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**КЕДУГУ БАЛДАР ЫРЛАРЫ ЖАНА БИЙЛЕРИ
(БАССАРИ, БЕДИК & МАЛИНКЕ) СЕНЕГАЛДАН, АФРИКАДАН**

**КЕДУГУ ДЕТСКИЕ ПЕСНИ И ТАНЦЫ (БАССАРИ, БЕДИК И МАЛИНКЕ) ИЗ СЕНЕГАЛА,
АФРИКА KÉDOUGOU**

**CHILDREN SONGS AND DANCES (BASSARI, BÉDIK & MALINKE) FROM SENEGAL, AFRICA
KÉDOUGOU**

Abstract. This presentation attempts to show how the fields of pedagogy and research not only share spaces but also exchange tools and logic. This experimental project enables a role reversal among those involved; in this case, a group of Senegalese teachers and students seeking to recover their respective children's musical heritage. At a certain point, it is the student who teaches and informs the teacher, and both participate actively and autonomously in the recovery of their own repertoires; a way of emancipating Africans from Westerners in the study of their own music.

Keywords: Kédougou (Senegal), Research-Pedagogy, Children's music, Role reversal, Musical heritage recovery.

Аннотация. Бул презентация педагогика жана изилдөө тармактары бир мейкиндикте жашашпастан, ыкмаларды жана логиканы кантип алмашышаарын көрсөтүүгө аракет кылат. Бул эксперименталдык долбоорго тартылгандарга ролду өзгөртүүгө мүмкүндүк берет; булар учурда өздөрүнүн балдарынын музыкалык мурасын калыбына келтирүүгө умтулган сенегалдык мугалимдердин жана студенттердин бир тобу. Белгилүү бир учурда бул студент мугалимге сабак берип, маалымат берип, экөө тең өз репертуарларын калыбына келтирүүгө активдүү жана автономдуу катышат; өз музыкасын изилдөөдө африкалыктарды батыштык басымдан бошотуунун жолу.

Негизги сөздөр: Кедугу (Сенегал), Изилдөө-Педагогика, Балдар музыкасы, Ролду өзгөртүү, Музыкалык мурасты калыбына келтирүү.

Аннотация. В данной презентации предпринята попытка показать, как педагогика и исследования не только разделяют пространство, но и обмениваются инструментами и логикой. Этот экспериментальный проект позволяет участникам поменяться ролями; в данном случае это группа сенегальских учителей и учеников, стремящихся восстановить музыкальное наследие своих детей. В определённый момент ученик обучает и информирует учителя, и оба они активно и автономно участвуют в восстановлении собственного репертуара; это способ освободить африканцев от западного влияния в изучении собственной музыки.

Ключевые слова: Кедугу (Сенегал), исследовательская педагогика, детская музыка, смена ролей, восстановление музыкального наследия.

Introduction. In January 2010, thanks to the joint initiative of the Carl Orff-Foundation and the Goethe Institute of Dakar, it was organized in Senegal the first Teacher Training Course focused to music teachers coming across the country. The methodological principles on which the course was based were in line with the ideas of Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman regarding the integration of music, dance and improvisation in Elementary Education. The use of oral tradition music,

together with the aforementioned methodology, constituted the axis around which the course was articulated, always from a practical point of view and with the subsequent systematization and reflection of the work done. Organizing a course of this kind in Senegal is itself a singular bet, as the goal is to apply through practical activities, ideas coming from the West tradition in a very different socio-cultural context as usual as it is Africa, but in which, however, other Western

models fit in other areas of education. The main objective was to provide a variety of conceptual and technical tools to the teacher's participants that permit them having other visions of how they could teach music, and how to do a better use of their own resources in the music class, always adapting ideas into their educational reality and the group identity.

This first experience was a turning point in the vision of all those who participated, both specialized music teachers working in different schools located throughout the Senegalese territory. They were so enthusiastic, and the results were so satisfactory, that it was decided immediately to organize a new workshop on the next year 2011, and several more workshops during the consecutive ones from 2012 to 2016, during which the training course in music education and dance became an original Research Project.

I. Teachers First Workshop. Dakar, Senegal. January 2010

During the two first calls, the course was based on realizing a big variety of activities in which the use of voice, improvisation, movement, dance and listening music, constituted the backbone around which the main topics were established in a transversal manner. Instrumental practice was adapted to the instruments brought by the participants themselves; other materials used during the course (songs, games, rhymes, dances, auditions, ... etc.), were taken from traditional music examples of different cultures in the world. That was the best way to give the teachers a wide vision, as varied as possible, on music contexts and educational realities around the world. Each session was followed by a discussion, reflection and review of the concepts worked and, at the end of the courses, we always offered a free concert at the Goethe Institut showing the work done during the course. These concerts were always a big success for performers and audience.

II. Introduction on Research: Kédougou

Due to the enormous interest that the teachers showed about the phenomenon of oral tradition's music in the world, it was after the end of the 2nd atelier in Dakar (January 2011) when a unique initiative appeared: to continue the workshop so parallel to a musical training in research. The consciousness that emerged

during the course of the importance of preserving traditional music, made to all thinking about the purpose of doing the same kind of work with music in Senegal still alive; particularly Children Music.

The possibility of collecting songs, games and dances of children and youth repertoires, became a big motivation for everyone. So that was the reason why we decided to focus our view into the remote region of Kedougou where a significant part of the participating teachers was destined and where the traditional music still survives! Thus, from January 2012 until February 2016, we continued the work in Kedougou but, due to logistical and geographical reasons, the newly formed "Groupe de Kedougou" was necessarily reduced from the initial 19 to 10 final members.

During the "Introduction on Research" new workshop, our first mission was to collect music coming from different field recordings. Parallel, we were taking pictures and some video samples of the circumstances, while collecting information concerning the sociological aspects of each song: function, repertory, history, geography, vernacular culture, linguistic aspects and traditional religion.

Subsequently, we proceeded to the transcription and analysis of those most significant aspects of music, and we searched as well about the music learning and knowledge transmission processes. Due to the great ethnic variety and the cultural richness at Kédougou region, we decided to focus our work on three communities: Bassari, Bedik and Malinke, specifically to the Children Repertoires

III. Kédougou: sociological, geographical and cultural context

Kédougou is one of the 14 regions of Senegal. It is located at the south-eastern most extremity of the country, between the boundary of the Niokolo-Koba National Park and the borders of Mali and Guinea-Conakry. The capital of this mountainous territory, of almost 17,000 square kilometres, is the homonymous city of Kédougou. The Gambia River, which originates in the Fouta Djallon Mountain range, flows through the region in a north-westerly direction towards the Atlantic Ocean. Until recently the region was quite isolated, with access to some villages being especially difficult. However, nowadays the area is experiencing a growth in tourism, in particular

the Bedik and the picturesque Bassari villages and surrounding area, where the great *Dindefelo* Falls are situated. In 2008, Kédougou became an independent region and was divided into its three present districts: Kédougou, Salemata and Saraya. It has a population of 155,000, a great cultural richness and a good deal of ethnological diversity where most of the population is made up of the Bedik, Bassari and Malinke.

The Bassari, Bedik and Malinke

The **Bassari** ("alliane" or "liyan") belong to the Tenda ethnolinguistic group. They number approximately 30,000 people spread among 22 villages in the district of Salemata, south of Kédougou, between the Gambia River and the border with Guinea-Conakry. Their primary occupation is agriculture (rice, millet and peanut), but there are also artisans (blacksmiths, weavers and potters). Agricultural work is very intense during the rainy season (from June to October). During the dry season (from November to May) the Bassari live on the harvest surplus and commercial produce. Apart of mainly Islamic influence, although less Christianity, The Bassari have maintained the traditional animistic religion and culture of their forebears.

The most important ritual among the Bassari is the rite of passage of adolescents at the end of the dry season when men and women dress in a very elegant and exuberant way. The Bassari, whose society is structured in accordance with life's vital stages, follow a matrilineal line of succession and have only seven surnames: Bangas, Bendia, Boubane, Bidiar, Bies, Bianquinch and Bonang.

The **Bedik**, originally from Mali, they also pertain to the Tenda ethnolinguistic group. Former hunter-gatherers and now farmers and merchants, the Bedik have settled in the vicinity of Bangafassi, near the border with Guinea, in a landscape of mountains and valleys, characterized by groups of houses with slanted roofs made of straw. Patrilineal, Bedik society is organized around clans and family units, considering themselves Christians but having maintained their animistic beliefs, among which is the idea that existence itself is under the supernatural power of genies and divinities of nature. They have a certain amount of cultural affinity with the Bassari, although the Bedik have more collective celebrations (*Matyang*) which commemorate the cohesion of the group,

that include banquets, music and characteristic dances, an important hallmark of the Bedik. Among the other rites, those that stand out are *Manindam* (male rite of passage in April and May), *Gamond* (female fertility and health or the coming of rain in May and June) and *Eyamb* (celebrating the arrival of puberty in marriageable girls).

The **Malinke**, also known as the Manding or the Mandinko (among other denominations), originated in the Empire of Mali (13th to 16th centuries). Today inhabit the district of Saraya, in south-east Kédougou. A patrilineal society based on farming, stockbreeding and fishing, it has been largely Islamized, although animism and ancestor worship endure as part of their beliefs (there is also a Christian minority). Malinké society has always been characterized by its hierarchical structure, distinguishing between nobles and vassals, and having different classes or castes according to age. The great artistic reputation of the Malinke is attributable to their wood carvings (masks), their multi-coloured, elegant fabrics and, above all, to their refined gold and silversmithing. They make bracelets, armbands, earrings and necklaces of gold and silver; the latter tend to have tiny bells which subtly tinkle creating a harmonious sound which, they believe, can be heard by their ancestors. The importance of the *griot* (troubadour) figure must be pointed out. He sings accompanying himself on the kora (21-string harp-lute) and keeps alive the oral, literary, historical and musical traditions of the Manding.

The Music: General characteristics of the songs

Upon a first listening of the different traditional music of the Bassari, Bedik and Malinke, one perceives a certain connection, as if one were hearing the same sound reality in which contrasting and at the same time complimentary musical aspects coexist. However, after further attentive listening the differences become more and more evident and one can perceive with greater precision the identity of each musical language.

Each of the collected songs for this research has its own social function or purpose as for health and welcoming; descriptive or in memory of individuals, festivity and entertainment, cautionary, advisory and reconciliation, to bringing the rain, rites of passage and fertility,

weddings and maternity, to accompany the masks and dances, for lamenting, sadness or healing, and lullabies.

The collection includes male, female and mixed monodic songs, sung *a capella*, accompanied by hand-clapping and/or rattles, or over the rhythmic patterns of a *djembe* drum. The formal structures are predominantly antiphonal (based on the alternation of two groups or between soloist and group), to a lesser degree responsorial (a soloist sings one or more phrases and the group responds, creating a question-and-answer effect), and sometimes both forms alternate.

Asymmetric assigning of the phrases among the participating groups is common, so that each group ends up singing all of them. The melodies are built on scales of 4, 5, 6 or 7 tones, mostly the Anhemitonic pentatonic scale (without semitones) in descending motion (for example, mi-re-do-la-sol) and the use of *portamento*¹ between the different pitches.

The songs were selected by the same boys and girls who memorized and sang them for the recording research support, while the gathering of the information about and the classification of the songs was realized by the Kédougou Group.

CD Edition

For materializing this project, the largest financial contributions were given since 2010 from the Goethe Institut: Group journeys, accommodation and sustenance in Dakar and Kédougou. The Carl Orff-Foundation in Diessen was not only taking care of Polo Vallejo's support but looking forwards to participate in the CD edition. The music publisher Ocora/Radio France was going participate as well but the big difficulties carried out in 2014 (and the following years) because of the economic crisis that affected Europe, took the project into an impasse, so this reason and the direction changes within the Goethe Institut, stopped everything during almost two years. Meanwhile, with the creation of a small editorial *Swanu books* (Spanish National Award 2016 in Book Edition, Art Category), the work restarted again and, at the end of 2018, it was possible to make a CD-Booklet with all the songs, music transcriptions and rest of the inner information. This publication,

which collected and synthesized the highlights of the experience, constituted a new form of field research with educational and social purposes as well.

IV. As a brief conclusion

"Kédougou Project" has been a unique educational, musical, scientific and human experience. The work carried out by the group of teachers, with the participation and implication of children and young's, has made possible to materialize and making real the idea that music is without doubt a powerful educational tool and probably the best communicative way to express not only emotions but knowledge. The challenge of carrying out a music teacher training course whose end has been transformed in a research work based on collecting traditional children music, shows us that, both fields -Education and Research- exist in permanent symbiosis and interaction and becoming a great motivation for teachers and students. Even more, paradoxically, teachers have been the ones who learned from their students.!. Furthermore, this project has been an extremely effective tool for considering the preservation of musical heritage whose fate is likely to disappear. The inherent value of this project is enhanced by the fact of empowering users to collect the music themselves and to keep it safe.

CD-Booklet reference edition



"Kédougou: Children's Songs and Games Bassari, Bedik & Malinke (Senegal)". CD-Book: recordings, texts & Photos by Polo Vallejo & Groupe de Kédougou. Swanu Books, Madrid, 2019.

¹Moving from one note to the next without interruption or a jump, by way of a slight sliding.