised slaves were relaxed to meet the increase demand for labour, providing a greater mix of ethnicities. Slave labour became concentrated on the sugar plantations and the relationship between slaves and masters changed to a great degree. The changing nature of slavery, with slaves deliberately

kept in their perceived ethnic groups and concentrated on large plantations, forced changes in social interaction and its resultant cultural development.

Figure 2.11: Map of Cuba

i. Congolese Musical and Dance Styles: Makuta and Yuka

On the plantations conditions were harsh leading to high mortality rates among slaves. In an attempt to improve morale it became the custom to allow slaves to play music on a Saturday after work. Lydia Cabrera carried out extensive research into the music of slaves, interviewing several informants about the music made on plantations (Cabrera 1979: 77-81). While these lack precise details it is clear that the music and dance being described bears many similarities to recognised styles from Africa including the Congolese *yuka* and *makuta*. I detail these as both the music and associated dance bear many similarities with features of rumba.

Makuta was traditionally played on a three-drum ensemble, the *mula, cahimbo* and *caja*. The mula and cachimbo carried the rhythm while the caja played lead improvisations. As previously discussed the concept of the drums combining to create the basic rhythm or tumbao is an African percussion concept, as is the playing of drums with hands. The makuta drums were originally hollowed out of a solid piece of wood and the skins were tuned by heating over a fire. This changed to the drums being constructed out of staves of wood, similar to barrel construction. This may have been partly to make the drums appear less

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African, but also for practical reasons, since solid drums were heavy, making them less portable (León 1984: 71,72).
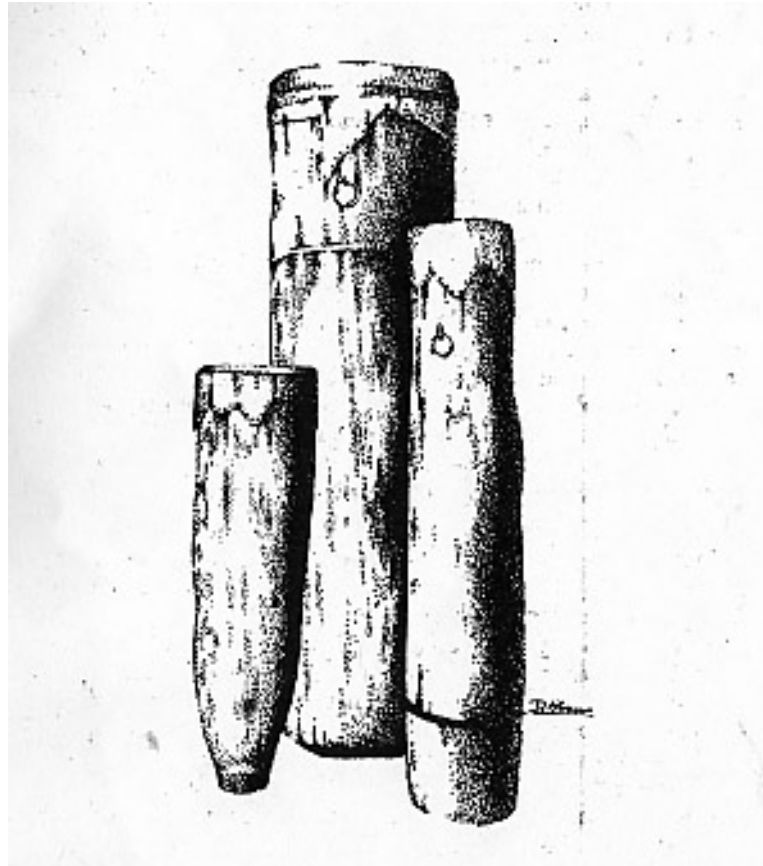
Figure 2.12: Yuka drums – caja, mula, cachimba (large to small)

Yuka was a social not a sacred dance form, danced by couples. In the yuka musical ensemble, an additional player struck a rhythm with a stick on the side of the mula or caja drums, a device known in rumba as the *catá* or *guagua* (León 1984: 69). Initially played on the side of the drum, it came to be played on a hollowed out instrument itself called the catá or guagua which came to Cuba through the tumba francesa imported to Cuba from Haiti. Both makuta and yuka are danced by a couple facing each other, accompanied by an ensemble made up of three drums and a wooden box (Daniel 1995: 64; León 1984: 67).

ii. The Development of Rumba

In the second wave of slavery, developments in central and western Cuba were distinct from those in the east. While there had been a longstanding Congo population in Oriente (the east), there is little evidence of their practising pure Congolese styles such as makuta and yuka; social conditions had produced a different trajectory for musical

development. In contrast with the slaves on plantations, rather than being organised along ethnic lines and greatly restricted in their movement, there had been opportunity for integration with other ethnicities. Having been in Cuba for centuries and in a community with a large proportion of French Creole and Afro-Haitians, their music, whilst distinctly African, had become creolised.

As son was developing in Oriente, so rumba was emerging in the west. Rumba developed among free blacks in the slums of Havana and Matanzas in the 1850s and 1860s (Daniel 1995: 17). A particularly Cuban musical style, it combined many African elements, notably yuka, and featured percussion, vocals and dance. Initially rumba would be played on drawers, walls and tables, but the drums that it later adopted were adapted from African designs and called *tumbadoras*.

The rumba ensemble was strikingly similar to that of the Congolese makuta and yuka, with three tumbadoras of different diameters echoing the mula, cahimbo and caja. In keeping with African rhythmic organisation principles, two drums created the tumbao whilst a solo drum 'talked'. In contrast to its Congolese precursors, the solo drum was now the highest pitched, not the lowest. In the rumba ensemble, the drum with the deepest pitch became known as the *tumbadora*, the middle drum, the *salidor, tres golpes* or *seis por ocho*, and the *quinto*, the high solo drum. Initially the tumbadoras were of barrel construction and tuned by heating. The tuning system was later replaced by lugs, perhaps in response to a ban on African instruments but also for ease of tuning (Warden 2005: 11). The addition of the tuning lugs made a greater range of pitches possible.

Rumba is a Cuban music and dance style drawing heavily on African roots. Its constituent elements are intertwined to such an extent that it is hard to isolate features and pinpoint their origins. An examination of an extract of rumba shows that Nketia's model of African musical structure and organisation can clearly be applied.

Figure 2.13: Transcription of a guaguancó matancero

Audio example 2.4: *La Leyenda de Grecia*

The three main styles of rumba are *guaguancó*, *yambú* and *columbia*. In this extract of *Guaguancó matancero*, the timeline is the rumba clave. This differs from the son clave only in the placement of the third beat of the third bar; in rumba clave this falls on the 4½ as opposed to the 4 in son. Instrumentation of rumba is purely percussive, the *palitos*, tumbadora and tres golpes creating an interlocked rhythmic pattern over which the quinto solos.

The tumbadora grew to be one of the most universally accepted Cuban instruments; in popular use it is often called the *conga* drum. Fundamental to the salsa line-up, its use is now widespread in a vast range of musical styles. The names 'conga' and 'tumbadora' have become virtually interchangeable although originally the name 'conga' referred to the similar but slightly smaller drum used in the carnival processions called '*congas*'. Fernando Ortiz suggests that the name 'conga' is derived from the Kikongo word 'nkonga' meaning umbilical chord, whilst others say that it is the Spanish female form of the word 'Congo', referring to the origins of the drum (Ortiz 1952c: 398) The drum and playing style is thought to be derived principally from the Congo makuta drums although there is some evidence of influence from the Lucumí *bembe* drum (Warden 2005: 10).

In addition to the African structure and organisation of rumba, researchers note the striking resemblance between the dance for yambú and that of yuka. Characteristics include a partner dance with the couple facing each other, focusing on gradual closeness and the touching of belly and thighs. These movements are found in the dances of the Luba, Bakongo and Lunda people, all Congolese. León also reports the use in yuka of a movement

similar to *vacunao*, a feature of guaguancó (Daniel 1995: 64; León 1984: 71; Vinueza 1999: 15). Cubans frequently reference these rumba moves when dancing to son and salsa.

iii. Links between Cuban Religious and Popular Music

It is commonplace for popular musicians to practice Afro-Cuban religions and play the related music. Many of the principal players in the development of Cuban music were involved in Afro-Cuban religions including bandleaders Arsenio Rodríguez and Benny Moré. Afro-Cuban religious music, lyrics and symbolism remain to this day a significant input into the development of Cuban popular music. For this reason I outline the main Afro-Cuban religions practiced in Cuba, with particular reference to the Congolese input.

The history of slavery in Cuba created conditions that led to a preservation and transformation of many imported African cultures and traditions. Notable factors are the baptism of slaves into Catholicism and the grouping together of slaves with the same assumed ethnicity both on the plantation and within the self-help organisations, the cabildos. Afro-Cuban religion, combining Catholic iconography and African gods, is deeply embedded in Cuban culture and continues to permeate Cuban society at every level. The main schools of religion include the Yoruba-derived Lucumí religion, the Congolese-derived Palo group of religions and Abakuá from the Old Calabar region. Religious allegiances are not mutually exclusive; in fact often a devotee of one religion will be involved in others too. Of the main religions, Lucumí, with its pantheon of gods represented by Catholic icons, is most visible, most accessible to outsiders, and has been the subject of extensive research (Amira 1992; Brandon 1993; Velez 2000). In contrast, the Palo religion is swathed in secrecy and deals with death and ancestors.

The marked contrast in attitudes towards and attention paid to the two schools of religions reflects the bias of the early works of Ortiz, which classed Yoruba people as superior among the Afro-Cubans (Ortiz 1916; 74) Literature on Afro-Cuban religions perpetuates this imbalance with far more scholarly attention given to Yoruba religions. I cite some examples of the imbalance: Argeliers León wrote about the Afro-Cuban religions in *Del Canto y El Tiempo* (1974) however, while 32 pages are given to Yoruba religions, Palo receives 15 pages and Abakuá, 12. In his 1942 paper detailing musical instruments of Cuba entitled *Musical Instruments of Cuba*, Harold Courlander dedicated six pages to Yoruba religion, three to Abakuá, two to Arará and half a page to Congolese religions (Courlander 1942: 227-240).

Palo has two sides, white and black magic termed *Palo Cristiano* and *Palo Judio* respectively, and the reputation of its devotees ('*paleros*') for dealing with magic and the

secrecy surrounding the religion has led to them being feared and held in awe. However, there is much evidence of the presence of Palo beliefs and rituals permeating everyday life and popular music (Garcia 2006: 19-20, 49). Devotees of the Palo religion converse in what they term 'Congo' a mix of Kikongo and Bantu-derived words and Spanish. The music of Palo is considered to have descended directly from the music of Congolese slaves with the main musical styles being *palo, yuka* and *makuta* (Cabrera 1979:77, León 1984: 77-81). Although it is not possible to quantify, the vestiges of Congo-derived religious practices in Cuban popular music may well have struck a chord with the Congolese audience for Cuban son.

iv. The Modernisation of Son

As son moved from the east to the west of Cuba it underwent various transformations and in fact became more Africanised. Its arrival in Havana in 1910 marked its change from a rural to an urban genre, with more performance opportunities and interaction between musicians (Sublette 2004: 335). In the racist climate of post-slavery Cuba, black Cubans were excluded from most professions. With tourism accounting for 13 percent of the country's trade, a disproportionate number of Afro-Cubans became musicians. Many of the musicians, along with other poor Cubans of the cities lived in tenement blocks known as *solares*. These were where son, the dance music of the working class, mixed with rumba and Afro-Cuban religious music.[22]

The nature of son shifted away from the creolised form from Oriente as more African and European elements crept in. In 1923 the marímbula and botija were replaced by the contrabass, already a feature of *danzón* groups, at the initiative of Septeto Habanera (Sublette 2004: 341). With the contrabass came greater flexibility; initially it mimicked the marímbula but as the instrumentation of son changed the bass lines developed. The clave, used in rumba, became an integral part of the ensemble. Septeto Habanero were the first son group to be recorded by the American record company RCA Victor in 1918, under their original name Sexteto Habanera Godines (Sublette 2004: 335). The son line-up had become formalised as guitar, tres, bongó, bass (botija or marímbula superseded by contrabass), *maracas* and claves with two singers. In 1927 a trumpet was added and the bands became

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[22] Poor city-dwellers were crowded together in slums. They lived in poor conditions in solares: communal tenement blocks with a central courtyard.

septetos[23] and it also became the practice for the bongó player to switch to the campana during the montuno section of the song, driving the music for the dancers.

Figure 2.14: Son with clave and campana, Septeto Habanero (1928)

Audio example. 2.5: *Alza las Pies Congo*

This extract of a 1928 recording of Septeto Habanero shows how the rhythmic organisation of son developed with the increase in size of the ensemble.[24] The montuno section is short, entering for the final 48 seconds of this three-minute song. It features call-and-response vocal chorus ("*Ayee alza los pies Congo*") interspersed with trumpet solo. The timeline of this song is 3:2 clave, the maracas and campana provide a steady rhythm, identical on both the 3 and 2 sides of the clave. The bass line is a variation on the *tresillo* rhythm, common to bass lines of early son. Whilst this extract does feature clave, the only instrument that varies in rhythm to fit with the clave is the guitar. The lead trumpet however emphasises the beats of the clave in his improvisation. Although the bongó player usually

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[23] The term 'septeto' did not always signify that there were seven members of the band. Although this was initially the case, the name came to refer to the format of the band rather than the actual number of musicians.

[24] This transcription does not include the octaves on the tres line as the part is hard to hear on the recording.

switches to the campana in the montuno section, in this example there are both campana and bongó playing at the same time.

By the 1940s the bass line of son had developed; the inclusion of the clave and campana in the ensemble freed up the bass, which no longer had to mark the first beat of the bar, and moved towards an emphasis on beats 4 and 2, echoing exactly the distinctive bi-tonal drum figure found in makuta.

Figure 2.15: Transcription of a makuta rhythm

Audio Example 2.6: Makuta rhythm.

In makuta the combination of the 2½ played on the caja and the 4 on the mula stands out. The drums are tuned a fourth apart giving the impression of a V-I cadence, just as in the anticipated son bass line.

Figure 2.16a: Tresillo son bass line

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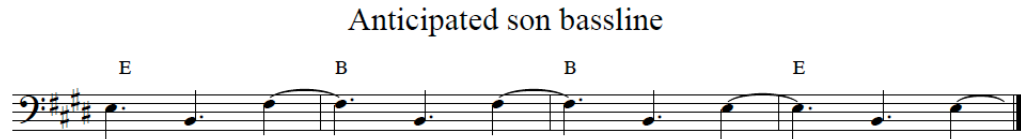
Figure 2.16b: Anticipated son bass line

Peter Manuel cites the introduction of anticipated bass as "perhaps the single most distinctive feature of Afro-Cuban popular music" (Manuel 1985: 249). This may be a little overstated but it is true that this feature became one of the signifiers of Cuban music and its derivative salsa for musicians worldwide[25].

2.6 The Dissemination of Son

In the racist climate of 1920s' Cuba there was initial middle-class resistance to son. African drums were not allowed to be played in music venues and black Cubans were banned from theatres and cafés (Moore 1997: 31). However son grew too popular to remain in the barrios. In addition to the working-class parties, it became the custom for the bourgeoisie to host private parties called *encerrones* with live son bands. These became a major source of income for the son bands, with some shunning working-class performances in favour of the better-paid encerronas (Moore 1997: 100). Whilst middle-class Cuba condemned son music, it was the popular choice of the working and upper classes.

The dissemination and popularity of son worldwide was inevitable despite initial indigenous suppression. Close proximity to the USA meant that it became common practice for Cuban musicians to travel to the United States to perform. Although there was no recording industry in Cuba, American record companies - Brunswick, Victor and Colombia - realised the potential in Cuban music and were recording son as early as the 1920s. Bands would be recorded on mobile recording studios that were set up in hotel rooms in Cuba or musicians travelled to New York to record. One of the early Cuban artists to be recorded was Miguel Matamoros, a prolific songwriter who brought together the lyrical *trova* form and son. Matamoros played with a trio of two guitars and maracas or clave, the small format being ideal for recording with the limited technology of the day. One of the guitarists, Rafael Cueto, picked the guitar with his thumb and forefingers rather than strumming chords. Matamoros used a classic trova device of two lead voices singing in harmony before moving into call-and-response lead vocal and *coro* for the montuno section. RCA Victor made their

first recording of Trio Matamoros in 1928 with *El Que Siembre su Maiz* being their first hit.[26]

Although there was no Cuban recording industry, Cuban radio played a huge part in the dissemination and popularisation of son. In the 1930s, radio stations competed for audiences, providing regular live sessions for musicians. Other islands and the USA could pick up Cuban radio, just as Cubans could listen to the music that was pouring out of US radio stations.

In Cuba, racist policies tried to contain son, making its public and radio performance the domain of white musicians. However Cuban *soneros,* black and white, gained huge popularity in North and Latin America, and Europe, through touring and promotion by the North American music industry. Under pressure from international acclaim, the Cubans could no longer suppress the popularity of son.

2.7 Further Developments: Arsenio Rodríguez and the Emergence of the Conjunto Format.

In the 1940s son instrumentation developed with the introduction of the *conjunto* format. An important figure in this development was tres player and bandleader Arsenio Rodríguez, who was also explicit in his connections to Congo. Born in Matanzas Province In 1911, Rodríguez grew up in Güines, the heart of sugar plantation territory. He claimed Congolese roots and was an active palero. His songs made constant reference to Africa and in particular Congo, bringing Congolese words and religious symbolism into his songs. An interesting example is his first success in 1937 with the composition *Bruca Manigua* (translated as 'Witch from the Bush'). In his study of Arsenio Rodríguez, Garcia discusses what he describes the "parody of a parody" in Rodríguez' composition. First recorded in 1937 by the all-white Orquesta Casino de la Playa with the mixed-raced singer Miguelito Valdés, the song told of plantation life and the lives of slaves. The audience for Orquesta Casino de La Playa's performances was predominantly tourists and white Cuban elite. In contrast to the racist stereotypes of black Cubans and the mock African words commonly presented in these performances, Rodríguez's work contained Kikongo words and phrases from the Palo Monte religion. Whilst the audience did not realise the significance of his

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[26] Guitarist Rafael Cueto developed a particular guitar style to accompany son in the reduced ensemble format. Trio Matamoros was among the early Cuban releases in Congo. In Chapter Three I draw comparisons between his guitar style and that of the emerging rumba musicians in Congo.

lyrics, the message of oppression and cruelty would have been clear to many of the Afro-Cubans who heard the song.

Arsenio Rodríguez was instrumental in instigating many changes to the format of the son ensemble. One important development was the addition of the tumbadora to the son ensemble. The tumbadora locked in with the clave, the bongó and the bass line, sticking to a device common to African music of accenting the 4 and the 4½.

Source: McGuinness

Figure 2.17 Tumbadora

Figure 2.18: Tumbadora rhythm in son

Rodríguez also added two, and then three, trumpets to his band and included the piano. The piano played much the same role as the tres: adding short repeated rhythmic patterns, emphasising the 4½. The concept of piano playing in son was quite removed from that found in European music; instead of playing block chords, harmony was created through a repeated interlocking ostinato.[27]

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[27] For a detailed analysis of the adoption of the piano into son see Juliet Hill's thesis *The Conjunto Piano in 1940s Cuba: An Analysis of the Emergence of Distinctive Piano Role and Style (*Hill 2008).

Piano Montuno in Son

Figure 2.19: Piano montuno in son

This mainstay of Western classical music had been appropriated by the Cubans and used in a percussive African playing style. The format of bongó or campana, tumbadora, three to four trumpets, tres, piano, contrabass and singers became known as a conjunto.

Another important change to the son format with which Rodríguez was credited is the development of the montuno section of the song by adding in an extended piano solo and a final section which he called the *diablo*. This featured repeated and interlocking horn lines adding a climatic finish to the song (Garcia 2006: 51). The extended and open structure of the montuno section was a feature that remained and was built upon in both son and salsa. Following on from the concept of the diablo, the *mambo* became a feature of the montuno section. Mambos were repeated interlocking horn lines that built up and often preceded or followed an instrumental solo. Unlike the diablo these were not necessarily at the end of the song.

Not only did Arsenio Rodríguez expand the format of the son ensemble: he changed the approach to playing son. He slowed down the tempo of the music and made it more complex rhythmically, with the use of *contratiempo*, an emphasis on the off-beats, which had the effect of pushing the music forwards in what Garcia terms the 'son montuno feel' (Garcia 2006: 41-46). These details led to Rodríguez's style being hailed as '*estilo negro y macho*' (black and macho style) as opposed to his contemporaries such as Orquesta Casino de la Playa and La Sonora Matancera who were labelled as having '*estilo blanco y feminino*' (white and feminine style) (Moore 2006: 56-58).

Figure 2.20: *Dame un Cachito pa'Huele*

Audio example. 2.7: *Dame un Cachito pa' Huele*

Several of the features in the development of the conjunto style are evident in this extract from a 1946 recording. The tempo of 142 beats per minute (bpm) is slower than previous examples. The basis of the bass line is the anticipated bass. However, the player embellishes the basic pattern following the vocal line at times. The chorus emphasises the clave by accenting beats 1, 2½ and 4 on the 3 bar, falling with the clave. The campana also emphasises the clave by omitting the 2½ in the first bar, playing what became the standard campana pattern in later son and salsa. All of the instruments accent the 4 of the bar with the exception of the tres and piano; they do fall on the 4 but their strong beat is on the 4½. In this extract the tres and piano play almost identical lines, although this is not always the case in recordings of Arsenio Rodríguez.

Arsenio Rodríguez's impact on Cuban popular music was far reaching; not only was he responsible for popularising the conjunto format and establishing son as the popular dance music of Cuba. His compositions also entered the *Bufo* musical theatre - the comedic Cuban style - that was popularised in the USA on Broadway, exposing his work to a far wider audience. The Broadway shows sparked the worldwide 'rhumba' boom of the 1920s (Sublette 2004: 395).

2.8 The Structure of Son

In the context of my research it is worth considering of the structure of son which shows marked similarities with the structure of Congolese rumba that developed in the 1950s. By the mid-1920s son had become formalised as a two-part structure; the verse or largo section, and the montuno section. Whilst there existed several variations within that structure, there were distinct characteristics of the two sections as detailed in Figure 2.26. With the establishment of the conjunto format in the 1940s, the montuno section became longer in length and included more distinct sections as detailed below. This structure became consolidated as the basic structure of what Arsenio Rodríguez called 'son montuno' and its derivative salsa.

The Structure of Son Montuno

SON MONTUNO		
Largo Section	Within the largo section there is no standard structure. There are however certain variations common in different song forms within the son complex.	
	A Instrumental Introduction	
	B Verse	
	C Instrumental Interlude	
	B' Verse	
	D Link into the Montuno Section	
Montuno Section	The montuno section of son has a formulaic structure within which the sections are open in length. The main features of the montuno section are:	
	Ostinato	Short repeated chord progression that generally remains constant throughout the montuno section.
	Coro and Pregones	Call and response with a short repeated chorus and a space of equal length in which the lead singer or an instrumentalist improvises. Typically the first few *pregones* of the montuno section will be played on a trumpet and then the lead singer will enter.
	Instrumental Solos	An extended solo popularised by Arsenio Rodríguez, initially on piano or tres.
	Diablo	A final instrumental section featuring interlocking horns, the diablo was introduced by Arsenio Rodríguez in his son montuno.
	Mambos	Following on from Arsenio Rodríguez's introduction of the diablo, the word 'mambo' became used in the context of son and salsa to denote the interlocking horn lines on the montuno section. There may be several mambos within one song.
	Coda	The coda may be a horn line, a repeat of the intro or a vocal cadenza.

Source: McGuinness

Figure 2.21 Structure of son montuno

2.9 Summary of Chapter

In this chapter I focused on the origins of Afro-Cubans, identifying the significance of the Congolese input into Cuban culture. I have detailed the development of son from its beginnings in Oriente, through its journey across Cuba, to the capital Havana. As the music moved west the creolised musical form was transformed, incorporating Afro-Cuban features.

The tumbadora, clave and campana were added to the ensemble and the two-part clave pattern became standardised as the timeline. The bass style became more syncopated, echoing the bi-tonal drum rhythm found in makuta. European instruments such as the piano and trumpets were incorporated into the ensemble and used in a style that displayed African concepts of rhythmic organisation. The result was a style of music that showed distinct African features in structure and organisation. The music was built around graded rhythmic parts and an ostinato provided by the tres, piano and bass playing interlocking parts. I argue that it is in this musical structure and organisation that the African features of Cuban music can most clearly be identified rather than focusing exclusively on instrumentation. This is borne out by my experience of working with Congolese and Latin musicians who recognise the commonalities between their musical styles, just as Congolese would have recognised features of Cuban music that travelled to Congo from the 1940s onwards.

CHAPTER THREE: THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONGOLESE POPULAR MUSIC

"Much of the sway of the world's popular music today comes one way or another from this large zone of Africa, as a lingua franca so basic that hardly anyone stops to think: Why is this our rhythm? Why are these the moves we like to do? Where do they come from? We may never be able to answer the questions fully, but we do know that a lot of it comes from the Congo and a lot of it comes from the Congo via Cuba." (Sublette 2004, 175)

3.1 Introduction

Having demonstrated the significant Congolese input into Cuban son, I now want to consider the relevance to my project of the return of Cuban music to Congo and the part that the return of son played in the development of Congolese rumba. Detailing the Cuban input into Congolese music is a formidable task. As with Cuba, Congolese music has a rich and complex history with numerous cultural inputs. Congolese and Cuban music are arguably two of the most popular world-music styles, feeding into the groove of music practically all over the globe. I have demonstrated the African features of musical organisation and structure in Cuban son, I now argue that Congolese people would have found familiarity in these aspects of the Cuban music that became popular in Congo from the 1940s onwards.

I first consider the scholarly writings on Congolese music and then look at the development of Congolese music from the beginnings of the Congolese record industry up until the present day, so that I can then draw conclusions about the common ground between Congolese music and son, making reference to musical structure and organisation.

3.2 Existing Research into Congolese Music

Whilst there is not as great a wealth of writings about Congolese music as there is about Cuban, there are a number of detailed studies into Congolese popular music. Several of them are biographical. In 1986 Graeme Ewens published a biography of the influential musician François Luambo Luanzo Makiadi, or Franco as he was widely known, and his group OK Jazz, giving an insight into the world of Congolese musicians. Ewens' work is interesting in that it details the workings of the Congolese music industry through his study of one of the most influential figures in Congolese music (Ewens 1986). Meanwhile Cameroonian musician Manu Dibango spent some time working in Kinshasa, inspiring him to write a book about his experiences, *Three Kilos of Coffee*, published in 1994. Dibango

was writing from the perspective of an African musician involved in a thriving Congolese music industry. In 2003 Jean Mpisi contributed a detailed biography of Congolese singer Tabu Ley Rochereau, *Tabu Ley Rochereau: Innovateur de la musique africaine,* which details the influences on and impact of one of the great Congolese singers.

Other works give a broader anthropological context. In 2000 Gary Stewart produced *Rumba on the River*, a detailed history of Congolese popular music from the 1940s to the 1990s, placing the Congolese music industry in the political and social context of the times. A recent publication about Congolese popular music is Bob W. White's study of the politics of Congolese dance music *Rumba Rules* (2008). His research was undertaken in Kinshasa in the late 1990s, working with many of the musicians with whom I now work in London. White's book provided much needed international scholarship into contemporary Congolese popular music. It gives an insight into a popular music scene, which remains central to Congolese identity both at home and throughout the diaspora.

Considering the prominent importance of popular music in Congolese culture, it is on one level surprising that it has attracted little international scholarly attention. However, the DRC has a history of instability and unrest contributing to the increasing isolation of the country from both the international community and Congolese communities in the Diaspora. The world-music community has had access to rumba from the 1950s to 1970s and there are a number of journalists worldwide specialising in Congolese music and mainly focusing on this 'golden age' of Congolese rumba, also known as the *belle époque*. I have gleaned lots of useful information from the sleeve notes they have written. For example Martin Sinnock and Graeme Ewens are particularly knowledgeable about Congolese music of this era (Ewens 1991; Sinnock 2008).

Whilst Congolese rumba of the 1950s to 1970s is popular with the world-music audience, when it comes to contemporary Congolese music, the knowledge of worldwide audiences does not stretch much past folkloric projects such as Konono No. 1 and Staff Benda Bilili. Popular music remains largely the domain of the Congolese and wider African audiences. In spite of the chaos and disorganisation that characterise modern-day Congo there are several Kinshasa-based journalists who have produced interesting work on Congolese music: Léon Tsambu, a journalist-turned-academic, writes with a focus on the parallels between the power structures within the bands and politics (Tsambu 2005, 2006) and until recently journalist Jeannot ne Nzau Diop wrote articles about music in the Congolese magazine *Potentiel*, his focus being the links between Congolese culture and

Afro-Cuban religions (ne Nzau Diop 2008).[28] There are also several Congolese academics operating in the Diaspora: Didier Gondola has written several interesting books and articles about social issues relating to music (Gondola 1997, 2002). Another Congolese academic working outside of the country is Kazadi wa Mukuna, whose work I have already referenced in the previous chapter. Part of his scholarly work on African music focuses on the development of Congolese rumba (wa Mukuna 1992, 1999).

The particular circumstances of the DRC with its long history of unrest has had far-reaching consequences. These include the emergence of large communities of Congolese in the Diaspora, complicated relations between Congolese at home and abroad, and the ever-complex link between music and politics. There are studies of aspects of the Congolese Diaspora: Janet MacGaffey and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga produced a book detailing how Congolese immigrants survive in Paris and giving insight into the lives of Congolese communities abroad (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000). In addition to academic and journalistic writings, reports on immigration and refugee communities in the UK have been relevant to my work (Penrose 2002, Kerrigan 2004, Doyle 2009, British Red Cross 2010),

In my project I fused both areas of study: the experience of musicians in the Diaspora and the current domestic music scene within Congo itself, since it is contemporary music-making and the modern-day musicians that is my particular focus. Specifically I wanted to know whether the musicians with whom I was working recognised a link with the Cuban music that 'came back' to Congo in the 1940s and 1950s and if any remnants of that link remained today. In this chapter I outline some key factors in the progress of Congolese popular music and consider whether there are any identifiable links with Cuban music.

3.3 The Backdrop - Kinshasa

Whereas colonisation and slavery impacted the fusion of musical styles in Cuba, it was also impacting the development of music in Congo too. The area now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo covers a vast area of central Africa and is hugely rich in mineral resources. When the Europeans divided up Africa in 1884, what would become 'Congo Free State' was already home to 33 foreign commercial companies (wa Mukuna 1999: 1). Its capital city, Léopoldville, settled in 1881, was a new and important industrial centre situated on the banks of the Congo river.

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[28] When I met ne Nzau Diop in Kinshasa in June 2009 his work had been halted because soldiers accosted him in the street. They took his computer and hard drive which he had to date been unable to replace, leaving him with no materials with which to continue his research and produce articles.

This and other newly formed urban centres also became centres of musical practice. There were several factors in the way that the Belgians colonised Léopoldville that impacted on musical development. In order to establish the city the Belgians destroyed the African settlements of Ndolo, Kintambo, Lemba and Kimpoko and expelled the residents (Gondola 1997: 66). They then established native work camps around the white centre, only encouraging young males to migrate to the city. Having destroyed the existing Congolese communities, they engendered the creation of new, predominantly male, urban groups comprising both Congolese and migrants from other places in Africa, for in their need for manpower the companies recruited workers from elsewhere on the African continent. Among the immigrants were a significant number of people from Cameroon, Dahomey (now the Republic of Benin) and Togo in West Africa and they became labelled '*lipopo*' or coastmen.

In the newly formed urban centres the different groups of immigrants set up social clubs with bands playing their own music. Musical styles included guitar music from the coastmen, likembe and percussion ensembles, and brass bands derived from Ghanaian highlife. It is likely that Congolese learnt the guitar from the coastmen who brought it with them, possibly having acquired the Spanish guitar via shipping traffic from Cuba (Shain 2002: 85). In addition, there was musical interchange with the people of neighbouring Brazzaville, the capital of Congo-Brazzaville, just across the river.[29] Out of this melting pot of musical cultures a number of dances emerged in the early twentieth century; the *maringa, agbwaya, nzambele, ebongo and patenge* (Ewens 1994: 54). It is generally agreed that the maringa formed the basis for what later became the rumba dance.

The African male population of Léopoldville grew rapidly as economic activity expanded but it was not until 1933 that women and families were allowed to settle in the city (Gondola 1997: 67). The foundations of the newly invented city and its musical culture had been built on the backs of a mix of Congolese and predominantly west African men and the few women who had managed to scrape a living together, legally and illegally, in the native settlements.

3.3.1 The Impact of Radio on Congolese Popular Music

Radio played an important part in the dissemination of Cuban and Congolese popular music throughout Africa. The first radio station in Congo, Radio Léo, was established in 1937 to play music for the ex-patriots in the colony. But in 1939 businessman

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[29] Kinshasa (formerly Léopoldville) and Brazzaville are the two closest capital cities in the world excluding the Vatican City and Rome. Musical development in the Congo has always involved the two cities.

Jean Hourdeboise set up Congolia, a station which targeted the African population in the hope of attracting advertising revenue. Congolia had broadcasts in four local languages and set up speakers on street corners, enabling people who couldn't afford radio to listen. The station played music aimed at Africans, with the GV releases of Cuban music (see below) making up a large proportion of the repertoire along with other imported jazz and pop records (Stewart 2000: 18). An important development was the allocation of airtime to local musicians who recorded for the station. There were other radio stations too: Radio Congo Belge and Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge, established during the Second World War to relay shortwave broadcasts to occupied Belgium, and Radio Brazzaville, established in 1935 just across the river.

3.3.2 The GV Series of Releases and their Reception in Belgian Congo

In the 1930s several factors combined to allow Africa to become one of the main audiences for the outpourings of Cuban and Latin American music from primarily USA-based record labels. For instance, what was a young global record industry needed to find a new market after the 1929 Wall Street Crash decimated its home customer base. In an attempt to survive the recession that followed, RCA Victor and the Gramophone Company teamed up in 1933 to produce the GV[30] series for the African audience. Initially aimed at the West African market the GV releases found popularity across Africa, particularly in the two Congos (Topp Fargion 2004: 2; Stewart 2000: 13). The series ran until 1958 after having made around 250 releases which were most popular in the mid-1940s. The first track to be released on the GV series was a Don Apiazu recording of *El Manisero*, Moisés Simons' classic Cuban pregón. The choice of *El Manisero* as a first release is a significant, but not entirely surprising, one. The song had previously been recorded by, among others, Rita Montaner in 1927 and Trio Matamoros in 1928 and was well-known to Cuban audiences. Wider exposure began with the cabaret version of the song by Don Apiazu and his orchestra with Antonio Machin singing at the Coliseum Theatre in New York on 5 April 1930. The band was billed as playing 'rumbas, danzones and tangos'. In fact, the music here termed 'rumba' was Cuban son as it had become common practice in the United States to misapply the name 'r(h)umba' to any music with a Cuban rhythm (Sublette 2004: 397). It was Don Apiazu's performance and 1930s' recording of the song that brought it to the attention of the world and was the beginnings of a worldwide craze for 'rhumba'.[31] The Don Apiazu release

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[30] According to Janet Topp Fargion (Topp Fargion 2004: 2) the name is attributed to Gramophone-Victor. However, it appears that musicians and consumers substituted their own interpretations, the most popular among Congolese being 'Grand Vocalistes'.

[31] The misappropriation of the term 'rumba', an Afro-Cuban musical style, has caused a great deal of confusion among the worldwide audience for Cuban music. It is clear that the term 'rumba'

of *El Manisero* was cautiously labelled with its English name *The Peanut Vendor* and termed a 'rumba-foxtrot'(Stewart 2000: 21).

I have detailed the release of *El Manisero* as it grew to be one of the most popular Cuban songs in the Congolese repertoire. Congolese musicians report that bands of the 1950s and subsequent years were required to play *El Manisero*, *El Que Siembre su Maiz* (Trio Matamoros) and other famous Cuban songs as part of the live show as a matter of course (Lusambo , Mutimanwa,, Interviews with Author, 2006).

The categorisation by record companies of *El Manisero* and other Cuban sones as rumba leads to an explanation of how Congolese popular music also came to be termed 'rumba'. There is no definitive evidence of how this came about, but perhaps in addition to the fact that the records were labelled 'rumba', the word itself has the familiar Bantu 'mb' cluster and sounded more interesting and attention-grabbing that the relatively bland word 'son', which simply means 'sound' in French.

The popularity of Cuban and other Latin American music in Belgian Congo led to a large number of records being released to this market. Cuban favourites included Miguel Matamoros and his various groups[32] Septeto Habanero and later Orquesta Aragón.[33]

3.3.3 The Formation and Development of the Congolese Record Industry

Belgian Congo, with its wealth of opportunity, was a draw for immigrants from Africa and the wider world. Congo-based foreign entrepreneurs played an important role in the pan-African success of Congolese popular music, with the formation of and investment in a thriving record industry. The early development of the Congolese music industry initially under Belgian rule and with the patronage of Greek merchants is well documented (Ewens 1994: 57; Stewart 2000: 34-59). Among the large numbers of immigrants to Léopoldville were a number of Greek entrepreneurs and it was from their ranks that the first studio owners emerged. In 1948 Nico Jeronomidis started up Ngoma, closely followed by the Papadimitrous brothers opening Loningisa in 1950. Together with the radio stations already mentioned, the industry helped promote Congolese music abroad. 'Congo Jazz' - as it was known - became popular with African and white audiences alike in the 1950s.

This attracted the interest of the international record companies too. Seeing the commercial possibilities they moved into the market (Stewart 2000: 4, 5, 47). In 1955 the

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(alternatively spelt 'rhumba') was, in the 1930s USA, given to all music with Cuban rhythm, in particular sones. The ensuing rhumba dance craze consolidated this use of the term.
[32] As well as working in a trio, Miguel Matamoros recorded with a septeto and a conjunto.
[33] Orquesta Aragón, formed in 1939, were a particular favourite of singer and bandleader Tabu Ley Rochereau (Mpisi 2003:97)

Fonior company, Belgium's licensee for Decca records, set up a studio, pressing plant and sales outlet in Belgian Congo. The pressing plant called MACODIS (Manufacture Congolaise du Disque) had a capacity of two million records a year, making it Africa's second-largest pressing plant after one in South Africa. They pressed discs for their own and other Congolese labels ensuring a ready supply of discs for the home market. The Congo-based Ngoma label began to press discs in France, to avoid the obstacles of duties and currency exchange between African countries. Discs were shipped from France direct to francophone Africa and record sales grew every year both at home in Belgian Congo and throughout Africa (Stewart 2000: 95).

> "One of the colony's propaganda organs, the *Belgian Congo Today*, reported that as of 1955 'the natives are buying discs at the rate of about 600,000 a year (at) an average cost of about one dollar'." (Stewart 2000: 47)

3.4. The Four Generations of Congolese Popular Music

Researchers and Congolese musicians agree that there are four generations of Congolese rumba. However there is some debate about whether the fourth generation - the era most relevant to my research - can be classed as signifiying a departure from the third (White 2008: 39-46). I have outlined the developments in Congolese music as it moved through the generations, as a prelude to focusing on the fourth generation and music of that period.

3.4.1 The First Generation − 1940s to 1950s

The first generation is known as '*tango ya baWendo*'.[34] This is the period in which the music industry became established in Léopoldville. The Greek studio bosses hired musicians to play for the house bands. Initially recordings were of solo artists with acoustic guitar or small groups of musician instrumentalists, the first major hit being *Marie Louise* by Wendo Kolosoyi and Henri Bowane.

Figure 3.1: Transcription of *Marie Louise*

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[34] Translates from Lingala as 'Wendo's time' in recognition of Antoine a.k.a. 'Wendo' Kolosoyi, the influential musician known as the 'father' of Congolese rumba.

Audio example 3..1: *Marie Louise*

The original recording of *Marie Louise* from 1949 features solo voice and Henri Bowane's strummed guitar accompaniment following a major chord progression featuring tonic, dominant and sub-dominant (I, V and IV) chords. This transcription shows the guitar strumming style of Henri Bowane, which remained fairly constant throughout the song.

As the industry and competition developed, the studios brought over foreign jazz musicians to play with and teach Congolese musicians. As musicians' confidence in the medium of recording grew, so did the ensemble size. European instruments such as contrabass were introduced. And there was another international influence at work: the sound of the GV series can be clearly heard in the releases of the day with its chord progressions and melodies copied directly by Congolese musicians (White 2008: 41). At the end of this period there also emerged the notion of the 'schooled' musician with the appearance of Jhimmy 'the Hawaiian' who was considered an intellectual because of his education (Stewart 2000: 34-35).

3.4.2 The Second Generation – 1950s to 1970s

The second generation of Congolese music spanned the end of colonial rule and the first decade of independence including the assassination of the first elected prime minister Patrice Lumumba and the ensuing chaos. In spite of, or perhaps partly due to, the political turmoil, the early days after independence are remembered as a golden age for music (Ewens 1994: 89). Joseph-Désiré Mobutu took control of the country on 20 May 1965 and formed what he termed the 'Second Republic'. He was to rule the country for 32 years. The first decade of the new republic saw quota systems in education leading to rise of a large new generation of musicians and musical ensembles.[35]

In the 1950s the fact that there was already an established music industry led to the growth of the community of musicians, many of them highly skilled, who were able to forge a career playing music. The pan-African popularity of Congolese music encouraged record companies to pay advances in the form of band equipment. With electric bass, solid-bodied guitars and previously unavailable drum kits coming into the country, the sound known as 'Congolese rumba' developed. In response to the craze for Latin American music that was

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[35] This was not to last; in the 1980s the sagging economy and decadence of political structure had a negative impact on all facets of life. Desperation, deplorable conditions and the demise of the recording industry led to a huge exodus of musicians to foreign capitals in search of a better life (wa Mukuna 1999: 8).

played on the radio and by visiting ensembles, vocalist Joseph Abase Shalala a.k.a. 'Grand Kale' formed African Jazz in 1955 which grew to be one of the most popular bands of the era (Stewart 2000, 44). The line-up featured the Latin American percussion of congas, guiro, maracas and claves, lead and rhythm guitars, contrabass and a horn section (wa Mukuna 1999: 4). The music of Grand Kalle and African Jazz bore a great deal of resemblance to Cuban son in structure, rhythm and instrumentation.

The success of the commercial music scene led to breweries and foreign companies sponsoring bands, and music thrived with the formation of a large number of musical ensembles, as wa Makuna noted:

> "By the 1960s there were thirty musical ensembles in Kinshasa alone, containing more than three hundred musicians, most of whom attained the mastery of their art through rote, unable to read or write a single note." **(**wa Mukuna 1992, 82)

One factor central to the progress of Congolese music in the 1950s was that bands established themselves outside of the studio. Whereas in the past individual musicians had been contracted by studios, bands now formed deals with clubs to perform regularly. This enabled them to have stable membership, try out new repertoire in a live situation and build a fan base. This move was initially spearheaded by guitarist Franco and his band OK Jazz when, in 1956, the band formed in response to a contract to perform at a local bar. Others soon followed suit. In the ensuing competition the emphasis in the music shifted away from just the recorded music to performance practice and presentation (Burking Faso, Lusambo, Mutimanwa, Interviews with Author, 2008)

Initially musicians embraced Latin America not just in the music but also in the associated performance practice; they adopted Spanish names, wore outfits inspired by Latin bands and copied the dance steps. Vocals were often sung in mock Spanish and Spanish words interjected into the music. In an interview with Kazadi wa Mukuna, Franco is quoted as saying:

> "Well nobody understood Spanish. Nevertheless, we took a dictionary and searched for words that would sound good and we used them regardless of their true meaning." (Franco, Interview with wa Mukuna, 17 March 1983) [36]

As the bands grew they incorporated horn sections and electrical instruments. Initially the Latin American influence in the music was clearly identifiable, but towards the end of the 1960s styles diverged and two distinct schools of music emerged: African Jazz and the OK Jazz school. There were several strands to the rivalry of the two schools. Nicolas Kasanda wa Mikalay or Dr. Nico as he was known and his African Jazz school were seen as educated, sophisticated and cosmopolitan. This contrasted with Franco and his OK Jazz

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[36] (wa Makuna 1992: 90)

group. Franco had a poor background and had lacked access to formal education; OK Jazz was seen as more traditional. In his study of Congolese dance music, *Rumba Rules*, White highlights the importance of this division:

> "This proved an important development in the music, not only because it signalled a more diverse field of musical creativity but also because the question of tradition would prove very productive in the context of Mobutu's post independence cultural policy."(White 2006: 43)

I will return to the issue of tradition as I explore the developments of the later generations of Congolese music.

During the second generation the structure of Congolese rumba became established as:

A Instrumental Introduction

B Verse

C Instrumental Interlude

B' Verse with Changed Final Cadence

D Refrain with Call-and-Response Vocals

E Seben – Instrumental Improvisation

D' Coda – Usually Derived From the Refrain Section

It is interesting to compare this with the structure of Cuban son:

Congolese Rumba and Cuban son format

CONGOLESE RUMBA		SON MONTUNO	
(2nd Generation)			
A Instrumental introduction		A Instrumental Intro	
B Verse		B Verse	
C Instrumental interlude	"Solfegge" usually a short lead guitar line.	C Instrumental Interlude	May be horn line or piano/tres figure
B' Verse with changed final cadence		B' Verse	
D Refrain with call and response vocals	Alternating chorus and lead vocal solos.	D Link into the montuno section	May be horn line or piano/tres figure
E Seben – instrumental improvisation	Extended lead guitar and horn solos.	E Montuno section	Call-and-response lead vocal and coro or lead instrumental, extended instrumental solos, horn mambos.
D'Coda usually derived from the refrain section		G Coda	May be in the form of a Horn line over the montuno or altered chord progression or return to the introduction.

Source: McGuinness

Figure 3.5: Structure of second-generation Congolese rumba compared to Cuban son

Whilst there are variables within both styles, there are significant similarities. Both rumba and son vary in terms of the length and number of verses, and the length of the linking instrumental section. This is neither unusual nor unique to these two styles of music. However the comparison becomes interesting when considering the latter sections of the arrangements, seben in Congolese rumba and montuno in son. These display several common features: extended instrumental solos, open sections within the structure, and increased intensity in the music.

Congolese rumba and Cuban son display common features of rhythmic organisation. Differences lie in the detail of the arrangement within the sections and aspects of the instrumentation. To explore this I now consider three songs from the second generation.

In *Parafifi*, a Grand Kalle and African Jazz song from 1957, the structure, instrumentation and playing style all point to Cuban son. The verses are sung by two voices in harmony and in the same manner as that popularised by Cuban musician Miguel Matamoros. The pattern played by the bass follows the tresillo rhythm as found in early son music from Oriente (see Chapter Two) and the horns play a continuous backing line which sounds reminiscent of Cuban bandleader Benny Moré's big-band style. The song uses a common Cuban device of signalling the end by two repeated choruses.

In fact there are so many similarities with Cuban son that it is easier to consider the differences. The feature that stands out is the signature sound of Congolese rumba, the lead guitar. The song starts with an intro on guitar with what the Congolese term a 'Hawaiian' sound. The guitar is clearly considered central to the sound, the horns are noticeably less important and very much in the background throughout the song. Whereas the lead guitar is high in the mix the rhythm guitar is very low in this song, possibly because of limitations in the recording technology.

Figure 3.3: Extract from seben section of *Parafifi*

Audio example 3.2: *Parafifi*

A consideration of the musical organisation of *Parafifi* shows several elements that I have previously discussed in relation to Cuban music: ostinato is provided in this case by the horn section and rhythm guitar, the rhythm being built up by the maracas, congas, bass, rhythm guitars and horns with the lead guitar soloing over the top. The instruments enter in different places to create the interlocked melodic lines; whilst the horns and lead guitar start on the first beat, the rhythm guitar and congas have the sense of beginning on the 4½. One feature of the song that distinguishes it from son is the noticeable lack of dynamics when the song moves into the seben section. The congas, maracas and bass play a constant rhythm with little variation in intensity or style throughout the song.

The rhythm guitar style in rumba is an important feature of the groove. Whilst it is considered to be distinct from Cuban guitar style, I question whether in fact there is influence from Trio Matamoros. The band was one of the popular Cuban groups that were recorded on the GV series and much copied by Congolese musicians. Rafael Cueto - the guitarist from Trio Matamoros - developed a style of guitar playing that sounded the bass note and picked out a style of montuno, as opposed to the strumming usually found in Cuban guitar accompaniment. An analysis of the guitar pattern in the Trio Matamoros version of *El*

Manisero, recorded in 1929, shows that in his montuno he makes use of sixths and thirds, a common feature in Congolese rhythm guitar playing.

Figure 3.4: Extract from *El Manisero* by Trio Matamoros

Audio example 3.3: *El Manisero*

Christine (1969) by Tabu Ley Rochereau and L'African Fiesta National follows a similar structure to *Parafifi*, with two-part vocals throughout and a guitar solo section. The arrangement features a third guitar termed the *mi-solo*. By the late 1960s it had become common practice for bands to include the mi-solo which played lines in between the lead and rhythm guitar, at times harmonising the lead line and at others reinforcing the rhythm (Stewart 2000, 138). I believe that the inclusion of the mi-solo was part of the development of Congolese popular music towards an increased emphasis on groove and dominance of the seben as the music progressed through the generations.

Figure 3.5: Extract from seben of *Christine*

Audio example 3.4: *Christine*

In *Christine* there is noticeably more change of dynamics between the verses and the refrain section than in *Parafifi*. In the verses the percussion and rhythm guitar are gentle and very much in the background whereas the lead guitar is in the foreground throughout the song. In the refrain, dynamic change is created by a marked increase in volume of the rhythm guitar and mi-solo, while the maraca and conga rhythm remains gentle throughout. The bass is based around the same tresillo pattern but features variations throughout, particularly in the seben solo section. The score displays how the three guitars create an interlocking ostinato. Not only is the interlocking created between the different instruments: the lead and rhythm guitars both play two-part repeated patterns. The lower harmony on the lead guitar is in the tresillo rhythm, the high harmony on the rhythm guitar provides a constant pulse. The timeline is provided by the 3:2 clave pattern. Whilst most of the instrumental parts enter on the 1, the mi-solo pattern starts on the 2½, a feature that was to be developed further as rumba developed.

Moving to the third song under consideration, the first noticeable difference on listening to *Infidelité Mado* (1971) by Franco and TPOK Jazz is the quality of the sound. Overall it contains more bass and the guitar sound is fuller, containing less high and more

low and mid-range frequencies.[37] The bass line in the verse and refrain sections emphasises the last beat of the phrase providing a sense of forward motion in the music.

Figure 3.6: Extract from the verse of Infidelité Mado

[37] The contrast between the sound of OK Jazz and L'African Fiesta is reminiscent of the 'estilo negro'/ 'estilo blanco' comparison of Arsenio Rodríguez with other bands of his day.

Audio example 3.5: *Infidelité Mado*

In the verse the rhythm guitar provides a constant accompaniment and the lead guitar plays melodic lines in between the vocal phrases. Then the mi-solo moves from harmonising the lead guitar in the third bar of the extract to accompanying the rhythm guitar. As the song moves into the refrain the song slows from 135 bpm to 110 bpm.

Figure 3.7 Extract from the refrain of *Infidelité Mado*

Whereas *Christine* stays on the constant gentle conga-maraca rhythm throughout the song, *Infidelité Mado* goes though dynamic changes - in the refrain all of the instrumental parts increase in intensity to create a dense interlocking groove. The congas play a livelier

pattern, the rhythm guitar plays a repeated two-part ostinato, the mi-solo changes to a rhythmic pattern, the latter now interlocking with the rhythm guitar line rather than harmonising it. The bass changes to a pattern, which emphasises the 4½ and 2½.

The tempo and the rhythm section stays the same as it moves into seben and the intensity of the lead guitar and bass increases as the seben continues. The seben section lasts for one minute before returning to the refrain and then back into seben for the last minute of the song.

I asked guitarist Burkina Faso whether he preferred the sound of L'African Fiesta or Franco. His response was:

> "Franco of course. Franco's music is hot, he plays with groove. Not everyone has groove." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

Figure 3.8: Extract from the seben of *Infidelité Mado*

In this song the lead guitar is, as with all examples, upfront in the mix but the sound is distinctly deeper and fuller with rhythmic patterns played in sixths and thirds. The seben is longer and each motif is repeated numerous times with slight variations.

A brief look at these three examples clearly shows how the music developed as the second generation progressed and the two schools - African Jazz and OK Jazz - emerged. A comparison with Cuban son highlights similarities in terms of structure and instrumentation in the music of Grand Kalle. As the African Jazz and OK Jazz schools developed the music moved towards an emphasis on groove and a repetitive interlocking ostinato guitar style, paving the way for future generations of Congolese popular music.

3.4.3 The Third Generation - 1970s-1990s
i. Mobutu's Rule and Cultural Authenticity

The late 1960s and early 1970s were a crucial time in the development of Congolese music. President Mobutu's promotion of a national identity coincided with a shift of emphasis in the music towards a modern sound, consciously dropping many of the obviously Cuban devices present in rumba.

As popular music moved into the third generation, President Mobutu launched his *cultural authenticité* ('cultural authenticity') campaign. In 1971 he renamed the country the Republic of Zaïre and the Congo River became the Zaïre. The next year he followed by passing a law forcing people with foreign-sounding names to change their names to 'authentic', indigenous-sounding ones. This had implications for the majority of the musicians who had foreign, often Spanish-sounding, stage names. A wide range of measures followed including dictating what clothes were worn: men wore the *abacost*, a collarless shirt jacket, women were banned from wearing trousers and had to wear three-piece traditional outfits. *Cultural authenticité* had a huge impact on musicians and the development of the music industry.[38] Mobutu's interpretation of this policy created the image of one people, '*Les Zaïrois*', and their 'traditional' culture. 'Authentic' folklore and traditional arts were favoured over outside foreign influences. In 1972 Mobutu banned all foreign music in the country, a ban which was to last ten years. Although it was unrealistic to think that musicians would not have access to outside influences, it did serve to consolidate the identity of Zaïrean music.

To promote his authenticity campaign Mobutu took Franco and his group OK Jazz on a promotional tour of the country playing propaganda songs and introducing folkloric traditions into their music (Ewens 1994: 135) As noted, Franco fell into the 'unschooled', more traditional camp of contemporary musicians and in many ways he was an ideal candidate to promote the *authenticité* campaign and the notion of a national folklore. Of mixed ethnicity himself, Franco represented a united Zaïre with a national identity. Throughout his career, folklore was present in his music. A famous example is *Kinsiona*,

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[38] There are many strands of interesting discussion among Congolese journalists and academics about the effects of Mobutu's policies on musicians and the music industry. One focus is on the parallels between Mobutu's style of government and the way that bandleaders run their bands (Tsambu 2005, 2006). Whilst these are very interesting and relevant to my work from the perspective of understanding the musicians with which I work, I shall restrict my discussion to some of the musical implications of Mobutu's policies.

lamenting his brother's death. The song is in 6/8, minor key 6/8 no less, and sung in Kintandu, the language he spoke with his brother.[39]

Whilst Mobutu's policy served in many ways to control and contain, it gave the space for Congolese music to develop a clear, powerful identity that led to widespread popularity on the African continent. In creating an image of 'Les Zaïrois', Mobutu constructed an idea of national folklore, celebrating and at the same time confusing the identity of the more than three hundred ethnicities that made up Zaïre. As part of his drive for a national unified identity and to counter what he considered to be the negative influence of commercial music, Mobutu set up *Ballet National* troupes that performed musical theatre and story telling. These added to the cultural landscape of the newly named country. He also formed huge 'animation' groups which, for many of the Congolese people with whom I have talked, remain one of the most enduring memories of the authenticity campaign; hours of '*animation politique*' would be shown daily on the television with choreographies of large numbers of people dancing to folkloric music and a picture of Mobutu's head, superimposed on the image, descending from the clouds (Ndelo, Interview with Author, 2006). Not only was animation politique on the television, it was taken into every workplace and everyone was obliged to participate in a communal '*animation*' at the start of the working day. Whilst the people were forced to participate in these public displays of submission, the consequences of Mobutu's failed policies and widespread corruption began to take hold in the country.

Les Zaïrois found themselves in a situation were a national pride was being promoted whilst their basic living conditions were being eroded. Perhaps because of this several community-based organisations emerged that were to play an important part in the development of popular music. The beginnings of one of them goes back to the 1950s and the work of a Belgian priest, Jef De Laet, who became known as 'Père Buffalo', the parish priest of Ngiri Ngiri (the area of Kinshasa where Franco grew up).

ii. The Hindoubills and Minzoto Ya Zaïre

In the 1950s approximately half the population of Léopoldville was under 18. Many of these youths were without employment and nor were they in education, since very few African children went on to secondary school under colonial rule. They became fans of the westerns and Bollywood films that were shown in the cinemas. Influenced by these, a movement started up known as the 'Hindoubills' (made up of '*hindou*', the Lingala word for

[39] Congolese rumba is almost always in a major key. When there are songs or sections in a minor key they usually move into 6/8, described as 'folklore' by the Congolese musicians whom I know.

Indian and 'Bill' from Buffalo Bill of cowboy and western fame). This saw them dress in cowboy outfits and give themselves cowboy names such as Wayne or Tex (Stewart 2000: 78).

Père Buffalo started working with the Hindoubills and eventually set up a community group. In the late 1960s he helped to form the performance group Minzoto ya Zaïre (The Stars of Zaïre) out of which grew Minzoto Wella Wella. The sound of Minzoto ya Zaïre was quite distinct from the rumba of the day, incorporating folkloric and religious music. Minzoto ya Zaïre and its offshoots, notably Minzoto Wella Wella, became a training ground for many of the key musicians of the third and fourth generations of Zaïrean popular music (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011). Minzoto Wella Wella came into its own in the 1970s when the cultural authenticity campaign raised the profile of folklore, (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011).

As a performance group Minzoto Wella Wella played a variety of music and included comic dance routines into their show. The band was popular with the home audiences and had a degree of recorded success with their take on Zaïrean popular music. The Minzoto Wella Wella guitarists incorporated their folkloric ideas into the interlocking guitar parts that combined to create the groove in the seben.[40] One device that was to impact on the groove of Congolese popular music was termed *'cocot'*: a damped percussive pattern said to be derived from likembe and marimba patterns of the 'village' tradition. The following is a musical example showing cocot at work, though for further discussion see Chapter Five, Section 5.3.4 The Guitarists.

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[40] Whilst I have found no literature on the use of cocot in Congolese music, I have conducted extensive research with Congolese musicians on the musical development and significant contribution of the folkloric groups - in particular Minzoto Wella Wella - to the evolution of Congolese music. It is interesting but not surprising to note that the informants who consider Minzoto Wella Wella to be of significant importance are those who claim to be from the village as opposed to the schooled tradition

Figure 3.9: Extract from the seben of *Alita* by Minzoto Wella Wella

Audio example 3.6: *Alita* [41]

Alita features guitarist Nene Djafar a.k.a. Tchaku Tchaku, whose skills were and are highly praised by the Congolese public. However I have found little written information about him. I believe that he was one of the main instigators of the use of cocot in popular music. The score shows a dense rhythmic organisation with the instruments entering at different points in the bar. The lead guitar in this segment begins at the beginning of the bar with the rhythm guitar entering on the 3. The cocot guitar plays a damped rhythmic ostinato which starts on the 4½ whilst the bass emphasizes the 4½ leading to the 1 and the 2½ leading to 3 as in the extract from Franco and TPOK Jazz,[42]. However, the bass line incorporates rhythmic touch notes and embellishments which add to the rhythmic complexity of the ostinato. The fast tempo of 120 bpm and dense rhythmic organisation result in a lively and exciting groove.

There were several other community groups that were set up upon along similar lines to Minzoto ya Zaïre. One, Bana Odéon, had been established in Kintambo in the west of Kinshasa in 1978 to occupy local unemployed youth, training them in traditional music

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[41] I have not been able to ascertain the exact year of recoding of *Alita*, I believe it to be late 1970s.
[42] OK Jazz formed in 1956. In 1968 the band changed it's name to TPOK Jazz-TP stood for 'Tout puissant"(all powerful) (Stewart 2000:145)

and dance.[43] Bana Odéon provided the first atalaku to enter popular music (White 2008: 60, 61). I mention the urban folkloric groups as I believe they had a significant impact on the development of third- and fourth-generation popular music, feeding into the school/village divide which I found to be a strong thread in the rivalry between contemporary musicians in Kinshasa on my visit there.

iii. The Third Generation - Zaiko Langa Langa and the Youth Bands

Towards the end of the 1960s, spearheaded by Belgium-based Congolese student bands, the sound of Congolese music modernised. Being resident in Europe these students had access to other styles of music, notably black American music such as that from James Brown and Otis Redding. One interesting development in this new wave of Congolese music was the move away from the culture of the individual star and leader to co-founders. In 1969 this model was taken up and developed in Kinshasa by a band that had grown out of the Hindoubill movement, Zaiko Langa Langa. It was responsible for significant changes in the instrumentation and performance of Congolese popular music.

In a deliberate move away from the established rumba format, the instrumentation of the band changed; whilst the congas were kept, the drum kit became of central importance and the horn section was dropped. Key changes in the music mainly focused on development of the seben in which the Zaiko Langa Langa drummer, Meridjo, developed a snare rhythm called 'cavacha' and a driving four-on-the-floor bass drum pattern (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011).
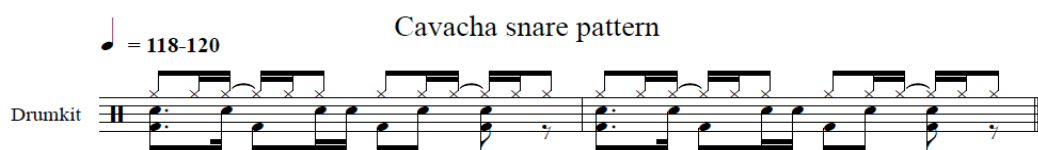
Figure 3.10: Score of cavacha snare pattern with four-on-the-floor bass drum

Franco had set the trend towards a powerful lead guitar in the seben and Zaiko Langa Langa built on this, the addition of the driving drum pattern having a dramatic effect

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[43] Kintambo was, and remains today, famous for its urban traditional music and many 'village' musicians and atalaku come from Kintambo. In addition there are regular folkloric music performances there. I spent a great deal of time in Kintambo during my visits to Kinshasa, both studying with Werrason's keyboardist Thierry Synthé and attending performances of traditional, folkloric music.

on the dynamics of the music. The seben was extended in length and the four singers executed choreographed dance moves. The musical focus was on hot persistent dance music. Although the first part of the song featuring chorus and refrain was still there, Zaiko Langa Langa shortened it.

The band was released on Polydor in 1971 and had a successive run of huge hits, in August 1971 holding number one and two positions in the Zaïrean charts simultaneously (Stewart 2000: 158). Other youth bands hit the charts and the new wave of music gained popularity. With the increased emphasis on seben, the skills of the lead guitarist became of paramount importance. In what was a fiercely competitive environment, guitarists would strive for an individual sound that would bring them fame and recognition. The classic line-up of a Congolese band grew to be four voices with varying ranges, one high, two medium and one low. With the emphasis on the show, it also became necessary for the singers to be skilled dancers.

Figure 3.11: Extract of seben from *Mwana Wabi* by Zaiko Langa Langa (1976)

Audio example 3.7: *Mwana Wabi*

This extract from a 1976 Zaiko Langa Langa song displays various features which mark a progression from the music of the second generation. Congolese musicians describe the cavacha drum pattern as the 'driving force' of the music (Makuta, Interview with Author, 2008). The bass and conga patterns are livelier whilst the bass remains focused on the fifth and first degree of the scale. In this extract the mi-solo plays a line that interlocks with the

rhythm guitar part, reinforcing the rhythm of the song. The lead guitarist Manwaku Waku, a.k.a. Pepé Felix, is playing a fast chromatic pattern. Burkina Faso claims that this style of playing, experimenting with harmony and rhythm, contributed greatly to the youth appeal of Zaiko Langa Langa:

> "Manwaku Waku tried new ideas with the harmony, he was the first guitarist who played for young people." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

It is interesting to compare the Zaiko Langa Langa arrangement with that of Minzoto Wella Wella. Whilst there are many similarities in the musical organisation and rhythmic layering, the Minzoto Wella Wella version uses a more percussive approach to some of the harmonic parts. The third guitar plays a damped cocot as opposed to the mi-solo rhythm part, the bass plays the same basic pattern in both arrangements but in that of Monzoto Wella Wella it is enhanced by percussive touch notes.

Another Zaiko innovation which was to change the face of Zaïrean popular music was the introduction of the atalaku. In 1982 the band approached two members of Bana Odéon and invited them to come along to rehearse (White 2008: 60, 61). When Zaiko originally formed they had dropped the Cuban-style hand percussion and now the folkloric musicians brought a different style of percussion into the band with the cowbell and the Zaïrean urban style of maracas: an insecticide can containing seeds (White 2008: 153-155).
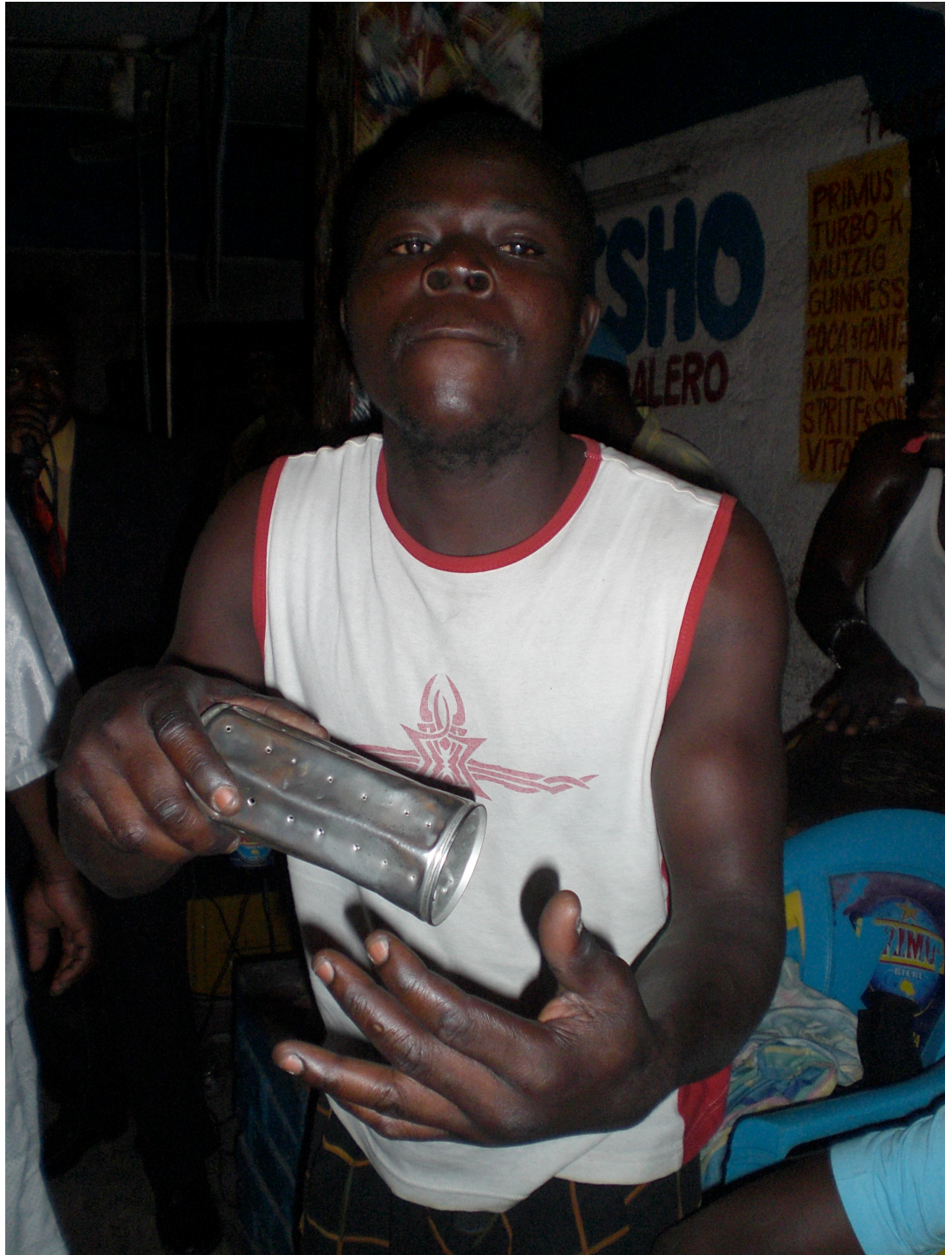
Figure 3.12: Atalaku in Kintambo with an insecticide can shaker

As well as providing percussion, the atalaku would shout out expressions and dance moves during the seben which the singers (now dancing) would respond to with their choreographed moves. The arrival of the atalaku brought a new element of folklore into Zaïrean popular music and grew to be a defining feature of seben. A keyboard player was also added to the line-up, giving another layer of texture to the music.

Figure 3.13: Extract of seben from _Zizita_ by Zaiko Langa Langa (1982)

Audio example 3.8: Zizita

This extract of a 1982 Zaiko Langa Langa song features keyboards and atalaku. The atalaku brought with them cowbells and shakers. The keyboards and shakers add new strands to the already dense rhythmic layering. The bass line of Zaiko Langa Langa now incorporates the percussive touch notes that were absent in their earlier music. The mi-solo in this extract is harmonising the rhythm guitar whilst the lead plays a two-part repeated pattern. The atalaku adds to the rhythmic layering, rapping percussive lines. The atalaku style is in the form of an ostinato, with numerous repeats of a rhythmic line with small variations. The cries of the atalaku prompted corresponding dance moves executed by the singers.

The structure of Zaïrean popular music had now become:

A Instrumental Introduction

B Verse

C Instrumental Interlude

B' Verse with Changed Final Cadence

D Refrain with Call-and-Response Vocals

E Seben – Instrumental Improvisation, Atalaku and Dancing.

The verse and refrain sections were now shorter than before and the seben considerably longer. A noticeable feature was the shift in energy of the music as a song progressed. There was a marked increase in intensity as the song moved from the verse to the refrain: the drum pattern picked up to a constant bass drum on the beat and the bass moved to a lively bass line emphasising the fifth and root note of the tonic and falling on the last beat of the bar. White notes that this percussive style of bass playing is often compared to the conga ('*mbonda*' in Lingala) (White 2008: 58). This draws parallels with the development of the bass line of Cuban son (see Chapter Two).
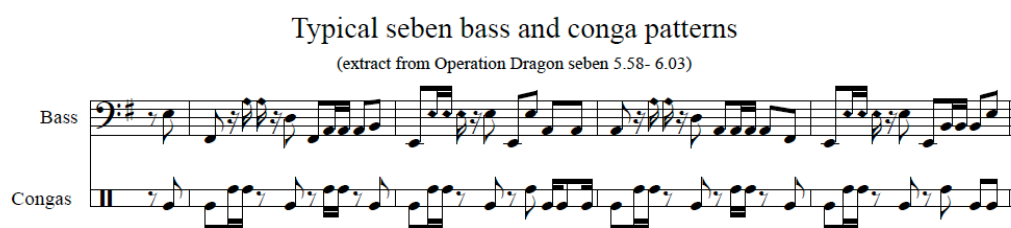
Figure 3.14: Bass and congas in seben

This transcription of bass and congas in seben shows the similarities in the two rhythmic patterns. The bass line emphasises the 4½ leading to the 1 and the 2½ leading to the 3 dropping either from the fifth note of the chord or the octave to the root note. This is echoed in the congas which play the 4½ to the 1 on the low drum. The bass touch notes provide more of a percussive than tonal sound and correspond with the off-beats played on the high conga. They fall together on the last semiquaver of beat 1 and additionally on the 1½ in bars 2 and 4.

As the music shifted into the seben section, there was a further marked change in dynamic created by the distinctive cavacha snare drum pattern and the guitar taking over from the voices as the lead instrument. It is easy to see why, when describing seben, guitarist Burkina Faso talks about creating pressure (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011).

"When we play seben we have to make fire, the bass player and drummer they need to create pressure, then we can play good and people, they can dance." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

Driving drums and bass, singing guitars lines, the percussive cries of the atalaku and the visual splendour of choreographed dance moves combined to create a powerful, energetic show.

3.4.4. The Fourth Generation – Wenge Musica

Having summarised the development of Congolese popular music I now turn my attention to the period most relevant to my research: the fourth generation and commonalities therein with Cuban music. There has been little academic research into this aspect of the music of this period. My research is conducted through musical interactions and interviews with Congolese musicians and analysis of the music produced. I focus on Wenge Musica as it is the most influential group of the fourth generation as well as being the group to which Burkina Faso belonged prior to moving to the UK. Wenge Musica was formed by a group of students as co-founders in 1981 but they did not come into their own until the end of the 1980s. Wenge Musica took the development of seben a stage further than in the third generation, making it the main focus of the music.

The Wenge sound featured synthesizers and up-front guitar lines with a strong front line of four vocalists. In an effort to attract a new generation to their music, Wenge deliberately did not put lyrical songs on their albums, preferring to focus on the seben (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011). Burkina Faso joined Wenge Musica in 1994. He cites the strength of the team of musicians and their ability to create 'pressure' in the music as central to the band's success. The team included the drummer Titina Al Capone, guitarist Alain Makaba and Burkina Faso himself. He describes himself as bringing 'village' to the band, referring to what could be described as a folkloric approach to groove from his days with Minzoto Wella Wella.

i. Musical Developments in Seben – the Atalaku

Bob White reports the heated debate among Kinshasa musicians about whether the fourth generation actually marks a change in the music or was a continuation of the third generation (White 2008: 47). The musicians I interviewed were of no doubt that it did warrant a generation of its own (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011; Synthé, Interview with Author, June 2010). As with the third generation, the question of what had changed revolved around the importance of the seben. According to Burkina Faso innovations brought by the fourth generation include the changed role of the atalaku.

Whereas previously the atalaku had used spoken raps, celebrated atalaku Caludji, who joined Wenge Musica in 1995, brought in a style of sung atalaku.[44]

Another defining facet of the fourth generation and central to the rise in the importance of the role of the atalaku was the practice of singing or shouting names in exchange for money, known as *mabanga* which became and remains the subject of much debate among Kinshasa journalists and academics (Tsambu ; wa Mukuna 1999; ne Nzau Diop 2010; White 2008: 165-224).[45] In the 1970s it became the custom for members of the audience to come forward to give money and drinks to the singers and musicians. This became a significant part of the performance; money would usually be slipped into a musician's hand, but, if the giver wanted to be ostentatious, they would stick it to the musician's head, or shower them with it.

The practice of giving money stems from a tradition among the Luba people from Congo, which consists of singing a persons name, lineage and deeds. This is common throughout Africa but in the DRC this is known as *ku tendelela* (wa Mukuna 1999: 6; Wemba, Interview with Author, 2009). The praise sung is known as *mabanga*. Derived from this traditional habit, the practice of mentioning the name of an individual or playing in front of them has been carried into urban popular music. Initially this would be done to acknowledge a friend or patron or to give publicity to the person, in response to which the named person would give the praise singer money. It soon became the fashion among the 1970s Congolese audience to do whatever was necessary to be mentioned in a song. Money, drinks, gifts and sexual favours were all considered legitimate incentives, and this practice became known as to *ko lancer* (wa Mukuna 1999: 6).

During the last two decades of Mobutu's Second Republic, economic and political collapse led to the population taking desperate measures to survive.

> "Of all the crimes committed against the country and people of Zaïre
> by President Mobutu in the last twenty years of his tenure, none was
> more severe than the systematic stripping of its wealth and dignity and
> plunging it in to perpetual miseries. Lack of schools, medical facilities,
> roads, etc turned the people into scavengers, hunters and gatherers
> without any sense of community." (wa Mukuna 1999: 7)

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[44] In *Rumba Rules*, Bob White agrees that the changing style of atalaku was a significant contribution to the development of popular music (White 2008: 51).

[45] In June 2009, whilst I was in Kinshasa, the government decided to ban mabanga. There was an outcry amongst musicians, and television and radio programmes featured much debate on the issue. A few months later I asked musicians in Kinshasa about the ban. It appeared to have been dropped in the face of widespread opposition from the music industry.

There was little money to pay musicians who changed ko lancer from a sincere act of recognition into a means of making money. This developed further to become a negotiated business deal, with the money being paid before the praise was sung. It is commonplace at the time of writing to have CDs and concerts financed by donations from people who, in return, have their name mentioned on the seben (wa Mukuna 1999: 7). In the case of Wenge Musica, a look at the track listings of an album show that most songs are named after a sponsor whose name is shouted during the song along with other financial contributors.

> "The music changed a lot. It was the shouts - noise! Before, in the third generation, Zaiko had seben but the noise wasn't like it is today. Today as well as the shouting and singing the atalaku has to shout out many peoples' names, we call it mabanga. So you hear the CDs and it is a lot of noise but people like it like that." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

ii. The Role of the Guitar

In the music of the fourth generation, with the emphasis on seben, the guitar became of paramount importance. Guitarists and a comparison of their styles had, since the early days of rumba, been the subject of much debate and rivalry. In the fiercely competitive 1990s with a plethora of great musicians this was even more apparent (Schengen and Kabangi, Interview with Author, June 2005). It is worth noting that a number of guitarists who attracted a lot of praise for their ability to create a groove came through the training ground that was playing with the band Minzoto Wella Wella (see previous section). One of these was Burkina Faso:

> "Minzoto Wella Wella was really important in Congolese music. Look at me, I learnt guitar but I took many things from Minzoto Wella Wella." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

The input of 'folklore' into the music of the fourth generation through the use of cocot and the percussive style of the atalaku undoubtedly added to the groove of the all-important, extended seben. As Burkina Faso explained:

> "Music of the third and fourth generation is really not rich in terms of the chords, but the music we play is rich in ambience. So we play like beginners but with ambience." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, April 2011)

Seben was the major part of the song and Wenge Musica developed it. Whereas before seben had stayed on a one-chord progression, now it moved between chord progressions and key changes. There were also dramatic changes in dynamics where the instruments would drop out leaving the keyboard or rhythm guitar to solo. All of these changes were signalled by a roll known as *passage* on the drums and in response to shouts from the atalaku and the corresponding dance moves.[46] Wenge Musica popularised the habit of including a *générique* as the title track of an album. This was an extended track featuring

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[46] I detail the structure of seben and terminology that the musicians use in my CD Rom presentation.

seben and possible sections in 6/8 'folklore'. Linked in with these musical developments, Wenge Musica put great emphasis on the visual aspects of the show, developing an intricate series of dance moves and producing slick, extravagant videos. A typical example of a Wenge Musica song is *Heritier Itele*. In this example the guitars are played by Burkina Faso. Whilst the sound is more modern and the recording reflects advances in recording technology, the structure of the song does not deviate from the third generation until the seben is reached. At this point there are several developments: the atalaku enters from the beginning and is constant throughout; the seben moves through many sections punctuated by drum breaks and there is a dramatic dynamic change when the music drops down to rhythm guitar, drums and congas. The overall effect of the seben is, in my opinion, more exciting and dynamic than that of the third generation.

Figure 3.15: Extract of seben from *Heritier Itele* by Wenge Musica

Audio example 3.9: *Heritier Itele*

This transcription of a Wenge Musica song from 1996 shows how the band developed the concept of layering interlocking parts. The arrangement incorporates both the rhythmic and instrumental ideas of Zaiko Langa Langa and Minzoto Wella Wella, featuring four guitar parts, two keyboards and bass. The lead guitar plays a two-part lead guitar line which is repeated with embellishments whilst the mi-solo guitar harmonises the rhythm guitar. The two percussive keyboard parts and the guitar cocot interlock to create an energetic groove, using the device of different instrumental ostinatos entering at different points in the bar. My research points to the inclusion of cocot and the percussive interlocking parts being due to the work of musicians with a 'folkloric' background, Burkina Faso claims this device is derived from folkloric marimba and likembe patterns. In this song Burkina Faso played all the guitars and arranged the keyboards.

I have included the atalaku lines in the transcription to show the new sung style attributed to Caludji, the performer in this song. Whilst the atalaku lines are rhythmic they now have melody, albeit delivered in a rough, half-shouted, half-sung style. They also provide an interesting example of the practice of mabanga. 'Tampete du Desert' is a nickname given to Mobutu's son Kongolo Mobutu. His other nickname 'Saddam Hussein' is also featured in this song. Kongolo Mobutu was a vicious man and a known killer. Wenge Musica risked prison or worse if they did not shout mabanga for him but at the same time several of them were threatened and attacked for singing his praises.[47]

iii. The Break-up of Wenge Musica – the JB Mpiana/Werrason Divide

In true Congolese fashion, several breakaway groups of Wenge Musica formed. The biggest break-up was in 1997 when two of the singers, JB M'Piana and Werrason, separated. The rivalry between their two bands (Wenge Maison Mere was Werrason's new group and Wenge BCBG that of JB M'Piana) ensures that they continue to dominate the music scene in Kinshasa and are a focal point of discussion both at home and in communities in the Diaspora. The splitting of Wenge Musica is of interest as it highlights issues of class, school and village that feed into my work with Congolese musicians. Werrason, termed '*Roi de la Forêt*' (King of the Forest), attracted widespread popular support whereas JB M'Piana

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[47] The complicated relationship between Congolese music and politics has served to separate Congolese musicians at home from those in the Diaspora.

fostered the image of being higher class. These differences were reflected not only in the music they played but also in their choice of venues and style of dress.[48]

Whilst both bands have followed on in the style of Wenge, strong stylistic differences can be heard in the music. *Operation Dragon*, the générique from the Werrason album *Kibuisa Mpimpa* (2001) that brought him acclaim demonstrates several of the musical factors to which I have been referring: it clearly shows the form of générique, the 'village' devices that Burkina Faso uses in his playing are obviously present, and the track moves in and out of sections of 'folklore' and seben.

Figure 3.16: Extract of seben from *Operation Dragon* by Werrason

Audio example 3.10: *Operation Dragon*

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[48] It is interesting to note that Burkina Faso chose to work with JB M'Piana, who was promoting himself as high class, although he saw himself very much as coming from the 'village' tradition. However, concurrent with working with JB M'Piana, he produced and played all the guitars with Werrason on the album *Kibuisa Mpimpa* (*Operation Dragon*) that brought Werrason widespread recognition and popularity.

This is another track arranged by Burkina Faso and so it is of no surprise that the cocot and percussive rhythmic layering are central to the arrangement. In this instance the mi-solo and rhythm guitars play in harmony with each other. There are two guitar cocots and one keyboard line. The lead guitar features one of Burkina Faso's signature riffs in the second bar with the sequence of high semiquavers.[49] Overall the lead guitar is more exciting than in the previous example, reflecting Burkina Faso's personal development as a guitarist. The track is heavily synthesized, and in performance all the breaks would have punctuated carefully rehearsed dance moves. The atalaku on this track is called Bill Clinton and he uses a sung atalaku style mixing names with nonsense words while at the same time Werrason is running off a list of names. Careful listening reveals the cocot that sits low in the mix but drives the music along. At 3:30 minutes into the song the first section of 'folklore' in 6/8 enters; punctuated by breaks, the générique moves effortlessly from 6/8 to 4/4 and back. It is of interest to note that the congas sit high in the mix in this recording. In fact although there was a conscious move away from Latin features in third- and fourth-generation music, the congas were never dropped. The form and orchestration of the track with layers of instruments and successive breaks is typical of fourth-generation Congolese music and Werrason took it to a new level of intensity, described by Burkina Faso as 'pressure':

> "Werrason and JB they are both good but Werrason, he knows how to create pressure. People like pressure. That way they can dance." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

The stylistic divide between Werrason and JB M'Piana can be clearly demonstrated by a look at a JB M'Piana 'charanga' song, *Grâce à toi Germain*. Although many of JB M'Piana's songs continued in the style of Congolese popular music, I believe that he was aiming for a more refined sound. It is interesting to consider this song as it is clearly in the style of salsa, although a rather slick, easy listening, piece. The track is heavily synthesized with programmed drums and layered keyboard strings, flute and electric piano. Three minutes into the song it moves into a son montuno section which has a standard salsa groove.[50] I discovered when working with Congolese musicians that they call a salsa groove such as this *'charanga'* and the keyboard player plays strings in the style of charanga violins typical to Cuban music. Although no-one can tell me why, I feel sure that it must be derived from the influence that Cuban group Orquesta Aragón had on Congolese music.[51]

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[49] Burkina Faso created several signature lines which Congolese guitarists copy to this day although I have not yet heard anyone play the lines with his fluidity.

[50] I noticed that Congolese musicians who do play Cuban music have a far stronger notion of clave than many other nationalities of musicians with which I have worked, aside from those from Latin America, and play convincing montunos.

[51] Orquesta Aragón, the top Cuban charanga, was a favourite in the Congo. Singer Tabu Ley Rochereau was a particular fan of theirs, emulating their style of unison chorus and demanding that his singers studied the full Aragón repertoire (Mpisi 2003: 96-97).

Figure 3.17: Extract of *Grâce à Toi Germain* by JB M'Piana

Audio example 3.11: *Grace à tôi Germain*

In the JB M'Piana song *Grâce à Toi Germain* the instrumental parts are programmed keyboard sounds. It features the standard son piano, bass and conga patterns and a simplified version of the campana pattern on the cowbell. The horn lines reference the 2:3 clave and the keyboard strings play a backing line that could be found in a salsa or son tune that featured strings. The song is, in short, a sequenced salsa tune.

iv. Class and the School/Village Divide

In 2009 during my first visit to Kinshasa I was the invited guest on a TV panel discussion program. We had a pre-meeting where the presenter tested his questions on me. This was lucky for him as I would not have given the answer that he was expecting. I discovered that his whole line of questioning was to get me to say that musicians who had formal schooling were superior to those who had not been schooled. By that time I had spent a month in Kinshasa working with and interviewing musicians and so I was not entirely surprised. For me it highlighted an underlying theme that had surfaced repeatedly during my trip: the distinction between the musicians who had been schooled - usually this meant had studied music at the Institut National des Arts- and those who had not.

The division appeared to feed in to a wider definition of class that appeared so important to Kinois society. I had found that, on my arrival in Kinshasa, it was assumed that

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I would want to base myself in Gombé, the wealthy domain of what few ex-patriots were living there and people with money. On the contrary, my interests lay in an exploration of the music I had come to know and love - Congolese popular music and the musicians who played it. There was a lot of interest in salsa and Cuban music in Kinshasa and I soon realised that it was considered the domain of schooled musicians. The reaction to the fact that I worked with Burkina Faso was telling; the majority of people were really excited to hear that I worked with him, many declaring him to be their favourite guitarist. However, the reaction of some of the schooled musicians was, to quote one guitarist who had studied at the Institut National des Arts:

> "Yes, but Burkina Faso can't play salsa, he can only play popular music." (Christian, Interview with Author, 2009)

As I began to work with different musicians in Kinshasa it was clear that musicians from both 'school' and 'village' were of the same opinion as Christian. The majority of musicians who played salsa had attended music school. The great musicians I worked with who had not been schooled felt that it was beyond them (Synthé, Interview with Author, 2010).

The music of the fourth generation followed the same basic structure as the third, but now the emphasis was on the seben, which had become by far the longest section of the song and now moved between clearly defined sub-sections.

3.5 Similarities Between Fourth-Generation Congolese Music and Cuban Son

Having charted the development of Congolese popular music through to the fourth generation, the era which produced the musicians I work with, I should now like to consider what, if any, parallels can be drawn with Cuban music. In considering the similarities between the two styles I refer back to Nketia's analysis of African musical organisation. Nketia argues that African identity lies in the organisation of the instruments rather than the instruments themselves (Nketia 2005: 318-336). He demonstrates how many African musical styles consist of layered interlocking percussive parts organised around a timeline. Scholars of African music agree with Nketia in acknowledging interlocking as an essential component of African musical organisation (Kubik 1994; Nketia 1962; Arom 1984, 1991).

In this chapter I have demonstrated similarities between the structure of second-generation Congolese music and son, and charted the changing nature and rise in importance of the seben. By the fourth generation the seben had become the central focus of the song. This parallels the focus on the montuno as son developed.

CONGOLESE RUMBA		SON MONTUNO	
(4th Generation)			
A Instrumental Introduction		A Instrumental Introduction	
B Verse		B Verse	
C Instrumental Interlude	"Solfegge" - usually a short lead guitar line.	C Instrumental Interlude	May be horn line or piano/tres figure.
B' Verse with Changed Final Cadence		B' Verse	
D Refrain with Call-and-Response Vocals	Alternating chorus and lead vocal solos.	D Link into the Montuno Section	May be horn line or piano/tres figure.
E Seben – Instrumental Improvisation	Extended lead guitar solos, layered guitar and keyboard parts, key and chord progression changes, and changing guitar lines separated by 'passage' rolls on the drums.	E Montuno Section	Call-and-response lead vocal and coro or lead instrumental.
	Choreographed dance moves in response to the cries of the atalaku, accompanied by the drummer.		Extended instrumental solos and horn mambos which build up accompanied by percussion fills and breaks.
	Open but highly formalised structure allowing interaction between musicians and audience.		Open but highly formalised structure allowing interaction between musicians and audience.
	Four-bar repeated chord progression. Always in a major key, comprising the I, IV and V chords.		Short repeated chord progression in major or minor keys. Usually on I, IV and V chords.
		G Coda	May be mambo or figure on montuno chord progression or return to the intro.

Source: McGuinness

Figure 3.18: Structure of fourth-generation Congolese rumba compared to Cuban son

It is interesting to compare the timeline of son, the clave, with that of seben, the cavacha rhythm
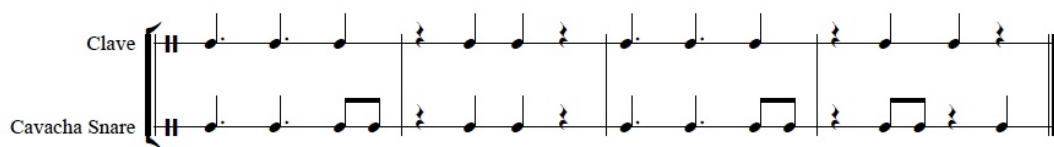
Figure 3.19: Comparison of clave and cavacha rhythm

Although clave is commonly written as a two-bar pattern and cavacha in one bar, I have transcribed the two in the same metre for ease of comparison. The score shows that the cavacha is, in fact, an embellished 3:2 son clave, the only variation being the 4½ in the first bar of the pattern. The drummer can vary the cavacha pattern at times.

Figure 3.20: Comparison of clave and cavacha rhythmic variation (kawuka)

In this common variation known as 'kawuka' there is an extra beat on the 2½ of the second bar and the last beat falls on the 4 rather than the 3.[52] Whilst this is further away from the clave, distinct common rhythmic features remain.

I consider there to be several commonalities between seben and montuno: structure, dynamics, performance practice and approach to creation of groove. The table shows that both seben and montuno consist of a series of sections. Both the number of sections and their length are variable, allowing the musicians to interact with the audience. I have discussed at length Nketia's theory of African musical organisation in my description of both styles, demonstrating how the music is constructed from a series of interlocking instrumental and vocal lines.

In charting the development of Congolese music I have tried to demonstrate how the music became rhythmically denser, adding more interlocking parts as it progressed through the generations. In the third- and fourth- generation Congolese music there is a dramatic shift of dynamic as the music moves into seben. Previously the shift in dynamics had come

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[52] This variation is favoured by Wenge Musica and is more commonplace in their music than the original cavacha rhythm.

principally from the guitars. Now the drum kit, bass, guitars and keyboards all shift up a gear as the music moved into seben. This is evident in the early music of Zaiko Langa Langa, but reaches a new level when the atalaku joins the band and then again in the music of Wenge Musica.

Figure 3.21: Extract of seben from *Heritier Itele* by Wenge Musica (1996)

The combination of the drum rhythm with cavacha snare pattern, bass drum on the beat and the cowbell has the same effect as the campana and conga combination in son. In this 1996 example of fourth generation rumba given above, there is a clave pattern programmed in the arrangement giving a clear comparison of the relationship between clave and cavacha. The rhythm and mi-solo guitar follow the lead guitar which plays a repeated line and builds upon it, a similar concept to the horn mambo in son. Wenge Musica added further layers to their arrangements in the form of interlocking rhythmic parts on both the guitars and keyboards, the cocot. These damped percussive parts are said to mimic the marimba and likembe patterns found in 'village' music. Altogether the parts combine to

create a powerful, driving groove. In the above extract the rhythm of the mi-solo guitar and keyboard demonstrate clearly the relationship between the instruments and the cavacha rhythm; in the first bar the guitar accents all beats of the rhythm and the electric piano enters on the 3½, with the snare, and plays the cavacha rhythm but with some embellishments.

The music is open and interactive with musicians responding to each other, to the audience and to the added element of the dancers and atalaku. The seben is open, moving between different sets of repeated lead lines on the guitar, sections of keyboard lead lines, shouts from the atalaku and related dance moves.

The dynamic shift is echoed in the transition into montuno in Cuban son; the bongó player moves onto the campana to drive the music along, the piano/tres and bass montunos change and the conga plays a livelier tumbao. Over a short repeated chord progression the music moves between call-and-response vocal sections, instrumental solos and horn mambos - a series of short repeated interlocking lines that build up. Within the montuno section the music moves through dynamic changes effected by variations in instrument montunos, percussion figures and instrumentation.

Figure 3.22: Extract of montuno section of *Camina y Prende el Fogón* by Adalberto Álvarez (2008)

Audio example 3.12: *Camina y Prende el Fogon*

In this transcription of a 2008 version of *Camina y Prende el Fogon* (1950) arranged by Cuban bandleader Adalberto Álvarez, we can see how the music is constructed from layered instruments all playing repeated rhythmic lines. In this instance the harmony is created by a combination of piano, bass and keyboard on top of which the horns play short interlocking lines. Over this there is a repeated chorus with lead vocal improvisation. The preceding section had been the same with no horns, the entry of the horns signalling a dynamic change in the song. Whilst the concept of clave is present in all instrumental parts, it is most clearly visible in the rhythm of the vocal chorus, "*Me voy a cocinar contigo*"

where the vocal enters on the 3 side of the clave (beats 1, 2½, 4), entering with the clave beat on the 2½ but then the rhythm is in quavers for the rest of the bar. In the next bar, the 2 side of the clave (beats 2 and 3), the chorus falls on the beat throughout.

Both examples adhere to Nketia's model of African rhythmic organisation; there is no block harmony, instead several instruments contribute to the harmony through repeated ostinatos, instruments enter at different places to create a rhythmic matrix and all parts, including the vocal, are percussive and relate to the timeline of the music.

It is the highly organised yet open structure of both seben and son that makes them particularly exciting live musical styles. Each section in itself is open, allowing interaction both between musicians the band and the audience. I found that, when I brought musicians from the two styles together, they understood the structure and dynamics of the musical style they were less familiar with.

3.6 Conclusions

My first encounter with Congolese music was with that of the third and fourth generations. Although at the time I was unfamiliar with the music and knew little of the history, I found a familiarity in the music that fascinated me. My first performance was with a twelve-piece band playing, among other things, seben. In the absence of a Congolese keyboard player to guide me, I had to find my own space among the soaring guitars and persistent drums. With my background in playing Cuban music I was used to the concepts of call and response, interaction with other musicians, and dynamics within the montuno. I applied my knowledge to what was going on around me; exchanging lines with the lead guitar, playing off the drum fills and punctuating the dance moves with keyboard stabs. My attempt to integrate must not have been too far off the mark as I was immediately asked to join a Congolese band.

As I immersed myself in Congolese music I fell in love with the brash upfront music of the fourth generation with all its shouting and synthesized brass. I cannot describe the excitement of a Werrason gig with a front line of 11 singers, 15 dancing girls and an incredibly loud sound system playing to a Kinshasa crowd of many thousands. I realised as I had the fortune to work with musicians of the calibre of Wenge Musica guitarist Burkina Faso and Werrason's keyboard player Thierry Synthé, that the input of the 'village' musicians to fourth-generation Congolese music had greatly enhanced the groove of the

music. It seemed to me not inconceivable that the folkloric roots of this village groove were among the rhythms that had been exported to Cuba since the sixteenth century.

As I became immersed in Congolese music I realised that there were indeed many similarities between Congolese and Cuban popular music. It is hard not to spot the direct links between the rumba section of a Congolese song and the verses of Cuban son. In addition I found that the whole concept of seben and what goes on therein draws many parallels with Cuban montuno. Many aspects of second-generation rumba were clearly derivative of Cuban son, and with the huge Congolese input into Cuban son, it could also be argued that Cuban son was derivative of music from Congo.

But reflecting on academic discourse on this point I am not concerned with who influenced whom. It is clear to me that there are numerous commonalities between the two styles of music. And importantly, whilst these are usually considered when looking at the music of past generations, I have tried to demonstrate that there are significant similarities between Cuban and Congolese music today.

CHAPTER FOUR: CREATING THE BAND

I have set out my case for performance as research, arguing that it affords insights into the music that could not be achieved by an observer. Then I detail how Congolese music has been influential in the formation and development of Cuban music. In the 1930s to the 1950s the Latin music that was exported to Africa was adopted by a thriving music industry and absorbed into Congolese popular styles. Initially it was common practice to play Congolese versions of popular Cuban tunes often with a mix of pseudo-Spanish and Lingala lyrics.[53] Bands were expected to perform a few Latin numbers as part of their performance. Congolese rumba of the 1950s and 1960s displayed many distinct commonalities with Cuban son and salsa in its instrumentation, structure, harmony and performance practice.

Aided by President Mobutu's campaign of cultural authenticity in the 1970s, Congolese rumba moved away from obvious Cuban features towards a national sound. It is my contention that the age of authenticity and the modernisation of Congolese rumba did not mark an end to the Latin influence in the music. The link continued and blended with elements of what under Mobutu became termed 'folklore', including some of the same rhythms and musical devices that had travelled from Congo to Cuba centuries earlier.

Having laid these foundations, in this section I detail my research. My work as a professional Latin musician entering the world of Congolese music created a situation in which I was immersed in both music scenes, able to observe and experience first-hand similarities and differences in approaches to music making. The formation of a band comprising musicians from both genres was, it appeared to me, a natural progression; the band provided a forum for research into whether there remained any links between the two musical styles, and whether these links were perceived by the musicians.

In this chapter I explain the ethos behind my project and then detail how I came to choose the musicians and instruments involved in the project and the changes that occurred as the band developed. Working on original compositions, the band developed material as a team, constructing a repertoire that reflected our musical experience and development. And in the next chapter, I shall analyse this process highlighting and drawing conclusions from the areas of commonality and difference within the music and performance practice.

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[53] I deal with the development on Congolese rumba in Chapter Two.

4.1 The UK Salsa and Congolese Music Worlds

Having dealt with music-making in Cuba and Congo, I now leap to London where my research took place. In the cultural melting pot that is the UK's capital city it is possible to find musicians from a myriad of traditions. Some are more visible than others, many staying predominantly within their own communities. However, if one knows where to look they can be sought out, as was my experience with the Congolese musicians. Before detailing my work with Grupo Lokito, the band that I formed, I provide some background about the communities from which the musicians are drawn.

4.1.1. The London Salsa Scene

There is a large community of musicians in London playing a variety of styles of Latin music. Those who play Cuban son and salsa are usually referred to as being salsa musicians so I shall therefore refer to the 'salsa music' community when dealing with the UK-based musicians. The UK has a long-standing community of Latin musicians considered by many to be one of the more skilful outside of Latin America and the USA, as top percussionist, Roberto Pla, explains:

> "The level of musicianship of the musicians here is superior to many countries. Many of them play Latin music as if it were their own style, play with the concept of the clave, the phrases of the instrument. The percussionists, such as David Pattman, are extraordinary people because they investigated this music with passion and obsession." (Pla, Interview with Author, 2008)

The thriving UK salsa music scene of the 1980s and 1990s featured a mix of Latin and non-Latin musicians and attracted both more Latin musicians to settle in the UK (Pla, Rosselson, Interviews with Author, 2008), and more non-Latin musicians to play salsa. Whilst the opportunities for live performance have diminished considerably over the last decade, in London there are currently a wide range of salsa bands. While some may comprise entirely Cuban or Colombian musicians, it is common for bands to include musicians of different ethnicities including those from Britain. This is reflected in the integration of Latin musicians into the wider community (Roman-Velazquez 2002: 262) There are significant differences between the salsa and Congolese music networks in the UK, differences which correspond to the attitudes and level of integration of the musicians.

4.1.2 The London Congolese Music Scene

In contrast, the network of Congolese musicians in the UK is relatively small and isolated. Whilst there is a sizeable Congolese community in the UK (Vertovec 2006), it is not one of the main centres of migration for people from the Congo, who generally gravitate towards Belgium, the former colonial power, and France. There are large and influential

networks of Congolese musicians in Paris and Brussels, unlike in the UK where the community of musicians is small and of mixed ability. The majority of UK-based Congolese musicians whom I have encountered conduct their lives almost exclusively within the Congolese community. The bulk of performance opportunities are within, at most, the wider East and Central African community.[54] Most of the musicians have not done any other work; those that have gained legal status claim benefit; those who have not struggle to survive on an income from music (Burkina Faso, Makuta, Interviews with Author, 2009). As Burkina Faso said:

> "I play guitar, that is what I do, that other work, it's not my business. I didn't go to school. I don't know anything." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

There is little need for newly arrived musicians to adjust to different ways of working as they can easily slot into the existing Congolese music scene. I have, on numerous occasions, been amazed by the inability of Congolese musicians to imagine musical possibilities outside the world of Congolese music. There are clearly exceptions to this, notably musicians who have come to the UK through marriage to a non-Congolese person, and built a life not centred on the Congolese community. Felix Ngindu, the last drummer to join Grupo Lokito, fell into this category. Of the other Congolese musicians in Grupo Lokito, Jose Hendrix Ndelo was the only one who had made contacts outside of his community and endeavoured to integrate to any degree. This may have been facilitated by the fact that, coming from a university family, Jose had access to a higher level of education than his fellow Congolese. He had good communication skills and was fluent in English and French.

When I started working with Congolese bands I found the cultural differences bewildering. My understanding developed as I continued to work with them and particularly when I visited Kinshasa and experienced the ways of working there. Although I had envisaged some cultural differences when I formed Grupo Lokito, I had not anticipated the extent to which this would impact on the project. I found circumnavigating the situations that arose because of the clash of cultures particularly challenging. I detail the problems and my solutions in this chapter as, in practice, a large amount of my time and energy was taken up in dealing with social issues.

i. Issues of Immigration and Legality

As my involvement with Congolese musicians and the surrounding community grew, so did my awareness of the many issues facing immigrants to the UK, particularly

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[54] Congolese music is popular pan-Africa, particularly in regions of Central and East Africa notably Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Hence a large proportion of the audience for Congolese music in the UK is drawn from these communities.

refugees (Lavie 1996; Appadurai 1990; Brah 1999b). The majority of Congolese musicians whom I encountered had arrived here with a band and then either overstayed illegally or claimed asylum. The complexities of the asylum system in the UK had led to thousands of people waiting in limbo for a decision on their asylum claims. And for the Congolese applicants, the international community's perception of fluctuations in the security status of the DRC also contributed to the delay. In the meantime the Congolese asylum seekers had no financial support or accommodation, no access to healthcare and were not legally allowed to work (Penrose 2002, Topping 2009,Kerrigan and Bharti 2004). In addition, they were required to report to a Home Office centre on a weekly basis, with the threat of being taken into detention or deported at any moment. For many this had been the normal state of affairs for several years. The growing number of asylum seekers falling into this category of having no status and no rights has led to it being recognised as a serious problem. Organisations such as the Refugee Council and the Red Cross have done several studies on the significant psychological and physical effects on people forced to live under these conditions. They have campaigned for changes to be implemented (Doyle 2009, British Red Cross 2010, Leverton 2008).

ii. Politics and Congolese Musicians

In addition to the lack of legal status, there were other obstacles preventing Congolese musicians from integrating in the wider music scene. One particularly Congolese problem was the direct link between Congolese music and politics and the role of an organisation known as the Combatants *(Les Combatants)* who were particularly powerful in the UK (DVD of Combatants Meeting in Hornsey, London May 2008, Tsambu 2010, Tsambu 2011). The Combatants oppose current DRC president, President Kabila, and boycott people who are seen to support him. The group claims that the home-based Congolese musicians are prominent supporters of President Kabila.

The musicians in Congo do, indeed, sing in support of politicians; the reality for Congo-based musicians is that the main way to make any money is through various kinds of sponsorship culture. Musicians accept money and favours from donors, including politicians, in exchange for naming them in a song.[55] This is certainly nothing new in popular music; however, Mobutu's style of government reinforced the practice of using musicians as a propaganda machine to his political gain. Famous Congolese musician Franco and his group TPOK Jazz regularly sang songs for Mobutu and other politicians (Ewens 1994: 133, 134 ,Stewart 2004:199, 200, 205):

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[55] In Chapter Three I discuss the practice of mabanga and its implications for Congolese popular music.

"All that is the system for a long time. When Mobutu was in power his politics were to get musicians to sing his praises. If musicians sang his name everyone would listen and think that he was good. But the reality is that the government gives the musicians money to sing their praises ... If the musicians don't sing for the politicians they have a problem." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2009)

As we can see, Congolese musicians in Kinshasa are forced into a corner. They sing praise for the Government and politicians out of necessity rather than conviction.

One consequence of the musicians' outward support for President Kabila's government is that they have become a target for the Combatants. As an outsider I found the ideology and working methods of the Combatants bewildering, but there were areas of their activity that impacted on this particular project. Through a combination of demonstrations, boycotts, threats of violence and an internet campaign, the Combatants are extremely successful in blocking Congo-based musicians from touring abroad. Bands from the Wenge family, Koffi Olomide, and various other musicians perceived as supporting Kabila are unable to play in many countries, particularly the UK, a stronghold of the Combatants. The success of this campaign has contributed to a culture of fear of exposure amongst the UK-based musicians. Among other things it forces them to declare themselves Combatants and to avoid collaboration with Congo-based musicians.

"I am a Combatant because the situation is clear. But the musicians in Kin(shasa) have no choice, they have to sing for the government to get money. They don't like it but they have to do it for money." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2009)

At the same time, the situation serves to further isolate Congolese musicians in the Diaspora from those still in Congo. While there is a continuous flow of information via the internet and numerous phone calls, there is little physical contact between these communities, for few of the UK-based musicians are at liberty to travel and the Congolese musicians are unable to come and work in the UK.

The contrast between this and the community of Latin musicians is marked. There are strong communities of Latin musicians in the UK, constantly replenished and supplemented by new musicians arriving both on tour and settling here. As well as ensuring an ongoing musical dialogue, this serves to keep a healthy sense of competition present: musicians need to be at the top of their game both musically and in terms of behaviour in order to keep working.

iii. The Consequences for Grupo Lokito

In terms of how this affects the work of Grupo Lokito, I believe that the relative isolation of the Congolese musicians means that the community has remained fairly static for some time. With the knowledge that there are few replacements, some musicians have slipped into less-than-professional patterns of behaviour within the Congolese music scene, which they in turn brought with them to the band.

I have detailed the particular circumstances in which the Congolese musicians find themselves, because they have had direct consequences for me in my endeavour to work with them. The working environment to which I am accustomed - the UK Latin music scene - has a distinctly different set of norms of behaviour and social pressures than that of the Congolese. I would not have been able to sustain this project without a level of knowledge and an understanding of the differences.

4.2 The Ethos Behind the Formation of Grupo Lokito

In forming Grupo Lokito, a process that started in 2006, I wanted to create a situation in which musicians could work together during all stages of creation and development of the music. This was not totally within my control; it relied on a willingness to commit from the musicians involved. In contrast with many of the existing projects, I wanted to explore a contemporary rather than a nostalgic fusion. My position working from within the project enabled me to guide and direct all stages of development, although I had to develop ways of working that gave other members a voice. My emphasis was not on commercial success, although audience reaction is a valuable indication of whether music is working or not. If it did not groove they would not dance. Having played Latin music for a considerable time, I was familiar with the popular music styles and audience expectations. My immersion in the Congolese music scene gave me an insight into the music that the African 'home' audience wanted to hear. I found that, particularly at the outset of the project, I had to be very clear about my vision. Musicians were used to the concept of creating music for the world-music audience and had assumed notions of what was required. The assumption was that the audience would not respond in a positive way to the same music that the home audience enjoyed.

In the book *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* Timothy Taylor puts forward the theory that the West puts pressure on African musicians to remain culturally 'natural', in a desperate search for what the Western audience perceives as 'authentic' (Taylor 1997, 125-146)**.** He deals with the duality of how Westerners are allowed to Africanise their music by working with an authentic collaborator, while the African musicians are not permitted to 'Westernise' their music. I believe that, in today's thriving market for world music there are

increasing examples of this. There are resonances of this in the audience for Congolese music; it is noticeable that, whilst Congolese and wider African audiences love third- and fourth- generation Congolese popular music, the world-music audience favours music from the belle époque some forty years ago.[56] As a keyboard player I particularly notice the reaction to the synthesized keyboard brass sounds favoured by Congolese bands. Many European fans of Congolese music have expressed their dislike of them while the African audience loves them. The case of *Buena Vista Social Club* is another interesting example, this time drawn from Cuba. The project achieved phenomenal worldwide success in 1997 and thereafter. Whilst this created a boom for Cuban music sales and performance, it had the effect of portraying a nostalgic and romantic view of Cuban music. In reality the island is buzzing with a wealth of modern musical styles: timba, salsa, reggaetón, rap, jazz and contemporary son to name a few.

The musicians in Grupo Lokito were all well aware of the styles of music that the wider world-music audience expected to hear and initially assumed that we would be pandering to these tastes. Only once we began to achieve recognisable results in terms of powerful music and audience recognition, did the group begin to understand the ethos behind the band. I cannot claim that Grupo Lokito is unique: there may be other similar projects. However, with so many variables in terms of place, musicians and social conditions, it is highly unlikely that any two projects would have exactly the same outcomes.

4.3 Creating a Band

I have outlined my research methods in Chapter One; I had decided on an action-research model, investigating the musical interaction through a process of creation, rehearsal, reflection and performance. In order to investigate musical interaction between contemporary Congolese and Latin musicians, I needed to create a band and provide material on which the band could work. Rather than bring material that had already been composed to them to work on, I would write original songs in collaboration with band members, making the compositional process part of the fusion project. The first step towards creating a band was to decide on the instrumentation. I identified the key elements of son and Congolese rumba ensembles and then assessed what might work for my project.

The instrumentation of a salsa band varies considerably depending on the style of salsa as well as economic and social factors. The standard salsa rhythm section comprises

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[56] In Chapter Three I detail the developments in Congolese popular music.

three percussionists: congas, timbales and bongó/campana, piano and bass. As call-and-response singing is a key feature of the music, there will usually be more than one singer. For economic reasons some of the instrumentalists sing chorus to keep the numbers, and costs, down. The number of horns and woodwind and the inclusion of strings depends very much on the style of music being played, but often there will be at least one horn.

In a contemporary Congolese line-up the bands are often fairly large. Instruments include drum kit, congas, lead and rhythm guitars, keyboards, several singers and atalaku. Horn sections only tend to be found in retrospective bands playing older Congolese rumba.

In creating a band I considered the instruments essential to each style. I tried out differing formats until I settled on one that appeared to work well. As I could only sustain a band if we were able to work and earn some money, for economic reasons I had to restrict the size of the band. Not only was the combination of instruments important, I had to consider the personalities and skills that individual musicians could bring to the project. In order for the band to work well as a collaboration, I required players who were not only skilled in their own style but also open to new ideas. That I was already a musician working with both Congolese and Latin musicians gave me inside knowledge and this helped greatly in the selection of musicians. Over the years I had worked with most of the UK-based Latin musicians, and in addition I had my own son band with musicians who worked well as a team. It was, therefore, fairly straightforward for me to select musicians for this project.

My arrival on the Congolese music scene was relatively recent; when I formed the band I had been playing Congolese music for less than two years. However, my inclusion in Sound Afrique, the house band of Club Afrique in East London, meant that I spent a considerable amount of time on a weekly basis rehearsing and performing with a group of Congolese musicians.[57] In addition to this I had the input and opinions of Jose Hendrix Ndelo, a Congolese singer who was not in Sound Afrique. He provided valuable insight into the process of selecting musicians.

A further complication to consider was how I was going to replace a musician when they were not available. One reality of music-making in London, in contrast to Congo, Cuba and some Latin American countries, is that musicians cannot afford to play with just one band. In order to survive economically they will play with several bands, usually honouring their commitment to the person who books them first for a date.[58] This may cause a few

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[57] Eventually many of the musicians playing in Grupo Lokito also played in the band Sound Afrique.
[58] I am not suggesting that musicians in Congo or Cuba earn vast amounts of money when they play with a band. On the contrary, in Congo there is little money to be earned; musicians usually scrape together enough to survive on small hand-outs and gifts. In Cuba the musicians are paid by the state and get a salary, albeit small, on a monthly basis. They are not allowed to play with other bands.

problems when the band only plays one style of music; these are compounded when musicians are required to be adept at a fusion of styles. If I substituted Latin musicians, they would have difficulty with the Congolese music and vice versa. I found in practice that some instruments posed more problems than others, as my description of my choice of instruments and musicians will show.

4.3.1 The Drummer

As the drums play a central role in contemporary Congolese music it was essential to include a drum kit in the band. Whilst the basic patterns used in Congolese music are not complex and could be learned by a drummer new to the style, the drums play a lead role in the seben. Interplay between the atalaku, dancer and drummer requires in-depth knowledge of the style and language of seben and an ability to keep abreast of latest developments and the creation of new steps.[59] Finding a drummer for the band has been an ongoing problem due to the shortage of professional Congolese drummers in the UK. At the outset there were, to my knowledge, three proficient Congolese drummers in the UK: two based in London and one in Liverpool.

Initially we worked with Mara, one of the London-based drummers, a great musician, with whom I was working regularly in Club Afrique. Mara had come from a very poor background in Kinshasa and had taught himself the drums, playing a home-made drum kit on the street.[60]

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[59] Refer to Chapter Three and the CD Rom for details of the structure of seben.
[60] Drum kits constructed from beer crates and a bundle of twigs are common in Kinshasa where there are a large number of bands rehearsing and playing local gigs.

Figure 4.1: A Congolese drum kit, Kinshasa, June 2009

He had been discovered and brought into one of the bands, Planète Élégance, with whom he travelled to London. Mara was particularly strong at seben with an exciting, energetic style, fluent with all the dance moves and highly skilled at interplay with the dancers and atalaku. Unfortunately Mara had difficulties in meeting his commitments to the band and eventually, in 2007, his place was taken by the other London-based drummer, Padou Machine.[61]

Padou Machine had arrived in the UK with Congolese star General Defao and his band in 2000. A strong all-round drummer, Padou's style was less flamboyant than Mara's, if steadier. However after some time it became apparent that he was not working well in the

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[61] I will deal with social problems, professionalism and expectations of musicians in the next section of the chapter.

band. He left early in 2008. In the absence of a Congolese drummer, we decided to try working with a talented and adaptable drummer who was willing to learn the style and approached Helder Pac, a drummer from Mozambique who was playing with several Brazilian and jazz groups. In contrast to the Congolese drummers, Helder Pac had his own drum kit and transport, making my job of organising the band for gigs considerably easier. He was a very good drummer, but, as I had envisaged, whilst the basic rhythms were not a problem for him, the language and tempo of the seben were not easy to teach someone from outside the style. As Helder had other commitments he only stayed with the band for the summer of 2008.

By this point the band had achieved a degree of success and the musicians felt a degree of commitment to it. Mara re-entered the band and Makuta, the lead singer, took the responsibility of bringing him to and from work as they lived close to each other. This system worked well for several months. Unfortunately, on 1 April 2009, both Mara and the guitarist Burkina Faso were put into an immigration detention centre. Mara remained in detention for five months, after three failed attempts he was finally deported to Kinshasa in September 2009. With Mara gone the band reverted to Padou Machine who was now keen to play with us as we were doing well and had a fair amount of work. However Padou disappeared without explanation in July 2010 and at the time of writing the band is working with Felix Ngindu in spite of the difficulties associated with his living in Liverpool. Prior to this Felix had been living in the UK for several years and played regularly with several bands including Kanda Bongo Man.

4.3.2 The Percussionists

Initially I wanted to try including two percussionists in the band. I chose to work with congas as they play an important role in both Congolese and Latin music. I also included timbales, partly because the player I chose, Roberto Pla, was a great musician and I was interested to see how his exciting playing style would fit with the music of the band. The original conga player in the band was Oli Savill, an experienced Latin musician from Portugal. He stayed with the band until 2008 when he had several tour commitments and was unable to continue with it. While Savill was with the band we had often had to find people to cover for him. This gave us the opportunity to try out several players. There were two conga players who fitted in particularly well: David Pattman, one of the long-term players on the UK salsa scene, and Colombian percussionist Emeris Solis. I opted to work with David and to use Emeris on the occasions when David was not available. Finding a conga player for the band was fairly straightforward, for there are many strong Latin musicians in London including many top-class percussionists.

Inclusion of the timbales in the band was interesting but didn't entirely work. In the Latin sections of the music the timbales added to the groove, but it was hard to find a way for them to feel appropriately attuned to the Congolese rhythms. Seben was a particular problem; the lead role taken by the drum kit meant that the congas were very much in a supporting role and there was little space or need for the timbales. If I had not been constrained by economic considerations I might well have kept the timbales and included Roberto Pla on another percussion instrument, possibly campana, in the seben. I worked with Roberto for two years, but eventually had to choose between two guitars or two percussionists and opted for two guitars.

4.3.3 The Bass Player

The bass guitar is of central importance to both styles and as such was a challenging role to fill. As I wanted to keep a balance of Congolese and Latin musicians in the band I needed a Latin bass player. I had worked extensively with Colombian player Elpidio Caicedo who, in addition to playing bass, was a strong singer and excellent performer. Elpidio was open to the challenge of working with Grupo Lokito and was with the band from its formation. Having a powerful Latin singer in the band facilitated a great deal of interaction and development of vocal styles. The bass indeed proved to be one of the most difficult instruments to cover, requiring the player to be fluent in salsa and also conversant with the complexity of bass style in seben. As Elpidio performed with several bands, we also worked on occasions with Uruguayan bass player Andy Lafone when Elpidio was not available.

4.3.4 The Guitarists

The guitar is such a defining feature of Congolese sound that I wanted to find a proficient Congolese guitarist who fitted with the project and was versatile. Initially I decided to try the Congolese format of having a lead guitar and rhythm guitar. For rhythm guitar I began working with Kawele Mutimanwa, who had been my guitar teacher and as such was my first contact with Congolese musicians in London. At this time, there were two active lead guitarists in London, Limousine and Shabair. I had already worked with Shabair and he was very interested in the project. We began to work with Kawele on rhythm and Shabair on lead guitar and musically this combination worked well. However, I ran into problems as Shabair's personal difficulties affected his reliability. He remained in the band for a year until it was not possible to work with him any more.

When I first started the project Jose Hendrix Ndelo (the lead singer) had approached Limousine to play guitar though he had not shown any interest in joining us. However,

having heard our music, he decided that he would like to join the band and we replaced Shabair with Limousine. This proved to be a wise move as Limousine was a proficient and versatile musician. Although he was not of the older generation, he had studied older Congolese music styles extensively as well as many other African and non-African styles. He brought a great deal of inspiration and ideas to the band, contributing to the formation and development of style and repertoire. We initially played with both Limousine and Kawele on guitar. However, as we began to get more work, Kawele, as a bandleader himself, was increasingly unable to find time to perform with us. In addition I found that we often had to play with a smaller band for economic reasons. I was playing regularly in Club Afrique with Limousine and as we became more practiced at playing together and my Congolese keyboard playing improved, we found that we could sound full enough with just keyboard and guitar to manage without a rhythm guitar. For a time, the band settled at a rhythm section of drum kit, two percussionists, bass, keyboards and guitar.

In mid-2007 I met and began working with Burkina Faso, whose real name, as I noted earlier, is Kiamfu Kasongo. He arrived in the UK as an asylum seeker in 2006 and is one of the top guitarists from Kinshasa, having been part of the Wenge Musica group of bands.[62] Working with him I soon realised that he was an exceptional musician and would be a great asset to the band. Although Burkina Faso is a lead guitarist he enjoys playing rhythm and mi-solo guitar and working with Limousine. The inclusion of Burkina Faso in the band has greatly enhanced the development of the band, and granted access to musicians and musical ideas that have been instrumental in shaping contemporary Congolese music.

4.3.5 The Vocalists

I started the project in collaboration with Congolese singer Jose Hendrix Ndelo, but as both styles feature harmony and chorus singing, we wanted to add another singer. I chose to recruit another Congolese singer so that the singers could sing in the same language and would know the choreographed dance moves for the seben. Out of the several good Congolese singers in London we decided to work with Eugene Makuta. Jose returned to Kinshasa in December 2008, and since he left we have been working with Iddo, a Congolese singer who works principally as a backing singer but has the advantage of being a great dancer. In Congolese popular bands it is common practice to have a least four singers plus an atalaku.[63] For economic reasons I decided to limit the band to two singers. As the vocal qualities of an atalaku are quite different from those of a singer it was not easy for the singers to fulfil this role. However, they did what they could and the band developed its own

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[62] See Chapter Two for details of Wenge Musica's development.
[63] See Chapter Three and the CD Rom on seben for and explanation of the role of the atalaku.

way of communicating with the audience. On several occasions, when funds were available, I was able to expand the band and worked with an extra singer, Manora, or atalaku Maracas.

4.3.6 My Instrument – the Keyboards

My instrument, the keyboards, plays a central role in salsa and a supporting role in Congolese music. Piano is often the only harmonic instrument in a salsa band, holding the rhythm and harmony together. In contrast, Congolese bands do not always include keyboards. In particular, the older rumba bands which used horns often had no keyboards. As I have detailed in Chapter Three, in the 1970s, the move to modernise Congolese music meant the horn section went out of favour. As keyboards have become cheaper and more accessible - though they are still very hard to obtain in Africa - they have become a desirable addition to popular bands. One reason for my degree of success in entering the world of Congolese popular music is the lack of Congolese keyboard players in the UK.

Having tried various formats and musicians I settled on a band comprising drums, bass, congas, keyboards, rhythm guitar, lead guitar and two vocalists. In addition the bass and keyboard players sing backing vocals.
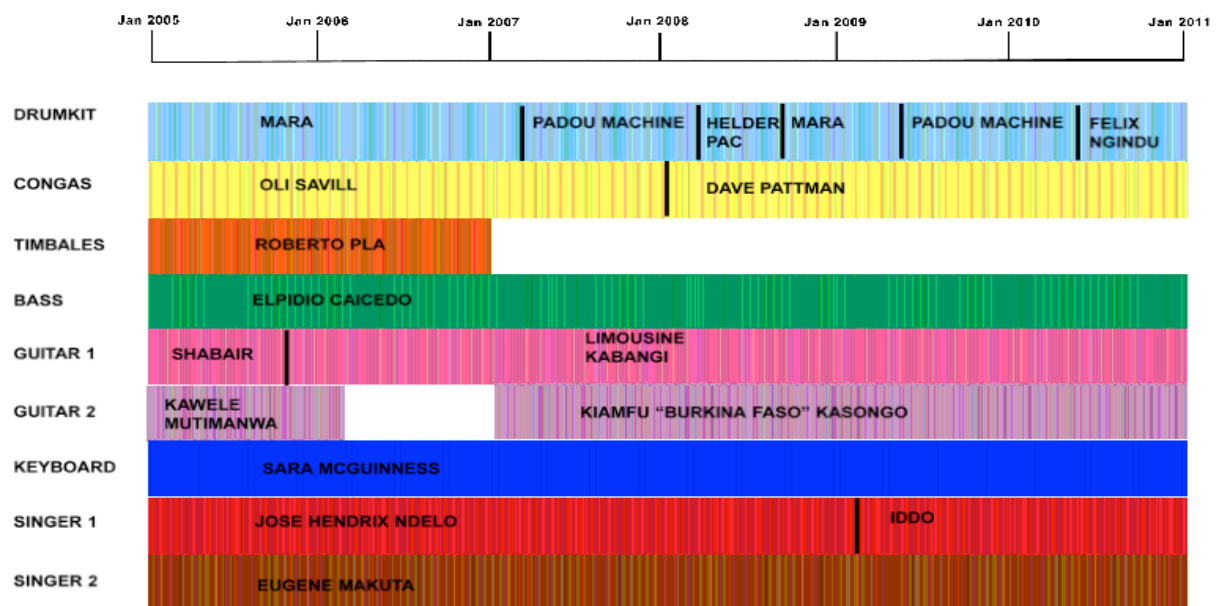
Source: McGuinness

Figure 4.2: Timeline of Grupo Lokito musicians

4.4 Developing Ways of Working

An area of particular fascination for me is communication between musicians. I have had occasion to work with musicians in many different fields of music. I have observed that while fundamental sensibilities towards groove and feeling in the music share many similarities, the ways of expressing musical ideas vary greatly. Having worked for many years as a Latin musician, I consider that world my 'home territory'. However, several years of continuous work with Congolese musicians have also accustomed me to their way of working. When I brought musicians from the two worlds together my prior knowledge of how they worked enabled me to negotiate common ground.

Both salsa music and Congolese music have precise formulae for how the music is put together. Initially I found that the musicians did not share my vision of a band that had the ability to perform both styles to a high standard. The assumption was that musicians from outside could only hope to play an approximation of their style. I found this particularly true of the Congolese musicians who had little experience of outsiders playing Congolese music.

It is worth considering the impressions of each other's music that the musicians had when they came to the band. In Chapter Two I discussed the links between Cuban and Congolese music. As Cuban and other Latin music made an important contribution to the Congolese musical landscape of the 1950s and 1960s, it is not surprising that Congolese musicians have a fair amount of knowledge of salsa. All of them have played salsa and charanga sections of Congolese songs in their repertoire.[64] The majority of the salsa tunes they know are old sones from the first half of the century. Whereas the Congolese musicians have a knowledge of salsa, albeit rather nostalgic, the Latin musicians had scant knowledge of Congolese music. Many of them had the commonly held notion that 'African' music involves a lot of percussion and acoustic instruments. It is therefore true to say that the Congolese musicians came to this project better informed than the salsa musicians.

4.4.1 Methods of Presenting and Learning New Material

I now detail methods of communication that developed as the band progressed, as they highlight contrasts and commonalities between the musical styles. I cannot claim that these distinctions would hold true for all groups of Latin and Congolese musicians, although I have observed rehearsals in Cuba, New York and Kinshasa where rehearsal organisation and communication is similar to the Latin and Congolese models I have experienced.

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[64] I detail this in Chapter Three.

When working on a new song, the Latin musicians are used to playing from chord charts of the music. They may later learn the song and dispense with the music but initially they play from them. This makes the first stages of rehearsing new material fairly rapid as they can play without first having heard or studied the song. In contrast the Congolese musicians do not read music, but learn songs aurally. [65] This makes initial rehearsal a slower process as the musicians need to memorise the song structure and harmony. However, they are able to learn and memorise songs surprisingly quickly and having learnt the music they remember it. In my personal development I have experienced both ways of working; I came to Latin music from a background in reggae and popular music, and so was used to memorising songs. I then worked from charts with Latin bands but chose to memorise songs where possible. I found that working with Congolese bands I was required to learn quite complex arrangements aurally. At first this was challenging but as I grew used to it I found that my powers of memory increased and I now have a large amount of Congolese repertoire committed to memory.

As I have stated, experiences in the formation and work of Grupo Lokito depended to a great extent on the personalities involved, a factor which I took into consideration when choosing musicians. All the musicians involved in the project were professional and had a great appreciation for the musicianship of the other members of the band. Out of mutual respect they allowed space for different methods of learning. The Latin musicians had the patience to work slowly in rehearsals while the Congolese learnt the song. The Congolese musicians were in awe of the Latin musicians' ability to read music and clearly appreciated how fast it made the initial rehearsal of songs. In turn, the Latin musicians were impressed by the ability of the Congolese to remember repertoire. For the Congolese the ability to read music marked people as 'schooled' musicians whereas in actual fact the Latin musicians in the band were self-taught. In order to accommodate all the musicians, I tried to combine the two methods of rehearsal. I distributed CDs to listen to prior to rehearsal and gave the Latin musicians scores of their parts. In many instances I also had rehearsals with smaller groups of the musicians to learn the songs and I found this to be a productive way of working.

4.4.2 Structure of Rehearsals

When rehearsing a song, Latin musicians will often look in detail at a particular section. When there are parts this may be marked by a name or a letter, and when there are

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[65] The ability to read music or not appears to be part of the school/village divide in Congo. It is assumed that musicians can only read music if they went to music school. For instance, Burkina Faso was in awe of the Latin musicians who read. He asked me to teach him to read music and picked up the idea of chord charts very quickly but then dismissed it. I had the impression that reading music would conflict with his image as a 'village' musician. Limousine, who completed two years of music school can read chord charts but chose not to.

no parts the section is named. This is fairly common rehearsal practice in many styles of music: I have experienced it in salsa, jazz, classical, popular and rock music. However, I had found in rehearsals with Congolese bands that these musicians prefer to rehearse the song as a whole. I had little success in the course of my time with Sound Afrique in encouraging the band to rehearse sections of songs, for they were accustomed to rehearsing the song top to bottom every time. I found this a cumbersome and time-consuming way to rehearse new material as often there were particular sections that needed more work. In Grupo Lokito, after some time working together, the Congolese musicians took on board the concept of rehearsing sections of a song; as a team we developed the habit of looking carefully at song detail and they realised that more work could be done if we were able to focus on sections rather than the entire song.

I found that working in a cross-cultural setting of my own making forced me to think about every small detail of communication. In Chapter Two I touched on the concept of community and my own inclusion in the two musical communities. I firmly believe that the relationships I had built up with the musicians with whom I was working, through years spent making music together, meant that we had mutual respect for each other. This allowed me to guide the project and the musicians to heed my point of view even before they shared my vision for the band. However, I did find that initially the musicians were a little confused by the project. The fact that I was asking them to play with musicians from another genre meant that they did not really expect the other musicians to play their genre in an authentic manner.

Initial rehearsals of the band were exciting events. None of the musicians had met those from the other genre before and they were all amazed by the skills that each displayed. Once we got down to details of groove, I found that any criticism or comments would be voiced in Spanish by the Latin musicians or Lingala by the Congolese musicians. My knowledge of both languages, and experience of how the groove should work in both styles of music, enabled me to mediate. I did have to assert my desire for the band to play both styles convincingly, and guide the project towards this goal. I managed to achieve this by firmly insisting that we rework details that I felt were wrong, and focusing with individuals on area that needed attention.

It was fortunate that concurrent to the founding years of Grupo Lokito I was working in Club Afrique with all of the Congolese musicians who played in the band. Part of being in the Club Afrique house band entailed the large number of hours we spent each week waiting

around in the club.[66] This gave us ample opportunity to talk about ideas for Grupo Lokito and reflect on progress. In fact, we often practised bits of Lokito songs whilst waiting for the rest of the band to appear. I also continued my work with Latin bands, enabling me to have an ongoing dialogue about Grupo Lokito with the Latin members of the band.

4.5 The Impact of Social Factors on the Band

4.5.1 Immigration and Legal Issues

Several of the Congolese musicians in the band were not legally allowed to work as they were waiting for a decision on their asylum cases.[67] As noted above, in 2009 both the drummer Mara and guitarist Burkina Faso were put in detention. Once the musicians were in immigration detention centres none of the Congolese - legal or otherwise - would visit them. Out of necessity I found that my time became preoccupied with campaigning, liaising with solicitors, and visiting detention centres. In Burkina Faso's case, his detainment led to him finding representation by a good solicitor who submitted a strong new case for him. Eventually we managed to get him bailed to live in my house, where he remains awaiting a decision.[68] Mara was less fortunate and spent five months in detention centres before being returned to Kinshasa in August 2009.

Another example of a Congolese musician from the band falling foul of the immigration system is that of Jose Hendrix Ndelo, with whom I originally formed the band. Along with many members of Planète Élégance, the band that Jose had originally arrived in the UK with, Ndelo had claimed asylum under a false name. When the work permit for the band expired, many of the musicians stayed on for years. Jose eventually grew tired of living illegally in the UK and returned to Kinshasa in December 2008. This had a great impact on the work of the band as Jose was my main collaborator for songwriting, decision-making and day-to-day running of the band. However, as detailed above, I recruited another singer, Iddo, and started to work on new material with other band members. Meanwhile I applied for a work permit for Jose to come and tour with the band in spring 2010. The application was

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[66] A typical week's work in Club Afrique would include myself and Makuta waiting in the club from 8pm to 11pm on Thursday for the rest of the band to arrive to rehearse. On Sunday we would arrive at 10pm and sometimes wait until 1am before playing the first of two two-hour sets.

[67] I had chosen musicians on the strength of their skills and experience in popular music. Unfortunately some of the top musicians were those whose legal situation had not been resolved.

[68] Burkina Faso still had no recourse to benefits and no right to legally work until In November 2010, as a result of several campaigns, asylum seekers who had been waiting for a decision for more than a year and could prove that they were a specialist under the Home Office Work Permit categories, were allowed to apply for right to work. I applied for Burkina Faso and he is now legally allowed to work.

refused as the UK Borders Agency held records of Jose's false asylum claim, and he will not be able to apply to come to the UK for ten years.

As I discovered when I began working with Congolese musicians, there is a network of clubs within the Congolese and African communities in London. Although there has been a marked decline in live Congolese music-making since 2008, during the period of my research, there was a thriving, if poorly paid, live circuit for the home audience. In contrast there were few regular venues for live African music frequented by a culturally mixed audience. This allowed the musicians to continue behaving as they did in Congo as there was no need to accommodate outsiders' behavioural norms. In his account of working with a Congolese band in Kinshasa, Bob White describes in detail the hierarchies and day-to-day workings of the band. This is interesting for me as I work in London with several of the same musicians as he worked with in Kinshasa (White, 2008). His description of many of the practices and behaviour patterns holds true for my experience of working in Congolese bands. However, with a far smaller pool of musicians in the UK than Kinshasa, or even Paris and Brussels, musicians in the UK can get away with behaviour that would not be tolerated elsewhere. The problems that I allude to can be loosely categorised as a lack of time-keeping, reliability, clarity, trust and legality. During my fieldwork in Kinshasa, I conducted interviews with musicians and journalists who cited the problems that I had raised as serious problems that have caused the Congolese musicians to gain a poor reputation worldwide (Akongo, "Le Perc", Interviews with Author, 2009).

4.5.2. Time-keeping and Reliability

In order for the reader to gain some insight into the negotiations involved in running this project, I will detail some of the solutions that I arrived at to ensure a smooth operation. Regarding time-keeping, the Latin musicians I played with arrived on time and when there was a problem they kept me informed. The Congolese musicians would always turn up late, often as much as two hours. In addition to this I had several occasions where a musician did not show up at all for a gig and, invariably, switched off his phone. When it came to bookings for the band, I was used to a system whereby, when I had a date, I rang the musicians, they informed me whether they were free or not, and they then put the date in their diary. I have experienced this way of working with all musicians I have performed with in the UK and the US. But the Congolese musicians I worked with did not keep diaries, instead claiming to store dates in their phones and expecting to be reminded about the date numerous times. We encountered problems several times, as the Congolese musicians said that they were free on dates where they actually had another booking. I would find out either from them or a third party, often at very short notice, that they would not be playing with me.

I had a particular problem with several dates in the summer of 2010. All of the Congolese musicians who play with me were offered a series of dates after they had confirmed Grupo Lokito dates. The bandleader offered them £10 more per gig, and with the exception of Burkina Faso, the musicians dropped out of my performances creating a huge problem for the band.

I had observed through my work with Congolese bands that they have a system of paying 'transport' for rehearsals, usually £5. Initially with Grupo Lokito I worked in the way I was accustomed to, paying a fee that included the concert and the rehearsal. However, the Congolese musicians were unhappy with this. In fact I discovered that they were happier to get, for example, £10 for a rehearsal and £50 for the concert rather than a greater fee of, say, £80 all paid at the concert. Congolese musicians also refused to play concerts if payment was by cheque, as is often the case.

Further complications are caused by the tendency of UK-based Congolese musicians not to own their own instruments. The guitarists may have a guitar but no amplifier, and both main drummers that I worked with, Mara and Padou, did not own drum kits. Musicians were also reluctant to help carry instruments. It was explained to me that in Congo a self-respecting musician would not be seen carrying their instrument. However, in Congo there are a huge number of band members and support staff, working for little or no money. I was also aware that other musicians in the band had worked in settings where they had road crew but adapted to other kinds of situations.

I was aware that the Congolese musicians had lived their entire lives under a system of corruption, chaos and dishonesty and had little experience of micro-management (Tsambu 2004; Wa Makuna 1999; White, 2008). I was therefore extremely careful to be open and clear about my actions as bandleader. I made sure that all musicians received the same treatment and were aware of how the band functioned. I had to find solutions to the problems of time-keeping and unreliability, and it was clear to me that monetary incentives were the best option. Having tried out several systems, I arrived at a solution whereby I portioned out the money paid to musicians according to work. I paid a fee for the performance and a fee for rehearsals. Initially I paid £20 per rehearsal but found that some musicians would arrive three hours late for a four-hour rehearsal and would still expect £20, so I changed the rehearsal fee to £5 per hour. When musicians arrived late for performances, I deducted some of their money and shared it among those who arrived on time. Having asked the musicians to help with the instruments without any response, I resigned myself to having to divide the money further to allow a fee for carrying equipment.

It remains hard to find a solution to unreliability and to last-minute absenteeism. However, there is now a core of musicians who are committed to the band. If the community of Congolese musicians in the UK were larger I would have replaced the others: all I can do is have replacements who are able to stand in occasionally. I overcame the problem of cheque payments by bringing cash to the gigs to pay musicians, causing personal cash-flow problems at times but enabling the band to work.

Although prior to this project I had been a bandleader for many years, I had never had the experience of having to impose fines and monetary incentives. I found this system contrary to my usual management style and while ultimately stressful, it did produce the required results. During my fieldwork in Kinshasa I interviewed one bandleader whose band were disciplined about time-keeping and work and I found that he had implemented exactly the same system ("Le Perc", Interviews with Author, 2009).

One reason that I felt uncomfortable with this style of management was that it set me apart from the other musicians. I reflected on this as I watched other bandleaders in Kinshasa and reached the conclusion that some distance was necessary and expected with Congolese musicians (Akongo, Chant, Interviews with Author 2010). Several incidents arose in the band with lack of discipline, involving some musicians getting drunk before playing or wandering offstage mid-performance for a cigarette. I found that the only way to deal with this was to act in a far more dictatorial way than I would normally. I told musicians that they would not play or get paid if they were drunk or left the stage. I also asked promoters only to provide one drink per musician until after the performance.

Burkina Faso is acknowledged as one of the top Congolese popular musicians and clearly considered to be at a higher professional level than the other Congolese members of Grupo Lokito. It is interesting to note that he is far more willing to help carry instruments than the others. He explained to me that, at first, this was not his inclination, but that he is now trying to adapt to the way of doing things in the UK:

> "We are in England and the system here is different, I have to try. But in Kin (shasa) I could never do that, people would think I was a small musician, it's bizarre!" (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2009)

The Latin musicians who work in Grupo Lokito are used to systems of working that would be considered conventional in most musical worlds in the UK. Issues of time-keeping, owning and carrying instruments, and unreliability do not usually arise. Conversely, the disorder that characterises the Congolese musicians' lives, demonstrated through problems of mistrust, time-keeping and a need for micro-management, have consequences for their performance and professional life. These are issues that the band has worked

through, but which remain key to the musicians' experiences of exile. The cultural inclusivity and appreciation for Congolese music expressed by British audiences is accompanied by a political exclusivity that makes it extremely difficult or impossible for Congolese musicians to establish themselves in London.

4.6 Conclusions

I have taken the reader through the process of putting the band together, giving some insight into the negotiations and decisions taken along the way. In setting the scene for my London-based project I have found it necessary to explain in some detail the particular circumstances in which the Congolese musicians find themselves. This was deliberate since I discovered that adapting to working with Congolese musicians involved a great deal of readjustment and re-thinking of what could be considered normal patterns of behaviour. A great deal of my time and energy over the years of this project was taken up with negotiating my way to balance the needs and expectations of the two groups of musicians, so that everyone felt respected and appreciated. I count my achievements with the project not only in terms of the calibre of music that the band produced but also in the fact that the band not only stayed together but grew into a strong, mutually respectful, musical unit.

CHAPTER FIVE: GRUPO LOKITO

5.1 Introduction

I have taken the reader through the process of forming the band Grupo Lokito and settling on the team of musicians. Along the way I detail the negotiation involved in, and social implications of, working in a cross-cultural setting. I have put forward the opinion that the particular history of disorder and dispossession faced by the Congolese impacts their ability to integrate into the wider musical community and I recount how I persevered to overcome this.

Having set the scene I now turn my attention to the music of Grupo Lokito. I remind the reader that my focus on bringing these musicians together was to investigate the longstanding links between the music of Congo and Cuba and I intended to do this using an action research model (see Chapter One). The outcomes of this research are the series of performances and the associated CD that I produced with the band, and a CD Rom. This chapter is to be considered in conjunction with these audio and visual examples.

In this section I shall focus on the commonalities and differences that the musicians experienced in the music of Grupo Lokito. I shall consider how the music of Grupo Lokito developed as the musicians became accustomed to working with each other and began to trust the band musically. As well as referencing the preceding chapters I shall refer to the accompanying CD Rom for detailed explanations of structure, style and song progression. This will enable me to keep the content of this section focused on the actual interactions and developments within the band.

5.2 A Review of My Research Methods

Before I discuss the outcomes of my research project, I need to consider whether my chosen research methods worked. I had included the composition process in the development of material so that input from both genres of music would be present at all stages of the process. In this way I could track development of material from the initial idea through its development, rehearsal, reflection and performance, and then finally recording. In practice this worked as outlined below.

A – COMPOSITION OF MATERIAL – Together with one other musician I would map out an idea for a song which we sequenced using Logic or Pro Tools software. This

process would usually begin with us deciding on a chord progression, a working rhythm and melody for the song. In most instances we worked on the backing track and then decided on the lyrics, but on some occasions we worked the other way around, building a song around the lyrics. The vocalist would then record a guide vocal on the skeleton backing, and this was the version that was taken to other members of the band for further work.

B – INITIAL REHEARSALS – Initial rehearsal would not be with the full band; often I rehearsed with a guitarist or the bass player with a view to orchestrating the idea and developing the arrangement. At this stage we would determine the groove, refine the arrangement of the song, and record guide instrumental parts. Recordings of this version would be given to all band members. After Burkina Faso joined the band he became a principle collaborator in the compositional and arrangement process. Although not a songwriter, he was a powerful and experienced arranger.

C – REFLECTION AND ADJUSTMENT – Individual musicians studied the song, learning their parts and considering compositional ideas to bring to rehearsal. Depending on feedback and my own reflections we might decide to change aspects of the song at this stage.

D – FULL REHEARSALS OF MATERIAL – The full band would come together to rehearse the song; this gave musicians the opportunity to contribute their ideas to the arrangement. A degree of reflection and adjustment would take place during the course of rehearsal which would be recorded. The process of reflection, adjustment and rehearsal continued until the band felt that the song had developed to a stage where it was ready to be performed.

Before creating this project I had experienced rehearsals with UK Congolese bands. They were in the habit of rehearsing regularly, however rehearsals invariably started a couple of hours late and covered very little material. In contrast, on the Latin music scene, bands rarely rehearsed but when they did so they made efficient use of the time.[69] I was conscious of the vastly different expectations of rehearsal time from the two groups of musicians, and in Chapter Four I detail how I overcame issues of time-keeping. Having got the musicians to attend and be punctual for rehearsals, I was determined to make good use of the time. I found that in practice the band were happy to work hard in rehearsals; they recognised we had a lot of material to get through and they could see that their input was valued.

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[69] Since the late 1990s there had been a decline in regular performance opportunities for Latin bands. Following the success of *Buena Vista Social Club* most available work was for small bands playing a standard son repertoire. The reduced income made it difficult to sustain band membership - musicians took work where they could find it - and there was little need to rehearse well-known songs.

E – PERFORMANCE – Although most of the arrangement was organised in rehearsal, the open montuno and seben sections were tested out in performance. We would not rehearse the dynamics, leaving space for interaction in a live situation. The exception was where the singers brought dance moves that they wanted the drummer and other musicians to rehearse.

F – REFLECTION – Reflection on the performance took several forms including discussion after a concert, personal responses and informal group discussion after the event. The band was also keen to watch video footage of the performance, especially when new dance moves had been incorporated.

G – FURTHER REHEARSALS – In subsequent rehearsals musicians frequently voiced their opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of new material, and pinpointed areas that needed work. I observed that the increasingly high-profile performance opportunities that the band was getting gave the musicians a focus and inspired us to work towards improving the material. There were songs that we decided to drop at times as they were not as strong as the rest of the repertoire.

H – RECORDING – When songs had been played in and we felt they were working well, we recorded them. We wanted to have a record of our work and at our concerts there was audience demand for CDs. I had discovered that for the Congolese musicians a CD was of great significance. It seemed as if they did not take the band seriously if we did not have a CD to show for it. The Latin musicians took a more pragmatic stance. Whilst they were happy to work on a CD, they realised that it was a costly business and hard to recoup costs. I recognised that the different expectations of the musicians stemmed from the norms within their two music communities. Few bands on the London Latin scene put out CDs. Those that did focused on the group rather than the individual. Conversely there was pressure on all Congolese musicians and wannabe-musicians to put out a solo CD.[70]

5.2.1 Recording Methods and Productions Values

We had to work within a low budget for recording, but there were still decisions to be made about production values. As well as having recorded extensively with Latin bands I had engineered, played on, and observed a number of Congolese popular music projects. In addition I had input from other band members who had studio experience. I found that the

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[70] One of my first contacts with Congolese musicians was through guitarist Fiston Lusambo. He worked producing CDs for many Congolese musicians and non-musicians. Fiston wrote and programmed the music, called in Congolese musicians to record, and the artist would sing, blending their voice in with the professional singers. A CD would then be produced with a picture of the solo 'artist' on the cover. I saw several of these London productions on sale in Kinshasa record shops.

best results were achieved by working from a sequenced track and then replacing the instruments with the real thing one at a time. This was the chosen method of most of the Congolese bands I had witnessed, and was also the way I had worked on several salsa albums. I was aware that playing along to a sequenced track one at a time does not suit all musicians - I know some great players who can not make the music swing if they are recording to a click track, achieving a far better result by recording live as an ensemble. Luckily all musicians in Grupo Lokito were familiar with and happy to record using the sequencer.

We worked by recording a sequenced backing track into Pro Tools and then added live guitars and bass. I then played non-sequenced keyboards onto the track. The backing tracks were then taken into a studio where we recorded drum kit, congas and vocals. After his arrival in the band Burkina Faso and myself would produce the tracks and the mixing was usually done on my home Pro Tools system.

Photo: McGuinness

Figure. 5.1: Recording Grupo Lokito – Mara on drums (London, December 2008)

Figure. 5.2: Recording Grupo Lokito − Burkina Faso and Sara in the control room, London, December 2008

In the CD Rom I have detailed the progress of two songs as an example of how the creative and research process worked from the beginning through to finished product. I consider that the action research model that I designed worked well in the context of this project. Musicians were able to engage with and participate in the development of material from the beginnings of the project. As the team spirit grew they chose to participate more frequently. I conclude that the process of composition, rehearsal, reflection and adjustment had several positive outcomes, engaging as it did all members of the band in the creative process and giving them a sense of ownership of the material.

5.3 The Challenges Facing the Different Instrumentalists in the Band

I now consider what conclusions can be drawn from the music produced through bringing together these two groups of musicians: Did the music work? Did the musicians recognise the similarities in the music? And, crucially, were there vestiges of the Congo-Cuba link in contemporary popular music?

Before considering the group as a whole, I look at individual players within the ensemble in order to detail how the two styles contrast for each instrument. There are several common themes that apply to all instruments: the emphasis on creation of groove, the same fundamental role of the instrument and parallels in structure. A feature of Congolese music with which the Latin musicians struggled at first was the manner in which lines on different instruments interlocked. Until they were used to it they found it hard to enter in the right place.

Figure 5.3: Score of typical Congolese rumba pattern

Audio example 5.1: Typical Congolese rumba accompaniment

In this example of a rumba pattern the lead and rhythm guitars enter on the 1½, the cocot guitar, on the 2½, the congas, on the 2 and the bass, on the first beat of the bar. As it is common for the rhythm guitar to start the song off by playing solo, it is easy for the start of their part to be mistaken as the first beat of the bar. I personally found it easier to play in time by feeling where the parts fitted relative to each other rather than by counting beats.

For the Congolese musicians, the main challenges lay in understanding the dynamic changes in Cuban music and the short call-and-response chorus and lead interplay characteristics of the montuno section.

5.3.1 The Conga Player

The congas fulfill the same basic role within both styles of music - driving the groove along. They play a central role in the son and salsa ensemble. In Chapter Two I detail how, as son developed, features of Cuban rumba, and Afro-Cuban religious music fed into the musical style. One result of this is the vast repertoire of calls and embellishments on Cuban percussion instruments referencing this input. In salsa and son, while the congas maintain the basic tumbao, the player will create groove and dynamics by use of these additional devices. An accomplished Latin conga player will have studied this repertoire and have strong command of this musical language.

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As I outlined in Chapter Two, there was a conscious move away from Cuban music in the third generation of Congolese music. However this did not reach as far as dropping the congas from the ensemble. Congolese musicians emphasise the importance of the conga rhythm in the creation of groove. Indeed, when working on songs for the band, Burkina Faso insisted that we program in a basic conga pattern before adding the instrument, considering it an integral part of the drum groove.

Whilst there is a wealth of Congolese folkloric styles with complex percussion rhythms, I have found the use of congas in contemporary popular music to be very much in a supporting role. The congas player will maintain a basic groove with very little embellishment. This is particularly noticeable in seben, where space is given to the kit drummer to interact with the dancers.
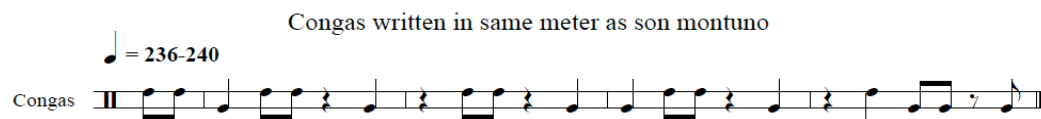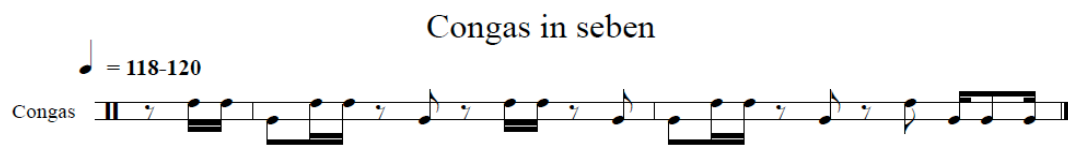
Figure 5.4 a: Scores of conga parts in seben notated in 4/4 at a tempo of 118-120 bpm and also in double time[71]
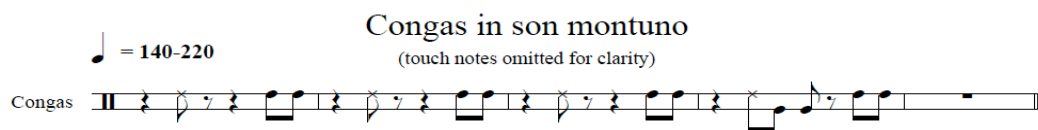
Figure 5.4 b: Basic conga pattern in montuno

A comparison of the conga parts in seben and montuno reveals that both emphasise the second and fourth beat of the bar, the strong 4 being a feature of African musical organisation that was absorbed into Cuban music (see Chapter Two).

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[71] In those score examples where I am comparing Cuban and Congolese rhythms I have written the Congolese scores in the conventional format of one cycle of the snare drum pattern to a bar and repeated them on a double-time score. This is to facilitate comparison with Cuban rhythms where it is the convention to write the clave over a period of two bars.

The device in générique (see Chapter Three) of shifting seamlessly from 'folklore', in 6/8, to seben proved to be the greatest challenge facing conga players in Grupo Lokito. Whilst others found the rhythms difficult to grasp, Dave Pattman was an expert player of Cuban popular and folkloric styles and he did not have any problem learning the patterns for the folkloric sections. Dave's playing style was understated and steady, fitting in well with the Congolese rhythms.

5.3.2 The Drummer

I have detailed the importance of the drum kit in Congolese popular music and the lead role the drummer plays in the seben. With the necessity for a vast repertoire of musical language, and knowledge of contemporary dance trends in Congolese music, a Congolese popular musician best filled this role in the band. The drum kit is not a standard instrument in the son line-up although it features in Latin jazz, timba and some salsa bands. All three Congolese drummers who played with the band found the basic rhythm of salsa easy to grasp. In Chapter Three I discuss the similarity between the cavacha snare rhythm and 3:2 son clave. With a timeline that is fundamentally the same, it is of no surprise that the drummers were able to adapt to salsa.

The rhythm section in son bands comprises congas, bongó/campana and hand percussion. Salsa bands add the timbales to the ensemble.[72] In the absence of these instruments, the drummer in Grupo Lokito played the most essential parts of the rhythm. We added a campana to the drum kit and worked with each drummer on structure in the Cuban repertoire. Initially they did not grasp the importance of dynamics in the music. I refer particularly to the use of a driving campana pattern when the song enters the montuno section. In my study of second-generation rumba (Chapter Two), I notice the lack of dynamics in the early Cuban-derived music of the period. I suspect that this influenced the expectations of the Congolese drummers we worked with.

5.3.3 The Bass Player

The bass player faced one of the biggest challenges in this project as the bass is a driving force in both Cuban and Congolese music. In both styles the bass player focuses on the first and fifth note of the chord, and the chord progressions and structure have a lot in common.[73] Whilst the basic concept of bass playing is similar, there are several significant

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[72] The bongó player changes onto campana for the montuno section of the song, I have written this bongó/campana to indicate that these two instruments are played by the same musician.
[73] It is interesting to note that in both Congolese and Cuban music the bass style is linked to the conga playing. In Chapter Two I refer both to the development of the bass in salsa to mimic the bi-tonal drum figure found in makuta (Chapter Two, Section 2.5.1., iv. The Modernisation of Son) and the

differences in playing style. One fundamental difference is the way the bass is picked. In salsa the player uses their second and third fingers to pluck the bass, whereas in Congolese music the bass player strikes the lower notes percussively with the thumb and pivots between the thumb and second and third fingers.

Photo: McGuinness

Figure.5.5a: Bass plucked with second and third fingers

parallels in Congolese popular music drawn between the seben bass style and conga rhythm (Chapter Three, Section 3.3.3., iii. The Third Generation – Zaiko Langa Langa and the Youth Bands).

Figure 5.5b: Bass struck with thumb and picked with second and third fingers.

Initially Elpidio plucked the bass using the method he was used to but eventually he incorporated the Congolese thumb style into his playing. In the rumba and refrain sections of Congolese music the main challenge for Elpidio lay in determining how the bass pattern fitted in with the other instruments. Once accustomed to this he had no problem playing convincing bass lines. The real challenge came in the bass lines in the seben.

The basic bass pattern in montuno is:

Basic montuno bassline

Figure 5.6 a: Montuno bass pattern

And in seben:

Basic seben bassline

Figure 5.6 b: Seben bass pattern

There are certain devices that the player adds to these to make the music groove. In addition to adding extra notes and variations one feature important to both styles is the insertion of damped touch notes in between the basic pattern. Elpidio is the master of these in Cuban music so it was easy for him to understand the concept when approaching Congolese music.

Touch notes

Key

Montuno bassline with touch notes
(extract from tu jueguito)

Figure 5.7 a: Example of montuno bass line including touch notes

Seben bassline with touch notes
(extract from generique lokito)

Figure 5.7 b: Example of seben bass line including touch notes

Audio example 5.2 a: montuno with touch notes,
Audio example 5.2 b: seben with touch notes

One difficulty when applying this technique to an unfamiliar style of music is to know exactly where to place the damped notes and how to phrase variations for maximum effect.

A further challenge for Elpidio was the lead role that the bass takes in the seben. With the fourth-generation emphasis on hot, exciting seben, the bass had become key in the creation of ambience, responding to and calling the dancers, and doubling sung lines with the atalaku. Just as with the drumming, this is a hard task for a bass player not familiar with Congolese popular music. In fact, having played with a variety of Congolese bass players, I observed that many of the older Congolese bass players do not have the repertoire to be able to fulfill this role.[74] Initially I faced a lot of pressure from the Congolese members of the band over the choice of bass player; they recognised the importance of the bass and the difficulties facing bass players who were not immersed in the style. I resisted the pressure, as I knew that Elpidio would work at his playing and I wanted to observe how he would assimilate the playing style. It took some persuasion to get Burkina Faso to work with Elpidio on the seben. Although he had a great respect for Elpidio as a musician, he was convinced that only a Congolese bass player could do what was required.

5.3.4 The Guitarists

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[74] Among the proficient Congolese bass players in the UK, Claude Bula is of the second generation. Whilst he has a great groove in rumba, the style he plays in seben is very repetitive and lacks in excitement. This is in sharp contrast with the style of Chocolat, a bass player who worked with Congolese star Bozi Boziana, and is conversant with the language of fourth-generation seben.

I have discussed the importance of the electric guitar in Congolese music and being a signature sound it was clearly an important feature of Grupo Lokito. The manner in which the guitar was incorporated in the band could be divided into two distinct periods: before and after the arrival of Burkina Faso. There are many striking similarities between the way the piano and the guitar are used in Cuban and Congolese music respectively. The piano and guitar share the montuno concept of short repeated cyclic patterns and interlocking rhythmic lines.

The differences lie in the sound of the instrument and the signature Congolese lead guitar style. I found that while the lead guitar had a distinctive Congolese sound, there was never any clash of rhythm. I attribute this to the inherent similarities between the two styles and the guitarists' ability to identify the groove and find their place in it.

As with all instruments, the individual musician's skills had to be taken into account. Limousine was the guitarist the band settled on and he played on all of the band recordings. He was a flexible guitarist, able to play both lead and rhythm guitar. With regard to the school/village debate, Limousine sat, so to speak, on the fence. He did attend Institut National des Arts in Kinshasa for two years before travelling to the UK with Planète Élégance. In addition he had done a lot of independent study into wider African guitar styles and had become a fan of Malian music. A consequence of his background was that, unlike many of the Congolese guitarists, Limousine was comfortable playing in minor keys.[75]

The arrival of Burkina Faso in Grupo Lokito caused a marked change in the groove of the band. As I have noted earlier he brought with him a wealth of experience in contemporary Congolese performance style. Burkina Faso proudly classed himself as a 'village' musician, his training ground had been Minzoto Wella Wella (see Chapter Two) and his approach to groove had made him instrumental in the development of the Wenge Musica sound. When I asked Burkina Faso to join the band I was not aware of his background: I had simply experienced playing with him and been impressed by his guitar skills and approach to music.

When questioned about music Burkina Faso did not believe in categories, he approached every style in terms of groove. He explained his philosophy:

> "There is no difference. There is one music but the name changes. In Cuba they say 'salsa', in Congo they say 'rumba', in America they say 'jazz' but it's all just music." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

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[75] As I mentioned in Chapter Three, Congolese rumba is always in major keys. When minor chords do occur they are usually in passing. Minor harmony does appear in Congolese 'folkloric' music, usually in 6/8. This creates a striking contrast that I have observed in the playing of Congolese guitarists: in minor keys they are more hesitant than in major keys.

Reflecting on what exactly Burkina Faso brought to the band, I have identified three main factors: a highly accomplished level of lead guitar playing, folkloric approaches to the creation of groove and a keenly developed concept of musical arrangement coupled with a deep knowledge of Congolese music. I shall deal with the first two factors here, having acknowledged at his input into the arrangements in the preceding section.

Burkina Faso is an extremely creative guitarist as is witnessed by the fact that he was, and still is, considered one of the top Congolese guitarists in the Congo in the face of stiff competition. He describes his guitar style as 'joking'. In fact, what he does is repeat a riff adding little variations every time. In June 2009, I interviewed musicologist and producer Michelle Mbunda at Institut National des Arts about Congolese guitarists. He stated:

> "For me Burkina Faso is the most original of all the popular guitarists. His technique of taking a line and varying it, bringing in little folkloric ideas [Mbunda sings example] catches your attention. He is a master with a deep knowledge of Congolese music." (Mbunda, Interview with Author, 2009)

I observed Burkina Faso working on numerous occasions. When confronted with a new piece of music he would cock his head to one side and listen for a time. When he had established the rhythm and harmony he would add a guitar part. His philosophy of not labelling music meant that he approached the Cuban-style songs without the preconceived notion of how a salsa groove should go, adding a part that he felt enhanced the groove of the music.

In Chapter Three I detail how Burkina Faso brought a folkloric device called a cocot into Wenge Musica. He was not the only person using this device. It was commonly used by the 'village' musicians, being brought into popular music by the guitarists who emerged from Minzoto Wella Wella. Burkina Faso stated:

> "The guitarists who came from Minzoto Wella Wella like Chiro Chiro, he wasn't a great guitarist, but he knew how to make people dance, he learnt everything in Minzoto." (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2011)

Burkina Faso brought the idea of cocot with him into the band, using it to great effect in both the Congolese and Cuban repertoire. In the associated CD Rom I have studied the development of two compositions, both of which make use of the cocot, which I discuss in detail. For the sake of continuity I give an audio example of an extract of a song without and then with cocot, and the score of the rhythm.

Figure 5.8: Cocot in the refrain of *Congo*

Audio example 5.3a: *Congo:* **Grupo Lokito refrain without cocot.**
Audio example 5.3b: *Congo***: Grupo Lokito, extract from the refrain with cocot.**

This score of the refrain of *Congo* shows how we built a groove from a series of interlocking ostinatos. In addition to the rhythm guitar Burkina Faso played a damped rhythmic cocot which interlocked with the two percussive keyboard lines. The result is a lively groove as demonstrated by the audio example.

The inclusion of cocot in the Cuban-style compositions greatly enhanced the groove of the band. The following examples are of *Tu Juegito* first with, and then without, cocot. In this example the variations that Burkina Faso is so fond of, his 'jokes', are apparent:

Tu Jueguito montuno
(extract 3.41-3.46)

E Caicedo/S McGuinness

♩ = 200

Lead vocal

Chorus

Guitar cocot

Grand piano

Bass

Percussion

Guiro

Congas

Drumkit

pe - sa mo - te - ma   *yo   lu - la yo___min - gi*

No vuelv - a   ca - er   *no vuelv - a   ca - er*

Figure 5.9: Cocot in salsa

Audio example 5.4 a: *Tu Jueguito*: **Grupo Lokito without cocot**
Audio example 5.4 b: *Tu Jueguito*: **Grupo Lokito with cocot**

In *Tu Jueguito* the piano, bass and congas play a standard 3:2 salsa tumbao. Study of the score of *Tu Jueguito* shows the emphasis on the 4 and the 4½. The piano and bass play the characteristic salsa patterns of the bass falling on the 4 and the piano on the 4½, which reinforce the open notes on the conga (4 and 4½). The guitar cocot starts with the piano entering on the 1½ of the first bar of the pattern. It then reinforces the 3:2 feel of the music by accentuating the off-beats of the 3 bar and playing a constant quaver rhythm on the 2 bar. The guitar is damped, producing a muted percussive note. It became clear to the members of Grupo Lokito that cocot worked extremely well in the context of the Cuban/Congolese fusion, as bass player Elpidio Caidcedo pointed out:

> "He's basically doing what the tres player does but in a more percussive way." (Caicedo, Interview with Author, 2011)

I have alluded several times to what I consider to be the importance of the folkloric input in fourth-generation Congolese music. I have also put forward the theory that Congolese 'folklore' travelled to Cuba centuries ago and was an input in the formative years of Cuban music. It must therefore be likely that the same folklore that travelled to Cuba, was

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transformed, and came back, also stayed in Congo. There it was transformed via the confluence of different folklores into an urban 'folklore' and this found its way into the guitar playing of Burkina Faso and his contemporaries.

5.3.5 The Keyboards

The piano fulfils the same central role in Cuban music that the guitar does in Congolese popular music. In Cuba it replaces the tres as the main instrument playing the montuno rhythm or, in an ensemble that features piano and tres, it plays montunos that lock in with the tres montuno. Piano solos are a common feature of Cuban music. In my opinion the piano player has the best of both worlds; he or she plays a percussive pattern that is an integral part of the rhythm section and also has the space to do open solos. In Congolese popular music the role of the keyboard rose in importance as the generations progressed, becoming part of the modern sound of the fourth generation. As with Cuban music the keyboard plays very much a percussive role. In the verse section of the song the keyboards play a simple line that interlocks with the guitar parts. When the song moves into the refrain and then on to seben the keyboard becomes more percussive. In addition to the percussive parts in seben, the keyboard takes a lead role, punctuating dance moves with brass stabs and taking the lead in certain sections.

As the keyboard is my instrument I am well placed to detail the progression of the role of keyboards in this fusion project. As Cuban music was familiar territory for me, I will focus on the area that was relatively new to me: the Congolese keyboard style. Initially I had little guidance on the role of keyboards in Congolese music. Although I was playing with a Congolese band there was a shortage of Congolese keyboard players from whom to learn the style. The one keyboard player I had met, Kallé, had shown me the marimba pattern for seben.

Figure 5.10 Marimba part in seben

Audio example 5.5: Marimba keyboard part in seben

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The marimba part is played by both hands and I have scored the part to indicate this split. In the score have included the cavacha snare pattern, the timeline of seben. An examination of the marimba part reveals the close relationship with the cavacha rhythm. The marimba pattern begins on the fourth beat of the bar, playing semiquavers that are identical to the conga part. The device of leaving out the 1½ of the first bar serves to accent the following semiquaver which falls on the cavacha rhythm. The marimba plays a driving semiquaver ostinato which accents the cavacha beats. The keyboard sound of choice for Congolese musicians is the *kalimba* sound. This is more percussive that the marimba sound, suiting the part better. Initially when learning the pattern I found it hard to enter in the correct place. However this became obvious once I had related the part to the snare rhythm.

 I did not find it difficult to play Congolese music; on the contrary, I found it very easy to fit in with the groove. The concept of the keyboard marimba part was exactly the same as the montuno in son; a percussive pattern that repeated continuously with slight variations.

Working with Burkina Faso was an education for me. He was a master at arranging Congolese music and with his help I discovered how the keyboard could enhance the groove of the music. He took the same rhythmic ideas that he used on guitar and wove together an interlocking mesh of different, simple parts. A good example of this is in the refrain section of *Congo*, as detailed on the CD Rom.

Figure 5.11: *Congo* refrain − keyboard, guitar cocot and conga parts

Audio example 5.6: *Congo*: Grupo Lokito, an extract of the refrain section.

This example shows the rhythmic parts - guitar, congas and keyboards - which interlock to create the groove in the refrain section of *Congo*. As I have detailed, in the

refrain the song goes up a gear in intensity as compared to the verse but it has not however reached the full power of the seben. The two keyboard parts are played on marimba and kalimba sounds. This serves to differentiate between the two parts, kalimba being chosen for the more percussive sound. There is strong correlation between the kalimba and conga patterns: both accent the last two semiquavers of each bar. In fact, the kalimba provides a pulse on the off-beat and the following semiquaver. The parts enter in difference places: kalimba and congas on the 4½, marimba on the 1 and guitar cocot on the 1¼. I have noted the beats common to all parts which is, with the omission of three beats, the kawuka variation of the cavacha rhythm.
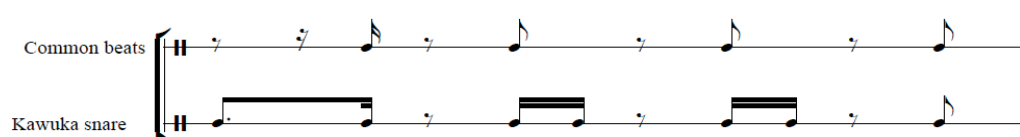
Figure 5.12: Common beats compared to kawuka snare pattern

Whilst the snare is not playing this rhythm in the refrain, the construction of the interlocking percussive parts refers to cavacha as the timeline. I consider that this is a build up towards the entry of the seben which, in this song, begins with the kawuka variation of cavacha.[76]

Through working on arrangements with Burkina Faso I started to get to grips with how to construct the groove of the music. In common with the rest of the musicians I had no problem understanding the concept and structure but on occasions I did have problems with knowing where to enter with the rhythmic parts. Some of the rhythms were slightly removed from where I would have played them with a Cuban groove and it was hard to adjust. I usually resolved this by listening carefully to the drum pattern. I found that as I internalised the cavacha rhythm as the timeline of the music I began to feel how my lines fitted into the rhythmic matrix of the music.

In common with many outsiders I initially found the lead brass lines that the keyboard interjected into the seben too brash. But my opinion changed as I began performing with Sound Afrique. I could see how the keyboard brass fitted into the performance as a whole, adding to the excitement of the choreography. The main challenge for me was searching for a convincing voice in the keyboard lead parts where the guitars dropped out of

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[76] This is similar to a common feature of son: although the clave is not always present the instruments of the ensemble still play 'in clave' with reference to the clave rhythm.

the seben.[77] A breakthrough for me came during my first visit to Kinshasa - an opportunity to seek out and learn from keyboard players. Through my work with Congolese musicians in the UK, I had established contact with musicians in Kinshasa. In addition Jose Hendrix Ndelo had moved back from London to Congo in 2008 and we were able to investigate the Kinshasa music scene together. I attended rehearsals of several of the top bands including Tshala Muana, JB M'Piana, Zaiko Langa Langa and Werrason, all of them featuring keyboards. It was clear to me that the band with the most powerful groove was that of Werrason, the keyboards playing an important part in the creation of this groove. I approached Werrason's keyboard player, Thierry Synthé, for lessons. Through working with Thierry I began to appreciate the role of the brassy keyboards in seben. He patiently taught me lead keyboard lines and showed me how to vary them in a style similar to Burkina Faso's variations on guitar lines.

Video Example 5.1: Thierry Synthé Class

Photo: Ndelo.

Figure 5.13: Keyboard class in Kintambo with Thierry Synthé, June 2009

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[77] In Chapter Three, Section 3.4.4 The Fourth Generation, I detail the structure of and dynamics within seben.

As I got to know Thierry and understand a little about musical life in Kinshasa, I realised several interesting points. In the first place, out of the keyboard players that I had seen, Thierry was the only one who was from the 'village' tradition. In addition to this he was from the heart of the urban village - Kintambo. His family all played folkloric music and he ran the main urban folklore band in Kintambo, Elengi Ya Thierry Synthé. The band performed every Sunday night in his parents' bar in Kintambo and it soon became my favourite night out in Kinshasa. The band comprised percussion, keyboards and voices, the keyboards playing some of the same lines that Thierry had taught me, lines that he transported into Werrason's music.

The folkloric performances in Kintambo in themselves evoked many memories of different aspects of Cuban music and performance, in particular the dance moves and percussion rhythms. However, a discussion of this is beyond the scope of this research project.

Figure 5.14: Sunday night in Kintambo −
Elengi Ya Thierry Synthé performing in Tsha-Tsho Bar, June 2009

I felt that my encounters with Thierry Synthé showed me how little I had known and how much I had to learn, altering my opinion of keyboard playing in Congolese popular music. Although I had realised that the keyboards could support the groove of the guitars, I had not known how to use the keyboards as a lead instrument in seben. I had previously repeated the same keyboard line without variation, not knowing that I could adopt a more

creative role. Thierry's playing also clearly demonstrated that the brass lines in seben were not played as substitute horn lines: they were lines composed for keyboards.

Figure 5.15: Score of keyboard line for seben in 2 Temps[78]

Audio example 5.7: Keyboard brass lines in seben

I have included the snare drum in the score to demonstrate how closely the keyboard rhythm is linked to the cavacha rhythm. In the above example I give four variations on a lead line in 2 Temps (see Seben Section in CD Rom). In reality the line would not vary as frequently, the player would repeat a line a few times before changing, interacting with the atalaku and dancers.

I brought back with me a far clearer idea of how I could use keyboards in Grupo Lokito. Previously I had taken a lead role in the Cuban repertoire and very much a back seat in the Congolese. But I now felt that I had the tools to make full use of my instrument in both.

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[78] See CD Rom on seben for explanation of terms. 2 Temps is the chord progression I, IV, V, I.

5.3.6 The Singers

The Congolese have a powerful vocal tradition; in my work with Congolese singers their vocal talents have constantly impressed me. The singers in Grupo Lokito displayed, as would be expected, different talents. Although Jose Hendrix Ndelo, the singer with whom I initially formed the band, sang Congolese music beautifully, his passion was for soul and pop music, and this was reflected in his singing style. I consider Eugene Makuta to be the strongest Congolese singer in the UK. He arrived here with General Defao and his band in 2000 and is one of the musicians that Bob White carried out research with in Kinshasa for his book *Rumba Rules* (White 2000).

The challenge for the Congolese singers was in the relatively foreign territory of Cuban music. One aspect of Congolese singing for which singers are praised is the quality of vibrato. Associated with this is the habit of holding notes on at the end of a phrase. This style is attributed to the influence on Congolese singers of European romantics such as Tino Rossi. In Grupo Lokito I found the long notes did not sit well with the Cuban songs which required a more rhythmic vocal delivery. With the help of Elpidio Caicedo who, in addition to his bass skills, is a well-regarded salsa singer, the singers worked in detail on the style of delivery in Cuban music.

Another feature that the singers were not accustomed to was the short call-and-response chorus and improvisations called *pregones*. In Congolese music there is call and response but this occurs in the refrain, and the structure usually involves an entire sung verse followed by a long chorus. In Cuban music the pregones should be rhythmic and varied in melodic and lyrical content. Initially I worked with Jose improvising but he found the concept a difficult one; Jose referenced soul music in his vocal style and was not comfortable attempting rhythmic improvisations with words, preferring 'oohs' and 'aahs'. I found that this did not work with the music we were doing and we decided to work with Makuta singing the improvisations. Makuta had a far better swing and concept of improvising, however there were a couple of stylistic details that needed adjusting. He would sing exactly the same melody each time with a slight variation of words and in live performance he would only sing as many improvisations as there were in the demo recording of the song. In Cuban music it is normal practice for the call-and-response chorus sections to be open in length, just as seben is in Congolese music. It took some time and explanation, coupled with listening to reference material such as Puerto Rican singer Gilberto Santa Rosa and Cuban band Buena Vista Social Club, for him to master the style. Initially Makuta would hand over the lead singing to Elpidio in the montuno section but, as his confidence grew, he took more of a lead role.

Audio example 5.8a: pregones before Congolese singer had absorbed the Cuban style of improvisation.

Audio example 5.8b: pregones after the singer had studied the Cuban style of improvisation

The combination of Latin and Congolese singers was a productive one. The singers observed and learned from each other and I found this was an area in which Grupo Lokito quickly developed its own voice.

5.4 The Material Produced by the Group

In considering the role of the individual instruments and the challenges facing their respective musicians, it becomes obvious to me that there are more similarities than differences. The basic underlying principles are the same: the creation of a groove through a combination of interlocking rhythms over a short repeated chord progression, extended open sections with dynamic changes, and interaction both between musicians and musicians and audience. The two styles of music have closely related timelines, indeed in Grupo Lokito I observed Elpidio Caicedo working out his parts in a Congolese song by referring to the clave.

I shall examine examples of Grupo Lokito's work to highlight examples of how we created groove:

5.4.1 *On Va Danser*

On Va Danser is the first song that Jose Hendrix Ndelo and I wrote together. We started with a straightforward son tune with a simple four-chord progression.

Figure 5.16: Score of *On Va Danser*

Audio example 5..9: *On Va Danser*

The piano plays a simple 2:3 montuno - I have scored it as a single line with no octaves to make it easier to read. In this song the bass does not play the standard son bass line. Having played the piano montuno I wanted to give this medium-tempo song a feeling of easy, forward motion. After some experimentation, we settled on the bass line which entered on the 2½ of the last bar of the chord sequence. Whilst most of the notes fall on the off-beats, the bass does give the sense of the clave as it starts on the bombo beat, the 2½ of the 3 bar, and ends on the third beat of the 2 bar, accenting this beat. The guitar part combines a harmony with the piano in the first and third bars with an interlocking line in the second and fourth bars.

A listen to the song will demonstrate that it has an easy, comfortable groove with no obvious uncomfortable clashes in the rhythm. But I have to refer to Burkina Faso for a guide as to whether the song works. He always says:

"Yes, but can it make people dance?" (Burkina Faso, Interview with Author, 2009)

We had the benefit if experiencing audience reaction to many concerts and this song appeared to fulfill Faso's criterion. In live work we have extended the song, moving into a

montuno section after the piano solo which features a short repeated chorus and lead vocal pregones. The drummer plays the campana in this section, as he does in all of the choruses.

5.4.2 *Congo*

There is a detailed analysis of this song in the CD Rom. I have chosen to highlight this composition as I consider it to have a combination of Congolese and Latin features. In the verse there is a typical descending Latin chord progression played in Congolese rumba style. Here I am interested in how the instruments interlock in this first, lyrical section.

Figure 5.17: Verse section of *Congo*

Audio example 5..10: *Congo:* Grupo Lokito, an extract of the verse section.

A look at the score shows that the guitar harmonises with the keyboard line and embellishes it, a similar idea to that used in *On Va Danser* but without moving away to interlock for the last bar of the pattern. The slight variations that Burkina Faso is known for are present and serve to hold the interest of the listener. This is the first section of the song and therefore the most steady, quiet section before the song moves up into a dynamic refrain and then on to seben. The absence of busy interlocking lines helps to provide a contrast with the sections that follow. The run up on quavers at the end of the second bar is reminiscent of the Cuban *guajira* form, especially as it is played in a harmony of sixths. As I have detailed in the CD Rom there are several features of guajira that feature in this song to the extent where, if one wanted to indulge a love of categorisation, one could call it a *guajira-rumba.* The band shared my opinion that this combination of a minor Latin chord progression and

Congolese rumba worked very well, although we had to work at our playing style, since the classic rumba riffs had to be rethought to work in the minor key.

5.4.3 *Na Ko Kamwa*

This song is written in the Congolese rumba format. I refer to the refrain section as an example of how we built the groove through a series of interlocking parts.

Figure 5.18: Score of *Na Ko Kamwa* refrain

Audio example 5.11: *Na Ko Kamwa:* **Grupo Lokito, an extract of the refrain section.**

In this section the electric piano plays a 3:2 clave rhythm with an added note on the only 4½ of the bar. This plays steadily throughout the refrain. Meanwhile the keyboard plays a marimba pattern that accentuates the 2½, 2¾, 4½ and 4¾. If the song were transcribed in the same metre as son, we would find that these are the notes that are accented by the campana and the conga in Cuban music - the 4 and the 4½ - an important feature of Cuban music with African origins.

This extract features an example of Burkina Faso's variations on the lead guitar. For most of the time the lead and rhythm guitar are playing in harmony. In the third bar, the lead breaks away to sing a little tune on the high C#. The bass line follows a cyclic pattern, repeating a line four times with a slight variation at the end.

5.4.4 *Générique*

Figure 5.19: Score of seben from *Générique Lokito*

Audio example 5.12: *Générique Lokito*

In this example of a section from *Générique Lokito* I have entered the drum and percussion parts along with the guitars and keyboards. The driving rhythm of the seben is the cavacha pattern played on the snare. The keyboard marimba part supports the cavacha, accenting the same beats as the snare. The conga plays an off-beat pattern, accenting the 1½, 1¾, 3½ and 3¾. As with the other examples the parts enter at different times; the marimba and conga entering on the fourth beat, bass on the 1, rhythm guitar on the 1½.

I have written the lead guitar an octave lower than it is played. The score shows how the rhythm guitar follows the lead, playing the same basic pattern. Whereas the backing instruments play the same two-bar pattern repeated, the lead varies as demonstrated by the lines played in bars 1 and 3. Variations can also be seen in the bass line with the alterations in bars 2 and 4. In the seben, as I have discussed, the focus is on the lead guitar and atalaku with dancers. This is supported by the other instruments playing strong percussive backing rhythms as demonstrated. The above example is a typical section of seben with lead guitar.

5.5 Common Ground: Similarities Between the Two Musical Styles as Experienced by the Group

In the above examples I have demonstrated some of the devices that the band has used to build up an arrangement and create a groove. The songs have emerged out of a mix of Congolese and Cuban arrangement ideas and devices. It is not always clear which device comes from where, but the music displays a marked number of commonalities. I now wish to consider the question of dynamics in the music, a topic that has come up several times during the course of my study.

5.5.1 Dynamics in the Music

I have frequently referred in my study to the question of dynamics. I observe that in the second-generation Congolese music the dynamics were fairly steady. In the Congolese salsa tunes of the period I flagged the absence of the driving campana rhythm as one cause. The rumba of the day also shows a steady, relatively gentle groove. I put forward the idea that the change in dynamics was one of the contributions that guitarist Franco made to the development of Congolese music. Third-generation Congolese popular music, with its emphasis on seben, took this a stage further by using marked changes in dynamics as the song moved into seben. By the fourth generation the seben had become a major part of the arrangement and within this extended section various devices were used to create excitement. I draw many parallels between this and the montuno section in Cuban son. The

montuno is the major part of a song, within it there are dynamic changes and different sections open in length. Both seben and montuno are considerably longer in performance than the recorded versions, reflecting the live, interactive structure of these sections.[79]

I have focused on the montuno and seben sections in the context of Grupo Lokito to investigate whether there are significant similarities.

5.5.2 Similarities Between Seben and Montuno

The obvious similarity between seben and montuno is that they are both the exciting part of the song where the dancing takes off. As such, within both genres, the live performance is quite distinct from a recorded version of a song. The open nature of both seben and montuno enables the band to respond to the dancers in the audience and to each other within an open but structured musical form. Within seben there are open sections marked by the cries of the atalaku and a roll ('passage') on the drums marking the move to the next section. In the majority of the sections the lead guitar is dominant, the guitarist playing a wide range of lead guitar themes which the rhythm guitarist follows. Dynamics are created by sections where the band drops down to keyboards or rhythm guitar, the bass drops out and the drums play a minimal pattern. Over this the atalaku will shout a line that fits with the keyboard and guitar line and the drummer will punctuate the associated dance moves.

Video Example 5.2: Grupo Lokito at The Barbican

In a live situation the seben will be long with the end usually signalled by the atalaku or singers.

In the montuno there are again open sections. There will usually be a musical director in the band and they will signal the move from one section to the next. Rather than focus on one instrument the sections will feature different instruments or call-and-response vocals. Dynamics are created in much the same way as in Congolese music: the bass and percussion drop out and the piano keeps going, possibly punctuated by percussion or horn breaks.

Audio example 5.13: *Mi Linda Habanera*

The differences within seben and montuno lie mainly in the instrumentation. In Congolese music the guitar has become by far the most dominant instrument. I noted in the

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[79] In both Cuban and Congolese performances I have had occasion to observe these sections lasting more than 20 minutes.

music of the second generation that the horns were present but mixed low in the mix and used mainly as a backing instrument. When the third generation dispensed with the horn section altogether the guitar had already been defined as the lead instrument. In Cuban music the horns are of greater importance. In the montuno, horn mambos are a crucial part of the arrangement. A characteristic of horn mambos is short repeated interlocking lines that build up, in exactly the same way as the lead guitar lines in seben.

Audio example 5.14 a: *Tu Jueguito:* **Grupo Lokito, extract from the mambo section**
Audio example 5.14 b: *Générique Lokito:* **Grupo Lokito, extract**

In these two audio examples I compare a horn mambo from *Tu Jueguito* with a lead guitar line from *Générique Lokito*. Both comprise of a simple pattern that repeats several times. In *Tu Jueguito* the trumpet plays the line up an octave for the last repeat. In *Générique Lokito* the guitar uses a similar device, playing a higher pitched variation for the last two repeats.

A significance difference between seben and montuno is the vocal style. Montuno features call-and-response chorus and pregón: it is the section where the singer can show off their vocal and improvisational skills. Seben, on the other hand, features the atalaku. The singers will stop singing and another person will come onto the stage and take over, someone whose vocal qualities will be quite distinct from the singers. The atalaku needs a powerful shouting voice and, whilst it is now the style to sing some lines, the emphasis is not on a sweet voice or perfect tuning. There is nothing like the atalaku in montuno, the closest one might get is a few shouts of encouragement from one of the singers. In seben the singers will be executing a series of complex choreographed dance moves rather than singing. The seben is a chance for them to show off but it will be in terms of dance moves rather than vocal prowess.

I have dealt with the importance of the atalaku in Congolese music and yet there was no atalaku involved in this project. I consider how we managed without this key member of the ensemble. The reason for not including an atalaku was cost. Having an additional regular member would have made it hard to find work that paid enough. In addition, although the singers did not have the voices of atalaku, they were able to do the shouts. When we recorded we called in an atalaku as the clarity of the recording highlighted the lack of the necessary vocal qualities in the singers' voices.

In considering the similarities and differences between seben and montuno, I find that where I perceived difference there are strands of commonality, and conversely the similarities have quite different features. My experience in playing the music, also shared by

musicians within the project, is that the underlying commonalities are so strong that they cannot be denied.

5.6 Towards a Performance Practice

There is a video of Celia Cruz and the Fania All Stars playing in the stadium in Kinshasa in 1974 as part of the *Rumble in the Jungle* boxing event. Celia Cruz is on fire, the stage show is amazing and the crowd is going wild **(Video Example 5.3).** Who was to know that the country was on the brink of a slide into despair out of which it has yet to climb. The video demonstrates an important link that Cuban and Congolese music share: the importance of presentation. Congolese musicians of the second generation drew inspiration from Cuban bands (see Chapter Three) which featured a front line-up of several singers and a lively stage show. As Congolese music moved into the third generation, the emphasis on dance moves and stylish clothes made the show even more important. In Cuban music the show has always been important but the emphasis is different; whilst there is a front line of singers they rarely do such choreographed dance steps. The singers and the horn section will dance but it is not a main feature of the show. What is acknowledged is the importance of communication with the public.

In the UK, bands from both genres tend to be smaller due to financial restrictions and the limited performance opportunities available, but the concept of an exciting stage show remains. How the show is presented depends very much on the individual musicians involved. There is some level of expectation of communication with the audience and an interactive stage show. Initially in Grupo Lokito the Congolese singers provided an excellent show, particularly during the seben, however they were not used to talking to the audience. Elpidio Caicedo is famed on the salsa scene for his skills in animating the public and initially took on the role of talking to the audience during performances. Having seen him in action, Jose Hendrix Ndelo followed his example and developed his skills to the point where he excelled at communication. He took it a step further by getting the audience to participate in dance moves with the band. This is not a new concept but I had not previously observed it on the UK Congolese music scene. This proved very popular and grew to be a feature of the Grupo Lokito show. When Jose left I prompted Makuta, who had hardly ever spoken to the audience, to rise to the occasion. I pointed out to him that we had no-one who could do the job and this led him to start to initiate audience participation. Iddo, the singer who later joined the band, was principally a dancer and the combination of Makuta's instructions with Iddo's moves worked very well and contributed to the success of the band.

Video Example 5.3: Grupo Lokito Live

Each band member brought their own talent and from this blend the band developed a reputation for exciting dance moves and a great rapport with audiences. This fed into other Congolese bands which started copying the moves and encouraging audiences to join in.

In the closing concert of WOMAD 2010 I noted how Manora, the singer with Kanda Bongó Man, used phrases such as "Happiness. Happiness!", "The dance floor is free, you don't have to pay extra!" (some of Elpido's signature jokes with the audience) as well as Grupo Lokito's dance moves in his communication with the audience. He had spent the previous week singing as a guest singer with us and had appropriated some of our performance tricks.[80] I was amused that these devices that had originated with our Colombian bass player had reached so far into the Congolese performance practice that it had set a new standard of communication with audiences among Congolese bands.

I have stated that in putting this project together I was very clear that I wished to play music that the home audiences wanted to hear (see Chapter One). Grupo Lokito became popular with a variety of audiences: festivals, salsa dancers, arts centres and African audiences. The festival circuit was a particular favourite and the audiences were open to dancing with the band. I was keenly aware of the fine line between having a bit of fun with audience participation and becoming a not-very-serious party band. I kept a close check on the direction in which the show was moving and endeavoured to control it. There were times when I had to assert my authority and not allow ideas into the show.

I give an example: in 2010 the band worked on a générique that Burkina Faso wrote around the time that Felix Ngindu joined the band. Felix had had quite a different experience of musical life in the UK than the rest of the band. He lived in Ellesmere Port in Cheshire and, being one of few non-white musicians in the area, played music that he imagined the UK audience wanted to hear. Felix inserted some of his vocal ideas into the track. He got the atalaku to shout, "Jump, jump like a fish, shake, shake like a dog, doggy, doggy". I did not like the move towards 'pleasing' the audience and asked the other musicians what Kinshasa audiences would think of us if we included it. They felt, as I did, that we would not be taken seriously and we decided not to use it in the song.

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[80] The singers in Grupo Lokito were horrified that the other Congolese bands "stole" some of our stage show ideas. I encouraged them by saying that it must be a compliment and we need to invent more moves and shouts to keep ahead of the competition.

5.7 Audience Response to Grupo Lokito

I claim that the band was successful as a research project; I also believe that as a musical project it achieved success. The two are linked. If the concept of a Congolese/Cuban fusion had not worked it would not have gained audience recognition. In actual fact the band became very popular leading to a busy work schedule. Grupo Lokito played to a range of audiences including as noted above, festivals, salsa dancers, African audiences and clubs. We found that all aspects of the show were well received: the music, the dancing and the interaction with audiences. It was telling that the different audiences, with their varying notions of authenticity, all enjoyed the band. I have to agree with Burkina Faso in judging the audience response and conclude that we could indeed make people dance.

My faith in the success of the project was strengthened by the reactions to our music in both Havana and Kinshasa. In Havana there is a DJ called Rosilio who played a large part in the dissemination of Cuban popular music. Now in his eighties he hosts a Sunday-night show, *Un Domingo Con Rosilio*, to which I was invited as an in-studio guest in February 2009. At first Rosilio was friendly but rather dismissive of me. He told me that I would be on for five minutes and could play a section of one of my songs. I feel sure that they had regular foreign guests on the show who had presented music of varying quality. His attitude changed dramatically when he heard the Grupo Lokito song that I played; he asked me to stay until the end of the show and spent a good deal of it interviewing me about the band.

I had similar experiences in Kinshasa. I was featured several times on TV and radio shows, with a whole show about Grupo Lokito featured on national radio station, Radio Okapi. This recognition in the capitals of Cuban and Congolese music-making coupled with the positive audience reaction to the band, led me to conclude that in Grupo Lokito we had captured something special in the music. My conclusion is that the music was powerful because we were bringing out common elements that were always present and building on them together.

5.8 Summary of Chapter

I have considered whether my chosen research methods were successful and reflected on the developments within the band. In detailing the challenges facing the different instrumentalists and the band as a whole I highlight several differences in detail. The underlying theme however is of commonalities in the music, as if the two styles are two branches from the same root. From the very beginnings of the project it was apparent to the

musicians that the music grooved. Building on this foundation we were able to work on details towards a stronger, more coherent, musical style. Taking material from the compositional stage through the development process allowed the band to develop its own style; a sound that reflected the richness of the musical traditions that we hailed from and the common musical ground therein.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Convento Santa Clara in Habana Vieja (Old Havana) stopped being a working convent some time ago. For many years now it has been a national monument and educational centre. Since February 2011 (the year of writing) the13 Cuban women who run the convent have been doing their daily chores to the strains of Congolese seben.

It did not arrive directly from Kinshasa though - this seben was cooked up in London. The CD was my gift to them following my annual stint teaching a course in Cuban music there. When I first played the CD to them the reaction to the music was instant. After cranking up the volume the women started to wind their hips and tell of their Congolese roots. They hadn't heard this modern version of Congolese music - there was no African music readily available in Havana - but they knew instantly that it was from Congo. Cuban friends now report that my CD is played in the convent on a regular basis.

I am proud to think of my attempt to re-link Congo and Cuba blasting out into the streets of Habana Vieja. But is that an indication that this project has been a success? I now consider what I have learnt from this project and whether I have succeeded in proving that there is a link between the music of Congo and Cuba.

Success is hard to measure and it appears to me that there are two strains to my assessment of this project: success as a piece of research and success as a band. I would argue that they are, to a large degree, linked. If the music grooves it will attract an audience and the music is far more likely to groove if the styles being fused share common ground. Groove is of paramount importance to both of these styles - it is clear from the outset that both Cuban son and Congolese popular music are dance music. My response would therefore be that the popularity of Grupo Lokito demonstrates that we have achieved success.

I shall qualify that assertion by following the path of my research, considering whether I made a wise choice of research methods, and how that choice impacted on my outcomes. I shall then reflect on the consequences of my choice of musicians and working environment. With the team and the methods established, I shall present my argument that there is a strong link between the music of Congo and Cuba that the musicians recognise and respond to.

6.2 Reflecting on my Choice of Research Methods

I have defended my emic research methods - that is working as a fellow musician alongside those I have been observing - as it has allowed me the access to, and interaction with, the musicians that I would not otherwise have had. In addition the years I had invested in working as a musician have established me within the musical communities. In the eyes of the musicians concerned I was an equal to a greater or lesser extent.[81] As an insider I had access to information that would not otherwise be available. An outsider would have had a completely different research experience. It is indeed hard for me to imagine how one would go about setting up a similar project from an etic perspective; it would be possible to put a band together if one had the contacts, but one would not be able to shape and guide the direction of the band from the outside.

The main disadvantage of my research method is the immense amount of time that the project has consumed. There is no doubt that Grupo Lokito took over my life. It would have been fantastic if the majority of that time had been taken up with the creation and development of music. However the reality is that the social and cultural issues that arose as peripherals to the music occupied a large portion of the project time. I do not believe this would be true of all cross-cultural projects but it is a feature of choosing to work with musicians from a country with such a violent and troubled history as the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Before embarking on this research project I was unaware of the term 'action research'. However, I am glad that I discovered it as a research model. Developed for the social sciences, it is flexible and fits into the 'real' world. In social sciences and medicine, where it is widely used, it is recognised that there are numerous external factors that impact on research since the subjects of research are not living in a laboratory. This holds true for practising musicians and any research projects carried out with them. The action-reflection-adjustment model is the process that musicians go through informally when creating and developing material. By using this model I could carefully reflect at all stages on how to integrate members of the band fully into the creative process. Involving all of the musicians was often more time consuming than developing material with a smaller team, but the end results made the time invested worthwhile. I was particularly excited by the fact that, as the

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[81] I use this term cautiously. I was certainly an equal on the multi-cultural Latin music scene. However, with very few non-Congolese musicians playing Congolese music, I was accepted as '*Sara keyboardi*' the keyboard player, but, as a non-Congolese, would never be 'as equal as others'.

project progressed, the musicians claimed ownership of the band, freely contributing input and opinions and referring to Grupo Lokito as 'us'.

6.3 The Musicians' Experience

In my research I was careful to select musicians who felt themselves grounded first and foremost in contemporary popular music, as this was the music I was focusing on. In both the Latin and Congolese music communities, there are musicians whose playing and passion is firmly fixed in a bygone era. This divide is most keenly felt within the community of Congolese musicians. I believe there are several reasons for this: the UK is not a major destination for Congolese musicians. Among the fairly small community of musicians settled in the UK, several made their names playing second-generation rumba, and the changing emphasis in the music of the fourth generation required a different set of musical skills.

My inclusion in the 'young' Congolese band Sound Afrique served to make me keenly aware of the difference between the musical generations and also provided me with a pool of musicians to draw on. I was particularly fortunate to encounter Burkina Faso. Having the input of a guitarist so experienced in contemporary Congolese music-making and at the highest level made a huge difference to the outcomes of my research.

Having been a member of the much larger UK community of Latin musicians for many years meant that I had a clear idea of which Latin musicians would suit the project. I have dealt with the central importance of the bass in both styles and flagged it as a particularly demanding role to fill. Again, the outcomes of the project would have been quite different if I had not had the involvement of Elpidio Caicedo; in addition to his strong, solid bass style and willingness to learn, he was responsible for the development of the Grupo Lokito stage show.

6.4 Social Issues Impacting on the Project

The impact of social issues on the musical progress of the band arose several times during the course of my research. When working in a cross-cultural setting, I quickly became aware that communicating about the music was easy but with the clash of cultures evident in terms of social expectations. Congolese musicians generally have a poor reputation among music promoters because of their unreliability and poor time-keeping. My involvement in the Congolese music community in London, and my trips to Kinshasa, were crucial in helping

me to understand the backdrop to their modes of behaviour. With this knowledge I was able to instigate systems to overcome social differences, usually by means of monetary incentives.

6.5 Developments Within the Band

The development of ways of working within the band highlights the importance of my role as a participant researcher. Initially the musicians did not grasp the concept of the project and, although they enjoyed meeting and working together, they did not share the vision of a fusion of the two styles. I found that during the early stages I had to guide the project carefully, ensuring that all musicians played both styles convincingly. As the project progressed, aided by the action research method of working, the musicians began to realise the potential of the fusion and played a more active role in helping each other with stylistic detail and developing material.

6.6 Outcomes of My Research

As a musician I find it difficult to write descriptively about music, preferring to listen or play. There are many aspects of musical communication that cannot be put into words. I have presented my work in the form of a CD and videos of performances precisely for that reason. This way the reader can form his or her own opinion on my success, or lack thereof, through more than verbal means of communication. The CD contains a selection of songs to be listened to as a whole to create an impression of the output of Grupo Lokito.

My impression of the music of Grupo Lokito is that it does work well. As the band developed repertoire there were times when I felt that the bias in the material favoured one style. I responded by working on compositions to redress the balance. As we developed our own sound, I found that we had moved towards a blend of Congolese and Cuban characteristics which locked together well, generating a powerful groove. When the musicians came into the project they had varied experience of each other's style of music. The Latin musicians had no idea about contemporary Congolese music. Some had heard rumba from the belle époque not knowing that it was Congolese, but none had heard fourth-generation Congolese popular music. They had knowledge of Afro-Cuban music and culture but realised that this was not representative of contemporary music-making in Africa. The Congolese musicians had a good, albeit rather nostalgic, knowledge of Cuban music, having

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been exposed to it in Kinshasa. When the musicians came together there is no doubt in my mind that they did recognise similarities between the two styles.

Although it was not intentional on my part, the majority of musicians in the band had not had formal music training. In fact the only two who had any were Jose Hendrix Ndelo and Limousine Kabangi. They had attended the Institut National des Arts in Kinshasa for two years. I had never before considered education to be an issue; the musicians involved in the UK Latin music community come from a diverse range of musical backgrounds with formal and/or informal music education, the distinction between musicians is not made on the basis of education. I have detailed the debate regarding popular Congolese music and the school/village divide among Congolese musicians as I believe it has profound implications for my research (see below). The notion of school-versus-village is a rather simplistic one. Of the two guitarists in the band, Limousine makes no claims about being from either camp, but then he was not involved in the high-profile bands in Kinshasa where this divide was so prevalent. Rather, while he had attended music school, most of his development was through self-study after arriving in the UK.

Burkina Faso prides himself on being from the village with training from folkloric group Minzoto Wella Wella. It is clear from his playing that he is a master of creating groove, one central device being the damped pattern called cocot. As a busy guitarist on the Kinshasa music scene it is inconceivable that he did not also pick up ideas from the schooled musicians. However, his village approach to the music helped shape the music of Wenge Musica in Kinshasa and changed the groove of Grupo Lokito.

In my consideration of both Cuban and Congolese music I have referred to Nketia's models of African musical structure and organisation. I have demonstrated that both styles of music adhere to this model with interlocking ostinati as a central feature of musical organisation. The device of cocot provides a damped ostinato which enhanced the groove in the Cuban-style songs in Grupo Lokito to such an extent that it became part of our signature sound. Whilst cocot is derived directly from Congolese folklore it has striking similarities with the percussive instrumental parts in son. In son Burkina Faso adapted the rhythm of cocot to the music, instinctively playing 'in clave', and accentuating the clave as the timeline of the music. It is my contention that the cocot that Burkina Faso plays blends well with the Cuban music precisely because it is related to the rhythms at its very source: that is, the African rhythms that travelled to Cuba and were incorporated into Cuban musical development. This contradicts the commonly held view in Kinshasa that son and salsa are the domain of the schooled musicians.

It is impossible to say which Congolese musical features were imported and which are 'pure' Congolese, just as it is impossible to give an exact genealogy of the features in Cuban music. However, the familiarity felt by the musicians in each other's music, and the successful groove of the resultant music when the two were blended, points towards a strong link.

My focus was on contemporary music-making and I considered the links between fourth-generation seben and montuno. Through my consideration of the many characteristics of the two, I concluded that there are a great deal of similarities. One noticeable feature that sets fourth-generation seben apart from the earlier periods is the use of dynamics within the seben. I draw parallels between this and the dynamic interplay that goes in the montuno section of a song. I also consider the similarities between musical devices in the two styles.

I conclude that the introduction of certain features and the expansion of others in the seben we hear in fourth-generation Congolese popular music brought it closer to the montuno in Cuban son. This is at odds with the commonly cited opinion that Congolese music moved away from Cuban music after the second generation.

The open and interactive structure of both montuno and seben is particularly apparent during live performance, a similarity immediately recognised by the musicians in Grupo Lokito. Another area of common ground was the emphasis on presentation in both styles of music. In the development of the live show, the band took elements of performance practice from both styles and blended them, developing a mix of visual and verbal communication. The innovations in performance practice had repercussions not just within the band and the immediate audience:, they were taken up and copied by a number of Congolese bands. Whilst I regard this as a measure of success, it also highlights the nature of my project. I was carrying out research but through active participation, my research developed into innovation with implications for the wider musical community.

In May 2011 (the year of writing) I was rehearsing a new générique with the rhythm section. In the absence of vocalists, the Colombian bass player Elpidio Caicedo took on the role of atalaku, shouting in mock Lingala as he played Congolese-style bass guitar. I reflected on how far we had come: not only had the band as a whole taken and developed the music of Congo and Cuba, the individual musicians had absorbed new aspects of musical style and performance practice, and clearly appreciated the experience. Whereas initially the Congolese and Latin musicians had only communicated with musicians from the same genre as themselves in Lingala and Spanish respectively, now there was direct communication between all members of the band. There was no longer a sense that the other musicians were not capable of playing in the manner required.

I conclude that bringing contemporary Congolese and Latin musicians together has produced a powerful fusion of the two musical styles. There are so many links and commonalities in the music that on one level it is surprising that the two groups of musicians in the UK have not encountered each other previously. Reasons for this are social rather than musical; whilst the Latin music community is well established and integrated into society, the Congolese musicians find themselves socially and politically excluded without the means to integrate with the wider community.

GLOSSARY

2 Temps: Congolese musical terminology for the chord progression I, IV, V, IV.

abacost: A collarless shirt that Congolese men were required to wear under President Mobutu's authenticity campaign. The word was an abbreviation of 'A bas le costume' ('down with the suit' in French) (Stewart 2000: 171).

Abakuá: A secret society for men in Cuba. Abakua descends from the Egbo leopard society from the Old Calabar region of West Africa (present-day Western Cameroon and Southeastern Nigeria) (Sublette 2004: 190).

Arará: The name given in Cuba to the people of Dahomey, now called Benin, whose culture and religion related to that of the Yoruba.

atalaku: The vocalist who raps and sings over the seben in Congolese music. Introduced into third-generation Congolese music by the band Zaiko Langa Langa in 1982.

authenticité: In 1971 President Mobutu introduced a campaign of authenticity which had far-reaching effects on the development of Congolese popular music.

baile yuka: The dance associated with yuka, a Cuban folkloric musical form reputed to have arrived in Cuba with slaves from Congo.

balafon: A wooden, keyed, resonated frame idiophone from West Africa.

Bakongo: The people of Kongo, the southwestern region of what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo.

bandurría: A plucked chordophone of Spanish origins with 6 pairs of strings tuned in ascending fourths.

Bantu: Languages belonging to the Bantu language group are used in a large part of central and southern Africa. The term 'Bantu' is often applied to the people who speak these languages. Although not geographically accurate, the term 'Bantú' became, and remains to this day, interchangeable with 'Congo' in Cuban ethnographic writings.

barracones: The barracks where slaves were housed on plantations in Cuba.

barrio: Literally meaning neighbourhood, 'barrio' is often used to signify the poor areas of a city where the working classes live.

la belle époque: The decades during which Cogolese rumba achieved popularity throughout Africa and beyond: the 1950s to1970s. This was considered the second generation of Congolese music.

bembe drum: An upright pegged drum played with one or two sticks.

bombo: i) The second beat of the 'three' bar of the clave rhythm, a strong accent in son. ii) The bass drum used in Spanish military bands.

bongó: An instrument created in Cuba consisting of two small drums which are joined

together. They are held between the legs of the player and struck with the hands.

botija: A curved earthenware jug used as a bass instrument in son. It has a hole in the side, into which the player blows, and one at the top which is used to vary the pitch. This is done by changing the degree to which the player covers the hole at the top with his or her hand.

bpm: Beats per minute, a measure of tempo.

Bufo: Comic theatre, popular from the mid-nineteenth century, which could include parodies of black Cubans and blackface minstrels.

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Brazzaville: The capital of The Republic of Congo (formerly French Congo). The country is often referred to as Congo-Brazza. Brazzaville and Kinshasa are the two closest capitals in the world, separated only by the river Congo.

cabildos: African mutual-aid organisations for slaves, set up by the Spanish in sixteenth-century Cuba. These played an important role in the preservation of Afro-Cuban culture.

cahimbo: The smallest drum in the three-drum ensemble used to carry the rhythm for the Congo-derived musical form makuta. The makuta drums were originally hollowed out of a solid piece of wood and the skins were tuned by heating over a fire.

caja: The largest drum in the three-drum ensemble used to carry the rhythm for the Congo-derived musical form makuta. These drums were originally hollowed out of a solid piece of wood and the skins were tuned by heating over a fire.

campana: The Spanish name for a cowbell. Thought to have been imported to Cuba with European monks, the campana became central to the instrumentation of son.

Carabali: The name given to slaves from the Old Calabar region of Africa, the area now covered by western Cameroon and southwestern Nigeria.

catá: i) In the yuka ensemble an additional player struck a rhythm with a stick on the side of the mula or caja drums while they were also being played by another drummer, the device was also used in rumba and was also known as guagua.

ii) a hollowed-out small wooden log played with sticks, also known as a guagua, which came to Cuba with the Tumba Francesa . This replaced the set up noted in (i) above.

iii) The Haitian name for the cinquillo rhythm.

cavacha: A snare rhythm developed in the 1970s by the drummer Meridjo in the band Zaiko Langa Langa. The cavacha rhythm was central to the development of seben in third-generation Congolese popular music.

Cavacha snare pattern
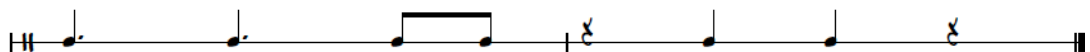
changüí: One of the earliest forms of son, originating in the Guantanamo area of eastern

Cuba, its instrumentation comprises tres, marímbula, maracas, bongo, guiro and marimbula.

charanga: i) The name given to a Cuban musical ensemble that plays danzones and cha cha chás. A typical charanga comprises flute, string section, timbales, congas, piano, contrabass, guiro and male unison vocals.

ii) The name adopted by Congolese musicians of the fourth generation to denote son. The keyboard often will play a string sound in the style of the Cuban charanga string section.

cinquillo: A five-note syncopated rhythmic cell, the fundamental rhythm of danzón. The same rhythm drives makuta, Puerto Rican bomba and Haitian and Dominican merengue.

Cinquillo rhythm
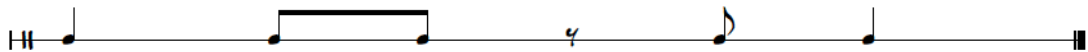
clave: i) An instrument made out of two sticks which the player strikes against one another.

ii) The five-note rhythmic cell which is the fundamental rhythm of son and Cuban rumba, and to which all other instrumental parts relate. It is notated over two bars and it has become common practice in salsa terminology to refer to the 'two –side' (the bar containing two notes) and the 'three side' (the bar containing three notes) of the clave. Whilst an ensemble may not always include a clave player, the clave rhythm is inherent in the rhythm of the music as a whole.

3:2 son clave
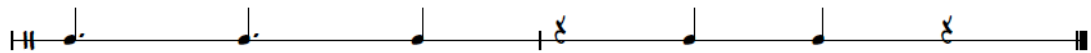
3:2 rumba clave
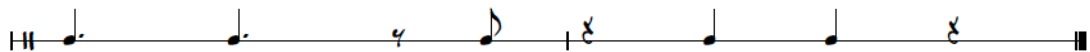
Club Afrique: A night club in Canning Town, East London which, until it closed in October 2009, was a social centre at the heart of the East African community in London. The club featured live acts from various London-based African communities. The most popular night was Sunday when a large Congolese band, Sound Afrique, would perform to a mixed African audience.

cocot: Rhythmic device brought into fourth-generation Congolese popular music by guitarists including Burkina Faso. Cocot is reputedly derived from folkloric rhythmic patterns played on marimbas and likembe.

coartacaión: A contract which allowed Cuban slaves to buy their freedom. The Spaniards were the only slave-owners to create such a contract.

cofradias: Spanish fraternities upon which the cabildos, the African mutual-aid organizations in Cuba, were modelled.

columbia: One of the three main styles of rumba. Columbia is the fastest of the three main styles and features a competitive dance between two male dancers.

contratiempo: Defined by David Garcia as, "The relentless accentuation of off-beats to give the music a quality of pushing forward" (Garcia 2003: 141).

Combatants: An organization of ex-patriot Congolese established to oppose the current president, Joseph Kabila. The combatants consider that musicians who are based in Congo must, by default, be supporters of Kabila and as such should be boycotted. The actions of the Combatants have served to separate communities in the diaspora from those at home.

conga: i) The popular name for the tumbadora drum, which grew to be one of the most universally accepted Cuban instruments, fundamental to the salsa line-up and now widely used in a vast range of musical styles. The names 'conga' and 'tumbadora' have become virtually interchangeable although originally 'conga' referred to the similar but slightly smaller drum used in the carnival processions called congas. The drum and playing style derives from the Congolese makuta drums although there is some evidence of influence from the Lucumí bembe drum.

ii) Both a Cuban carnival procession itself and the music played during the procession (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5.1, ii. The Development of Rumba).

Congo Free State: The name King Léopold gave to the vast region of central West Africa which he procured in 1886 as his private domain. In 1908 the country was taken out of his hands by the Belgians and renamed Belgian Congo.

Congo Jazz: The name given to Congolese music as it became increasingly popular in the 1950s, aided by a thriving recording industry and the proliferation of Congolese radio stations.

Congo–Brazzaville: The name given to the Republic of Congo, a former French colony, the capital of which is Brazzaville

conjunto: In Spanish 'conjunto' means musical ensemble. It was adopted as the name for the expanded son montuno line-up as popularized by Arsenio Rodríguez in the 1940s.

coro: The Spanish word for chorus. A central structural element in son montuno.

danzón: A Cuban musical style with roots in English country dance (via France and Haiti) and African rhythm, which emerged in 1877. Danzón was originally played by groups known as 'orquestas tipicas' (or 'orquesta tipica' for one group) featuring timpani, valve trombones and figle horns. The music was gentrified to make it more palatable for the Cuban bourgeoisie: the timpani were replaced by the smaller timbales and horns were replaced by flute and strings.

decima: A ten-line Spanish poetic form which was taken into Cuban guajira.

Democratic Republic of Congo: The current-day name given to the country which was formerly Zaïre and has been the focus of my work on modern Congolese music.

diablo: The name Arsenio Rodríguez gave to the final section of son montuno. A diablo

typically enters after a piano or tres solo and features repeated interlocking horn lines interspersed with coros. It generally ends the song.

DRC: see Democratic Republic of Congo

encerronas: Private parties held by bourgeois Cubans in the first half of the twentieth century at which son bands would play.

folklore: The name used by Congolese musicians to describe all traditional musical elements they bring into popular music. A section of 'folklore' will normally mean that a song will move into 6/8 instead of the usual 4/4.

générique: An extended track featuring seben and possible sections of folklore in Congolese music from the fourth generation. A générique will usually share the name of the album it is featured on and serve by way of an introductory track. Génériques are usually 10 to 13 minutes in length.

guagua: i) A rhythm used in Cuban rumba.

ii) An instrument also known as catá [see *catá* i) and ii)]

guaguancó: One of the three main forms of Cuban rumba. It features a dance which is a flirtation between a man and a woman and includes the vacunao, a hip thrust which signifies the man attempting to impregnate the woman.

guajeo: A repeated cyclic pattern played on the tres and piano in son, also known as montuno.

guajira: The term 'guajira' literally means from the countryside in Spanish but now denotes a Cuban musical style that was incorporated into the son repertoire in the 1920s. The guajira was derived from punto guajiro, Cuban country music. Originally guajira was typically in 6/8 metre. In the 1920s the son sextetos adapted guajira to suit their repertoire, playing in 2/4 and changing the rhythm of the accompaniment.

hindoubills: A youth movement which began in the 1950s in Kinshasa inspired by Bollywood and cowboy films.

Jhimmy 'The Hawaiian': Jhimmy's real name was Zacharie Elenga. From Brazzaville in Congo-Brazzaville, he rose to fame in 1950 at the age of 20 and was an influential Congolese musician, reputed to be an intellectual and considered a 'schooled' musician.

kalimba: A lamellophone. The kalimba sound on a synthesizer is preferred for the percussive keyboard parts played in Congolese seben.

kawuka: A variation on the cavacha snare pattern. Kawuka was developed by Ilo Pablo, one of the drummers with the group Zaiko Langa Langa in the 1970s.

Kawuka snare pattern

Kikongo: The language of the Bakongo and Bandundu people of Congo.

kiriba: One of the earliest forms of son, kiriba was first reported in eastern Cuba in the second half of the nineteenth century.

largo: The name given to the first, lyrical, section of a son arrangement.

likembe: A variety of sanza or hand-held lamellophone with a wooden body and metal or bamboo tunable tongues.

Lingala: The lingua franca of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

lipopo: The name in Lingala for those Africans from the West African coast who settled in Léopoldville in the early twentieth century.

Luba: The Luba people of the Democratic Republic of Congo originate mainly from the Katanga, Kasai and Maniema regions.

Lucumí: The name in Cuba given to an Afro-Cuban religion with Yoruba origins.

mabanga: The Congolese practice of mentioning people's names during a performance or recording in exchange for money.

makuta: A social dance in Cuba of Congolese origins.

mambo: i) A musical style incorporating big band jazz arrangements and Cuban rhythm as popularized by Damasio Perez Prado in the 1950s.

ii) Repeated, interlocking horn lines which occur during the montuno section of a son song.

Mande: The people of the Mande Kingdom of West Africa.

Manikongo: The ruler of the ancient Kingdom of Kongo; a powerful state in the fifteenth century.

marímbula: A Cuban llamellophone with three tongues, providing a three-note repetitive bass line; used in son.

maringa: A dance form which emerged in Léopoldville in the early twentieth century.

mbira: A type of lamellophone.

mi-solo: A third guitar part introduced into Congolese popular music in the late 1960s which fitted in between the lead and rhythm guitar parts.

montuno: Literally 'from the mountains' in Spanish, the word has two meanings:

i) The repeated cyclic pattern played on the piano, tres and bass in son music.

ii) The second and longest section of a son and salsa song incorporating call-and-response vocals, instrumental solos and horn mambos.

mula: One of the three drums played in makuta, it was hollowed out of a solid piece of wood with skins tuned by heating over a fire. The mula was the medium sized of the three drums.

nengón: An early form of Cuban son music which emerged in eastern Cuba in the second half of the nineteenth century.

ngoni: A chordophone from West Africa.

Paleros: Devotees of the Palo religion (see Palo below).

Palo: A group of Afro-Cuban religions said to originate in Congo.

palitos: Literally 'little sticks', the rhythm played with sticks on the catá in rumba.

ponche: The term given in son to the fourth crotchet of the bar, an important accent in son music.

pregón (pregones pl): Vocal improvisations during the montuno section of a son arrangement. Interspersed with a chorus (coro) sung in harmony.

quinto: The name given to the highest pitched solo drum in the Cuban rumba ensemble.

quisangui: A dance observed and reported upon in seventeenth-century Africa.

rumba: The word rumba has been used for a range of musical styles including:

i) A Cuban musical form which features percussion, call-and-response vocals, and dance. The three main styles of rumba are guaguancó, yambú and columbia.

ii) The sones played in the 1920s during the 'rhumba' dance craze in the 1920s in the USA. The name 'rumba', sometimes spelt 'rhumba', was misapplied to this music during this period. The term is used to this day in ballroom dancing, although it is pronounced differently. The use of the term 'rumba' in this context has led to a great deal of confusion

iii) The name given to Congolese popular music which emerged in the mid-twentieth century. Initially the music had clear links to Cuban son, as the music developed the name Congolese rumba remained.

rumba Lingala: A name given in Africa to Congolese rumba.

salidor: A name given to the middle pitched drum of the three drums found in the Cuban rumba ensemble, also termed the 'tres golpes' or 'seis por ocho'.

salsa: A generic term that has come to be used for Cuban son and related music from Cuba, Latin America and the USA. Developed in Puerto Rico, New York and countries in Latin America, it has influences from Cuban son, Puerto Rican and Latin American popular music as well as jazz big bands.

sanza: Part of the lamellophone family, this hand-held instrument had a wooden body with metal or bamboo tunable tongues, occurring in a variety of local adaptations throughout vast areas of central and southern Africa.

schooled: In Congo, musicians who had had access to any education, even if just at primary school, were considered to be higher class than those without education.

seben: The final section of Congolese popular music.

seis por ocho: i) A name given to one of the three drums found in the Cuban rumba ensemble, also termed the 'tres golpes' or 'salidor'.

ii) Spanish for 6/8 metre in music.

septets: In the late 1920s it became common practice to add a trumpet to the sexteto format (see below) and the bands became called septetos. Although there may in practice be more than seven musicians, the son line-up, which included a trumpet, is still termed a 'septeto'.

sexteto: The common format of a son ensemble in the 1920s. A typical sextet would comprise tres, guitar, bass, bongó, maracas, claves and vocals.

solares: Communal tenement blocks with a central courtyard found in the cities of Cuba.

son, sones (pl.): A Cuban musical style which emerged in the east of Cuba in the mid-nineteenth century and grew to be the popular dance music of Cuba.

son montuno: A style of son which features a montuno section. The terms 'son' and 'son montuno' are often used interchangeably.

soneros: Singers of son music, skilled in the art of improvising pregones.

timbales: An instrument comprising two metal-shelled drums, similar in size to snare drums but with only one skin. Timbales were originally used in charanga orchestras but were taken into the salsa line-up in the 1970s.

tingo-tilango: Earth bow found in early nengón in eastern Cuba. Its origins are attributed to people from Congo.

timba: A style of Cuban music which emerged in Havana in the early 1990s. Timba fused jazz harmony, songo rhythm and street slang.

tres: A Cuban adaptation of the European guitar with three sets of widely spaced double strings which is played with a pick. Thought to be invented in Baracoa and first reported in the 1890s (Ortiz 1996 2: 313). There are two usual tunings of the tres: A-D-F# or G-C-E. The outer pairs are in unison, and the middle pair are tuned an octave apart.

tresillo: A rhythmic cell found throughout music in Cuba and the Caribbean.

Tresillo rhythm

tres golpes: The name given to one of the three drums found in the Cuban rumba ensemble, also termed the 'seis por ocho' or 'salidor'.

trova: A Cuban lyrical musical style typically played by a solo singer/guitarist.

tumbadora: i) The collective name for the drums used in rumba which were brought into son

by Arsenio Rodríguez, The names 'tumbadora' and 'conga' have come to be used interchangeably.

ii) The lowest pitched drum in the rumba ensemble.

tumba francesa: A musical style which arrived in Cuba from Haiti.

tumbao: The term 'tumbao' is used to denote the rhythm played by the constituent instruments in a son ensemble. Commonly used for the conga rhythm it can also signify the piano, tres or bass part. Tumbao is also used to denote the overall rhythm of the band playing as an ensemble.

unschooled: A term used to describe those Congolese musicians who do not have a formal education. So-called unschooled musicians see themselves as more authentic and are proud of their village groove and of being less tainted by external influences.

vacunao: A pelvic thrust executed by the male dancer in guaguancó. The move signifies an attempt to impregnate the female dancer who attempts to avoid his advances. A similar movement is reported in the Congo-derived baile yuka. (Daniel 1995: 64; León 1984:71; Vinueza 1990: 15).

yambú: One of the main styles of rumba. Yambú features a flirtation between a couple. It is generally at a slower tempo than guaguancó and does not feature the vacunao movement.

yuka: A Cuban social dance with Congolese origins.

Zaïre: The name used between 1971 and 1997 for the country now called the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

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APPENDIX A – CD ROM

A.1 CD Rom

This CD Rom is intended to be used in conjunction with "Grupo Lokito: A practice-based investigation into contemporary links between Congolese and Cuban popular music" as an explanatory aid. It makes use of audio and visual examples and musical transcriptions where appropriate.

The CD Rom is divided into two sections:

Section One details the structure of Cuban son and Congolese rumba. Included is an extended project on the structure and harmony of fourth-generation Congolese seben. This was produced in 2008, three years prior to the rest of the CD Rom. The inclusion of this material in the CD Rom reflects the fact that research into the musical details of Congolese seben, in particular that of the third and fourth generations, is relatively untouched territory. The material on seben is presented in a different format from the rest of the CD Rom as limitations in the authoring software have made it impossible to re-edit it. However, the project contains valuable information which the reader may find of interest.

Section Two focuses on two compositions by Grupo Lokito, following the development of material from the initial idea through to final performance and recording. This is included to give the reader an insight into the workings of this practice-based research project.

A.2 Authoring Software

This CD Rom was created using Mediaworks multimedia authoring software (http://www.mediaworkssoftware.com/products.html). Whilst the program is accessible in that it is easy to use, there are some limitations to the programming abilities. These are apparent in this presentation in the following ways:

a. I have used the largest viewer size which produces a presentation in the middle of the screen. Whilst it would be preferable to have a presentation that filled the entire computer screen, this is not possible with the Mediaworks software.

b. Occasionally a pop-up score will appear behind other items on the screen at first click. This can be remedied by closing and re-opening the pop-up score.

c. Occasionally video playback is not completely smooth.

A.3 Playing the Presentation

In order to view the CD Rom, it is necessary to install the Mediaworks player on your computer. I have included the player for both Mac and PC on the CD Rom. Alternatively they can be downloaded direct from http://www.mediaworkssoftware.com/players.html.

APPENDIX B – CD

Grupo Lokito *Esengo Ya Ko Bina,* Malecon Records MRCD002 (2010)
> The material on this CD was recorded in London over a period of 4 years.

B.1 Track Listing:

1. *Générique Lokito* (Kasongo, Masila , McGuinness) 6.56
2. *Esengo Ya Ko Bina* (McGuinness, Ndelo) 5.54
3. *Espoir (aka Congo)* (Kasongo, McGuinness, Ndelo) 6.30
4. *Guajira* (McGuinness, Ndelo) 4.03
5. *Sans Frontières* (Kasongo, Makuta) 6.54
6. *Tu Jueguito* (Caicedo, McGuinness) 5.53
7. *Mobembo* (McGuinness, Ndelo) 5.26
8. *On Va Danser* (McGuinness, Ndelo) 5.09
9. *Bolembu* (a.k.a. *Na Ko Kamwa*) (McGuinness, Ndelo) 7.21

B.2 Musicians:

Grupo Lokito:

Bass: Elpidio Caicedo

Drums: Mara, Padou Machine

Guitars: Limousine, Kiamfu "Burkina Faso" Kasongo

Keyboards: Sara McGuinness

Percussion: David Pattman, Oli Savill

Vocals: Elpidio Caicedo, Eugene Makuta, Jose Hendrix Ndelo

Guests:

Atalaku: Aimé Bongongo (*Espoir, Sans Frontières, Bolembu*)

Momo Masila (*Générique Lokito*)

Trombone: Paul Taylor (*Esengo Ya Ko Bina, Tu Jueguito*)

Trumpet: Yelfris Valdes (*Tu Jueguito*)

Percussion: Bill Bland (*Esengo Ya Ko Bina*)

Roberto Pla (*Guajira, Esengo Ya Ko Bina*)

APPENDIX C - DVD

DVD of Grupo Lokito live at Band on the Wall, Manchester on 19 May 2011

This concert was part of a 13-date UK tour in May 2011. The concert features visual projections which I produced in conjunction with "Your Mum Visuals" as part of the live show.

C.1 Track Listing:

1. El Manisero (Simones)
2. Na Ko Kamwa (McGuinness, Ndelo)
3. On Va Danser (McGuinness, Ndelo)
4. Toli (McGuinness, Ndelo)
5. Congo Na Ma (Kasongo, McGuinness, Pattman)
6. Sabroson (Caicedo, Pattman, Wilson)
7. Générique Mboka (Kasongo)
8. Esengo Ya Ko Bina (McGuinness, Ndelo)
9. Sans Frontières (Kasongo, Makuta)
10. Guajira (McGuinness, Ndelo)
11. Congo (McGuinness, Ndelo)
12. Tu Jueguito (Caicedo, McGuinness)
13. Générique Lokito (Kasongo, Masila, McGuinness)

C.2 Musicians:

Bass: Elpidio Caicedo

Drums: Felix Ngindu

Guitars: Limousine, Kiamfu "Burkina Faso" Kasongo

Keyboards: Sara McGuinness

Percussion: Emeris Solis

Vocals: Iddo, Makuta