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SINGING A NEW SONG FOR A TRANSFORMING CHURCH: EXPERIMENTS IN MUSICAL LOCALISATION AT GRAHAMSTOWN CATHEDRAL, SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the process of musical localisation at the Anglican Cathedral in Grahamstown. It begins by giving a rationale for the cathedral's programme of transformation with particular reference to language and music. The author continues by analysing five separate examples of intentional musical localisation. They are an adaptation of a Xhosa *igwijo*, a local hip-hop Psalm, an arrangement for marimbas of a South African setting of the congregational Eucharistic texts, and two examples from a specially composed call-and-response multilingual Eucharistic setting. The author concludes that the process of transformation through language and music is a continuous one which has only begun.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie artikel word die proses bespreek waardeur musiek in die Anglikaanse katedraal te Grahamstad gelokaliseer word. Ten aanvang word die bedoeling met die katedraal se transformasieprogram verduidelik, met spesifieke verwysing na taal en musiek. Die skrywer gaan dan voort deur vyf afsonderlike voorbeelde van doelbewuste musikale lokaliserings te ontleed. Dit sluit in 'n verwerking van 'n Xhosa *igwijo*, 'n plaaslike *hip-hop* Psalm, 'n marimba-verwerking van 'n doelmatig gekomponeerde Suid-Afrikaanse toonsetting van die gemeentelike Nagmaaltekste, en twee voorbeelde van 'n getoonsette Nagmaaldiens met veeltalige roep-en-antwoord. Die skrywer kom tot die slotsom dat die transformeringsproses deur middel van taal en musiek aaneenlopend van aard is en nou eers begin het.

The process of localisation, or inculturation, is not a new phenomenon in the sweep of Christian history. From the Church's earliest times debates have raged about the core message of the faith as it relates to culture. The first evidence of such discussions appears in Paul's letters to the Mediterranean churches (see his instructions regarding food offered to idols in 1 Corinthians 8 as an example). There is also the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 concerning circumcision and following other practices of the Jewish Law. Throughout Christian history these debates have proved controversial, sometimes threatening to split church communities; yet, in general, Christianity has been able to absorb and tolerate any number of cultural adaptations in order to convey its Gospel. This article is an introduction to such a cultural debate at Grahamstown Cathedral. It joins the many discussions taking place around the world as the norms of western colonial Christian identity are challenged by vernacular cultures. The purpose here is to present musical examples of transformation in relation to South African Anglican worship. As such, the examples deal with musical issues which revolve principally around Anglicanism's current core liturgical service: the Eucharist. The five musical examples below are drawn from experiments which have proved broadly successful within the congregation. They may inspire other congregations to explore their own cultural diversity.

I. LOCALISATION

In terms of this essay, the word "localisation" is used intentionally. Hellberg argues that the terms inculturation and indigenisation both connote a return to "pure" musical cultures which have their roots in the pre-colonial past (Hellberg, 2010:20). The concept of "pure" cultural music has problems of its own, particularly in places where conquest and cultural domination may have been in progress before western colonialism. Another limitation of meaning is that inculturation and indigenisation both seem to suggest that a pre-existing culture's ethos and norms require reinvigoration or revival. Localisation, on the other hand is a more flexible term which allows for a definition embracing situations where musical cultures have already intersected and are in negotiation with each other, e.g. western hymn tunes which have been adapted to suit local tastes (Hellberg, 2010: 19). Hellberg refines the definition saying, "Participants in a process of localisation do not look only to the past, but also appropriate new cultural influences, using elements of the local cultural past that still are remembered in combination with them" (Hellberg, 2010: 20). The examples listed below are all examples of localisation within the Cathedral community in Grahamstown.

Anglicanism in Southern Africa has not been at the forefront of institutional inculturation or even systematic localisation, except where it happened organically. In the 1990's Wells, in his musical survey of Lesotho, noted that the local Anglican Church had resisted inculturation and continued to encourage music of European origin (Wells, 1994:191). Indeed, the world-wide Anglican Communion has been slow to recognise the

need for the active engagement of Christianity in its western guise with local cultures of the global south. Lambeth Conference, the international gathering of Anglican bishops held every ten years, only officially encouraged experiments of inculturation in 1988 when they passed two resolutions:

Resolution 22 - Christ and Culture

This Conference:

- (a) Recognises that culture is the context in which people find their identity.
- (b) Affirms that God's love extends to people of every culture and that the Gospel judges every culture according to the Gospel's own criteria of truth, challenging some aspects of culture while endorsing and transforming others for the benefit of the Church and society.
- (c) Urges the Church everywhere to work at expressing the unchanging Gospel of Christ in words, actions, names, customs, liturgies, which communicate relevantly in each contemporary society.

Resolution 47 - Liturgical Freedom

This Conference resolves that each province should be free, subject to essential universal Anglican norms of worship, and to a valuing of traditional liturgical materials, to seek that expression of worship which is appropriate to its Christian people in their cultural context. (Lambeth Conference)

A year later, a group of Anglican liturgists met in York to discuss the implications of the resolutions. Collectively they said, "Inculturation must therefore affect the whole ethos of corporate worship, not only the texts but also, for example, the use of buildings, furnishings, art, music and ceremonial. From one aspect it means cultural de-colonialisation of worship..." (York Statement, point 6). What would this mean in the context of Anglicanism in Africa? Within a couple of years, a consultation of African liturgists met in Kanamai to discuss possible approaches to worship which would help to localise, but not necessarily indigenise it. The delegates of the consultation "... [encouraged] the use of local words and music to make worship more joyful and authentically African. Attention needs to be given to creative writing and composition. Music should not appear to decorate the liturgy but should be regarded as being integral (Kanamai Statement, point 2.3. (Gitari 1994))". Thus, the stage was set for formal experimentation. Some parishes have been active agents of musical localisation in their communities. Others have simply retained the western hymn tradition as they have received it. The analyses below demonstrate some of the intentional experiments with local musical traditions as a response to the encouragement of Lambeth Conference and the Kanamai Consultation.

2. RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICAN ANGLICAN MUSIC

Research on localisation in Southern African church music has been pioneered largely by the Roman Catholic Church (Dargie 1981; Dargie 1982a; Dargie 1982b), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe (Axelsson 1974) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (Hellberg 2007; Hellberg 2010). These churches were instrumental in recognising the need for African inculturation and localisation in the 1950's and '60's. There have been several research studies in Anglican music in the subcontinent, but they have tended to focus on how the English nature of Anglican worship migrated from Britain to Southern Africa (Smith 1997; Smith 2005).

Local Anglican scholars usually concentrate on one of two streams of research. The first is historical studies which trace the development of Anglicanism and its cultural impact (Hinchliff 1963). The second is sociological studies which usually explore the impact of worship wars, where so-called "traditional" hymnody and choral music is threatened by contemporary western scriptural songs or vice versa. (Largerwall, 1997). Both streams focus on Anglicanism's "traditions" in terms of western preoccupations. The overarching ideal of an 'Anglican ethos' is so deeply entrenched that meaningful commitment to localisation in this denomination from theological, sociological and musical spheres is limited. This is not a uniquely Southern African problem. Celebrated voices on the continent like John Pobee (Pobee 1987) and Luke Pato (Pato 1998) are virtually alone in their critiques of the continued English identity of Anglicanism outside of Britain.

3. INTERCULTURAL MUSICAL ACTIVITY

The music educationalist Huib Schippers has observed that "The concept of large homogenous groups with single identities is weakening rapidly" (Schippers, 2010:30). Indeed, in terms of this study, the Cathedral congregation is no longer a homogenous group (see below). How, then, does one categorise the negotiation of musical cultures? Schippers offers four categories:

- a. Monocultural: a dominant culture is the only frame of reference. Other music and cultural practices are marginalised. This includes the philosophy of institutions, design of courses and methods, etc.
- b. Multicultural: different peoples and music cultures lead largely separate lives.
- c. Intercultural: this denotes loose contacts and exchanges between cultures which may include simple fusion.
- d. Transcultural: the in-depth exchange of approaches and ideas. Cultures are viewed, taught and experienced on an equal footing (Schippers, 2010:30 – 31).

The experiments at the Cathedral fall broadly into categories (c) and (d). Godwin Sadoh offers insight concerning diverse musical cultures from an African perspective. He shows how the theorist Akin Euba categorised interaction of different cultures of music:

1. Thematic intercultural activity: this is where the composer belongs to one of the musical cultures from which material is derived, i.e. he/she acts as an organic distiller of musical cultures.
2. Domicile intercultural activity: here a composer writes in a cultural style which is not his/her own.
3. Intercultural performance: this is where the music and the performer are from different musical cultures (Sadoh, 2004:636).

In order to fully represent what is happening at the Cathedral I have combined both systems, using the meanings of “intercultural” and “transcultural” from Schippers’ categories with the first two descriptors from Euba’s, i.e. “Thematic” and “Domicile”. So, for example, Thematic Transcultural interaction would mean that a composer or arranger belongs to a musical culture which is represented in a hybrid style, but has sought to understand the other musical culture(s) which mingle with his/her home culture. In other words, the cultures interact from the depth of their philosophical and theoretical underpinnings and meanings. Thematic Intercultural interaction would imply that the composer or arranger again belongs to a musical culture which is represented in a hybrid style, but whose knowledge of the other styles is simply through loose contact through the media or visiting musicians. The depth of transaction is not at a philosophical or theoretical perspective. The other transmutations of the terms is self evident.

4. CONTEXT

The Anglican Cathedral of St Michael and St George is located in the heart of Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape. It started its life in 1824 as a parish church for Anglican colonial immigrants and in 1854 was elevated to the status of a Cathedral, bearing the throne of the newly consecrated Bishop of Grahamstown, John Armstrong (1813 - 1856). For the majority of its long history the Cathedral has served a largely white congregation, but in the last few decades the demographics of the community have changed with the advent of multiracial democracy. Today the congregation is one of the most diverse in Grahamstown, attracting residents, university students and school learners from at least six South African language groups. Among the members are those from further afield in Africa, representing Zimbabwe, Botswana and Nigeria.

Given this incredible diversity, the Cathedral pastoral team decided that multilingualism in the liturgy was paramount. Significantly, though, they decided that multilingualism would not only be defined as the use of multiple languages, but would include aspects of culture which underpin and support those languages.¹ So, for example, it was not enough simply to include a language such as isiXhosa in

¹ The ethnomusicologist John Blacking argued that while language appears to be one of the strongest carriers of cultural thought patterns and actions, non-verbal expressions such as music must be close contenders too. He makes the point especially in the South African context where, at the time he was conducting research, the voice of the black majority was severely curtailed due to apartheid. He claims that in this context, music rather than language acted as the carrier of cultural identity (Byron, 1995:199)

a largely western milieu (i.e. isiXhosa words with a British hymn-tune). The idea was that music and gesture which accompanied a particular language should be fused into worship. Thus, western hymns translated into the vernacular with western tunes were not necessarily the only ideal. Praise hymns from the prophet Ntsikana Gaba (d. 1821), in the literary and musical style of the amaXhosa, were seen as important and beautiful signs of God's grace operating within the ambit of a specific cultural setting and as a prototype of cultural forms of localised Christianity.²

Indeed, for many people in South Africa, it is music which underpins their identity as Africans and more particularly as Christians. African Initiated Churches, which almost always feature locally composed hymns, are particularly proud of their musical offerings, because they are more consciously in dialogue with local cultural norms and faith disciplines. June Boyce-Tillman argues that, "...the performed theology of singing in church must be sufficiently in tune with the thinking/singing of a church community to enable spiritual nurture and growth" (Boyce-Tillman, 2013:49). Joyce Scott also speaks of the "heart music" of people and encourages missionaries to embrace such musical norms in order to evangelise more effectively (Scott, 2009:32). John Blacking, speaking of black congregations in Venda, articulates Scott's idea more fully, "The music, which was for all the most emotional and expressive element of worship, was meant to help each individual member to find his/her inner self in the presence of and with the help of others, and to achieve experience of the Holy Spirit through participation in collective counterpoint" (Byron, 1995:209). But how does a community which comprised such diverse cultural groups, as opposed to a monochrome community, express the "heart music" of each represented culture? Is it possible?

The Cathedral team felt strongly that their mission was not only to promote diverse languages, but also to encourage transculturalism and mutual understanding through worship. Thus, examples of cultural interaction, both through macaronic texts or musical styles which have fused, were sought in existing repertoires and were commissioned from local writers and composers. An historical example of this is J.A. Chalmers and John Knox Bokwe (1855 – 1922) with their popular hymn "Msindisi waboni" – a white and black man collaborated to produce a hybrid result. While the text follows western poetic norms, it uses imagery from the amaXhosa worldview. Equally, while the tune conforms to western melodic and harmonic norms on paper, its performance today has been completely transformed with parallel harmonies and an entirely different metre (Bethke 2016). At the Cathedral, a kind of reverse colonial process has been established with this particular hymn, where an English version of the text has been created which can be sung simultaneously with the isiXhosa. Bokwe's original tonic sol-fa tune is not used, but rather a transcription of the tune as it is sung unaccompanied in parish churches with a majority black congregation.

The difficulty with this approach of musical and textual translanguaging is that inevitably someone's culture will be left out or that cultural boundaries will be unwittingly transgressed. This is a real danger, and one that the Cathedral is well aware of. Regular interaction with members of the congregation in terms of music has been a crucial part of this ongoing endeavour. A fascinating encounter will serve as an example. On one particular Sunday the Cathedral invited a traditional isiXhosa drummer to

² Janet Hodgson's book *Ntsikana's "Great Hymn"* (Hodgson, 1980) contains an excellent introduction to Ntsikana's life, conversion story, teachings and hymns.

accompany a new call-and-response setting of the Eucharistic responses (the music of this setting will be discussed in detail below). While the majority of worshippers (of all ethnicities) responded positively to the drumming, one member was particularly disturbed by it. She had, in her youth, experienced a call from the ancestors to become a *sangoma*. Being a devout Christian, she had gone through a traditional ritual to ask the ancestors to refrain from calling her, as she was dedicating herself fully to Christ. Interestingly, though, particular rhythmic drumming patterns (those used for religious ceremonies and which were used in the Cathedral that Sunday) reawakened in her the calling and unsettled her tremendously. As a result, she asked if she could be excused on Sundays when drums were used. In fact, drums have only been used twice subsequently, despite their popularity. But the story shows that experiments with cultural interaction can yield surprisingly positive or disturbing results.

The discussion below presents some musical examples of the process of localisation through intentional cultural engagement. They are representative of only a few of the experiments that are taking place at the Cathedral and serve simply as a catalyst for more discussion on methods of diversification within church worship.

5. PRAYER FOR AFRICA

The Prayer for Africa was composed by the cleric and anti-apartheid stalwart Trevor Huddleston (1913 – 1998). It was included in *An Anglican Prayer Book 1989* and is used at many Eucharistic services across the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. It has been set to music by numerous musicians. The most well-known is Barry Smith's 1989 setting (see figure 1 below). Its soaring melody is memorable and it is much loved by many Anglicans. And yet, for a prayer which is directed specifically at Africa, its Eurocentric style is what one might term textually dissonant. In fact, to call it Eurocentric is perhaps

The image shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system has the lyrics: "Gently God bless Af-ri-ca. guard her". The second system has the lyrics: "chil-ren, guide her leaders, and give her peace. For JoesusChrist'ssake, A-men." The music consists of a treble clef staff with a melody and a bass clef staff with a supporting bass line. The melody is characterized by a soaring, stepwise line, particularly in the first system. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

Figure 1. Barry Smith's setting of the *Prayer for Africa*. Used with permission.

too bold. In essence it stands in a no-man's land, not unlike John Knox Bokwe's hymn tune LOVEDALE.³

Harmonically the piece breaks several western rules, such as the use of consecutive parallel fifths (see bars 6 – 8, bass clef). Parallel fifths do feature in African traditional music, but do not function in the same way as Smith uses them.⁴ The melody, too, is not particularly African, starting low and moving gradually to a climax before returning to a resting point – a solid example of western-inspired melodic aspirations. These non-African traits do not in any sense diminish the significance and popularity of the music, they simply show that the music is more likely to be accepted as “heart music” by those from a western background.

In an effort to create a musical setting with a more African ethos, Andrew Tracey, the retired head of the International Library of African Music, decided to adapt a amaXhosa *igwijo* song,⁵ retaining the essence of the original music, but swapping the words for an adaptation of the English version of the Prayer for Africa. The transcription of the *igwijo* with its original words is given in figure 2. Figure 3 is Tracey's adaptation with the English text of the Prayer for Africa.

Comparing the two, one can see that Tracey retained the melodic contours and the essence of the call-and-response opening of the song. He also kept the parallel harmonic movement which usually follows the melody in parallel a fifth below. Notice, though, that the arrangement is for four voices, the sopranos and altos simply following the tenors and basses. The rhythm is slightly varied from Dargie's transcription, in this case to allow for a more characteristically rhythmically varied performance (transcriptions always face the danger of immortalising one particular version of the song/piece as it is performed on that day and time, yet performances may vary quite widely). Tracey also adapted the words quite freely, retaining the overall meaning, but creating a two-verse structure that allows for the natural flow of the words without disturbing the original melody. The only aspect of meaning which is slightly different is the phrase “watch over our leaders” as opposed to “guide our leaders”. One could argue that there is sufficient alteration so as to pray for an action which is quite different in comparison to original. This is perhaps the weakest part of the overall adaptation. Another negative argument may be the association of the melody with a secular, non-Christian activity. This is not a new debate in the church and can have strong advocates on both the positive and negative sides. However, the song was well received by the congregation, with no negative comments arising to my knowledge. In fact, the overwhelming response was positive and encouraging from all racial groups.

As a whole the piece successfully evokes an African musical idiom and retains the essence of the English prayer, thus fusing two cultural worlds: English with the amaXhosa. Since Xhosa music has some elements which common with music throughout Africa (such as call-and-response technique), people from other African cultural groups have responded with equally positive comments.

³ See Olwage (2006).

⁴ In general, for example, in Xhosa harmonisation techniques, the harmony follows the melody in parallel movement, not the bass-line (Dargie, 1988:79 – 80).

⁵ An *igwijo* is a traditional stick-fighting song that is sung by Xhosa initiate boys. They are usually in cyclic form and can have humorous lyrics.

Hlabela (Lead)
Ye! Ma - kot' o - mncane o - mncane u - ya - wa -

Landela (Follow)
Ye! Ma - kot' o - mncane u - ya - wa -

H
thand' a - ma - do - da, ndi - qwe - ne - la ndiv' o - wam m - faz' om-ncan'.

L
thand' a - mo - do - da, ndi - qwe - ne - la ndiv' o - wam m - faz' om-ncan'.

Xhosa words

1. Ye! Makot' omncane
Uyawathand' amadoda
Ndingwenela ndiv'
Owam mfaz' omncan'
2. Senditsho ndisohamba
Ndayiwel' iBelveni
Ndadibana nengwe
Nengonyama.

English translation

Hey! Little bride
You like men
So I hear all the time
My little wife.

So I said when I went away
I crossed over to Belville
And I met a leopard
And a lion.

Figure 2. *Igwijo*, “Ye! Makot’ omncane” transcribed and translated by David Dargie (1988:179 – 80) and translated into western notation by the author.

S
A
T
B
God bless Af-ri-ca and take care of our child - ren and
God bless Af-ri-ca!

Original Prayer for Africa

God bless Africa
Guard her children
Guide her leaders
And give her peace
For Jesus Christ's sake.

Tracey's adapted form

God bless Africa!
And take care of our children
And give us peace
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God bless Africa!
And watch over our leaders
And give us peace
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Figure 3. The first few bars of Andrew Tracey's adaptation of the *igwijo* for the English Prayer for Africa. Used with permission.

6. CHORISTERS' COMPOSITIONS

The Cathedral maintains a strong choral tradition and has a unique choral scholarship scheme for talented singers from disadvantaged backgrounds.⁶ Altogether there are twenty-four children (who each receive an annual scholarship towards their school fees) and sixteen adults drawn from the community. The age range of the choir is from 9 to 80.

Once a year the Cathedral hosts a "Back to School" service for the entire community which attracts children from the schools in the area. On that day school choirs and small groups present music as part of the service. When the music team was preparing for the 2015 service, a group of five Cathedral choir girls asked if they could prepare Psalm 23 as a hip-hop song to be sung after the first reading. Psalm chanting is a weekly feature of worship at the Cathedral, either using Gregorian psalm tones, or Anglican chant. Given the nature of the service, it was felt that a new type of musical arrangement of a Psalm would not only be appropriate, but would give the girls an opportunity to creatively engage with a musical genre that does not often stretch to biblical psalmody.

The result was staggering. It caught the attention of the school children and electrified the atmosphere in the lead up to the Gospel lesson which was scheduled to follow the psalm that day. The musical composition the girls put together was inspired largely by the film *Pitch Perfect*, and most especially the audition scene from that film where a hip-hop mix takes place. The features of a regularly recurring bass-line (in this case sung by a low alto), backing vocals (humming) and percussive "beat-box" all contributed to the hip-hop feel. However, elements of Xhosa parallel harmonisation also seeped into the texture. All of the harmonic movement follows the melody (which, in fact, only appears after layered entries from the bass-line, beat box and backing vocals respectively). Gerhard Kubik speaks of the characteristic "skipping third" process which is inherent in most Southern African music (Kubik, 1994:171 – 175). As figure 4 demonstrates, all the parts follow the melody exactly either a third above, or a third below. Thus, what the girls presented was a fusion of the hip-hop style they had absorbed from *Pitch Perfect* along with their cultural harmonic intuition. Along with this they had grafted a Judaeo/Christian text into this hybrid musical texture creating an organic synthesis of cultures.

The structure of the song is cyclic with a short coda. One cycle of the song is presented in figure 4 below. The piece begins with the alto singing one cycle, followed by the beat-box, then the backing vocals successively, each part building upon the texture of the previous voices. Finally the main tune and text are introduced. The coda brings all the parts together in close harmony, not related to any melodic or rhythmic material from before.

⁶ For more information about the Makana Choir School, refer to <http://www.grahamstowncathedral.org/music/choir.php> [accessed 8 February 2016].

The image shows a musical score for a Kyrie. It is written in 2/2 time and D minor. The score is divided into three systems. The first system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "Lord, have mercy" and the organ accompaniment. The organ part consists of a repeating rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a more complex accompaniment in the left hand. The second system continues the organ accompaniment. The third system shows the organ accompaniment concluding with a final chord.

Figure 5. An extract from the *Kyrie* from the *Constantia Setting* by Collin Howard.
Used with permission.

From figure 5 it is clear to see that this is a piece designed for congregational use, but with a four-part choral harmonisation accompanied by organ. This particular section is solidly in d minor (notice the strong IV – V cadences in bars 4 and 6), and the rhythm delineates the simple-quadruple time signature with strong beats falling on the first and third beats respectively. Its repetition of musical motives on the words “Lord, have mercy”, perhaps unconsciously, does signify its one quasi-African attribute: a hint of call-and-response technique. However, this device may simply have been included to reinforce the melodic content for the congregation for whom it is intended.

When this setting was introduced at Grahamstown Cathedral, some 900km away from Constantia where it was written, the piece took on a new character. Firstly, it was decided by the Cathedral worship team that, if possible, the work should be transcribed for marimba, rather than organ accompaniment. At the time (2012), marimbas accompanied the singing of the congregational parts of the Eucharistic service, i.e. *Gloria*, *Kyrie*, etc. Up until then the Lumko setting, originally devised for the Roman Catholic liturgy, was used regularly. Penny Whitford, the leader of the Cathedral marimba ensemble, gathered her group (five young Xhosa men whom she had trained for the past nine years) and taught them the melody. After this, she asked them to create an accompaniment. The result for the *Kyrie* is given in figure 6.

The image displays a musical score for a marimba ensemble, transcribed for Soprano, Tenor, and Bass parts. The score is written in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Soprano parts (1 and 2) play a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The Tenor part provides a harmonic accompaniment with a similar eighth-note pattern. The Bass part plays a bass line with a slower, more rhythmic pattern. The lyrics are: [Lord, _____ have mer - cy]. The score is divided into two systems, with the second system starting at measure 5.

Figure 6. An extract of the adaptation of the *Kyrie* from the *Constantia Setting* by the Grahamstown Cathedral marimba ensemble, transcribed by Penny Whitford. Used with permission.

The first striking change is the key. The Cathedral's marimbas are designed to play in C and G major. While they can accommodate A and E minor, the required raised sevenths (G# and D# respectively) are not available. This presents a problem in a piece which has such a strong grounding in the minor key and relying on a major version of chord V. This did not daunt the marimba group. They simply transposed the piece to E Dorian mode and allowed for the minor version of chord V. Then they set about transforming the piece to suit their own musical taste. Notice the bass-line which, opposed to Howard's original, moves mostly in similar motion with the melody. Notice too that the harmonic rhythm has slowed down from almost every beat, to a whole bar.

From a rhythmic perspective the adaptation is equally interesting. Where the original favoured natural accents on the first and third beats, the adaptation clearly prefers a strong second beat, creating rhythmic tension between the melody/bass-line, and the accompaniment. Thus, the pattern

in the melodic line is four quavers plus four quavers, while the accompaniment is two quavers plus four quavers plus two quavers. This displays what sometimes occurs in Xhosa traditional music where numerous rhythmic patterns are performed in tandem creating a complex fabric of interweaving accents, although this usually occurs between what Dargie calls “voice movement and body movement” (Dargie, 1988:83), rather than necessarily two pitched instruments.⁷

Despite these localisations, the piece is still immediately recognisable. In fact, whether the organ or the marimbas accompany the setting, the congregation is able to participate without any difficulty.

8. MULTILINGUAL EUCHARIST

The final examples of this essay are also settings of the congregational texts from the Eucharist. The New Cathedral Setting was written for the Cathedral by the present Director of Music, Andrew-John Bethke, in response to its programme of linguistic and musical transformation. The idea was to create a group of pieces in several languages where either existing traditional music from South Africa was used, or music composed according to local musical norms was created. Of course, the question begs, “what is South African traditional style, and can it be recreated?” While pure vernacular styles are difficult to pinpoint (many having all but vanished in the wake of colonialization and modernisation), there are particular traits which are common throughout Africa, and in Southern Africa in particular. Authors such as Kubik (1994) discuss the characteristics of music across the African continent, highlighting specific cultural norms in particular areas. Other authors and scholars, like Dargie (1988), focus specifically on one particular cultural group and try to codify or comment on its musical theoretical system. With aids like this, modern composers can try to create something resembling a local style. Another aim of this specific project was bring South African cultures together through lyrics and music. Both aims will be demonstrated below.

Four of South Africa’s languages were chosen for the setting: English (*Gloria*), Xhosa (*Kyrie*), Afrikaans (*Sanctus/Benedictus*) and Sotho (*Agnus Dei*). Together these languages represent at least eight groups. Xhosa originates from the Nguni language group which is also the progenitor of Zulu and Swathi. Sotho is derived from another progenitor which itself produced two other related languages Pedi and Tswana. All the pieces were designed with a call-and-response ideal in mind, where either a cantor or clergy person could lead the congregation by lining out a phrase and the congregation could follow by repeating it. This type of setting is particularly helpful when many visitors are in a service, i.e. Easter Day. When the call-and-response style is used on such occasions, even those who are unfamiliar with the music can participate because the phrases are short and easy to imitate. Likewise, the texts for each movement were chosen specifically because they were easy to imitate, even if the congregation may normally be unfamiliar with a particular language. The idea in composing the setting was to help ordinary church goers to become accustomed to numerous languages, and perhaps to be inspired to learn more about local languages with which they are unfamiliar. Such a setting also promotes a

⁷ Dargie’s discussion on the polyphonic underpinning of Xhosa music is also relevant here. His premise is that several cycles of rhythm may be at play simultaneously (Dargie, 1988:87 – 88).

sense of hospitality within the congregation, such that the mother-tongue of several people is used in worship, albeit briefly. Finally, the idea was to create a setting which could be used unaccompanied, with drums, or with marimbas. So far it has been performed with drums (cf. above) and the marimba group are working on an accompaniment to introduce in 2016.

The *Agnus Dei* is an example of a newly composed piece written in the style of the Basotho. Its musical attributes include the use of call-and-response technique, pentatonic scales and a rhythm derived closely from the text. These characteristics are all fundamental bases for traditional Sotho music.⁸ To achieve as natural a rhythm as possible, a mother-tongue Sotho speaker was asked to recite the text slowly and lyrically several times for a recording. This recording underpinned not only the rhythmic basis of the work, but also broadly outlined the melodic contours. Sotho is tonal language (Wells, 1994: 15) and possesses a flowing lyrical lilt which lends itself readily to musical setting. In fact, the melodic contours seem to suggest themselves through repeated recitation.⁹ Like many Southern African vernacular musical styles, Sotho melodies tend to begin high and weave their way gradually downwards.¹⁰ The accents in the text seem to promote this downward melodic trajectory. The task of grafting the text onto the downward inflection of the pentatonic scale on C presented no complications and produced the following result (see figure 7).

Kon - ya-na ea Mo-li-mo, u tlo - sa li-be tsa le - fa - tse u re ha-u - he - le.

Sotho text (Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 1989:127)	English translation (Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 1989:127)
<p>Verses 1 and 2. Konyana ea Molimo, U tlosa libe tsa lefatse: U re hauhele.</p>	<p>Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world: Have mercy on us.</p>
<p>Verse 3. Konyana ea Molimo, Utlosa libe tsa lefatse: U re fe kotso.</p>	<p>Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world: Grant us peace.</p>

Figure 7. The first verse of the *Agnus Dei* from the *New Cathedral Setting* by Andrew-John Bethke. Used with permission.

⁸ Robin Wells provides an introduction to Sotho music using several transcribed examples. Two major themes are apparent in his work: 1. the text of a piece is an important structural feature; and 2. that the leader of a song has more flexibility in the melodic and rhythmic development of musical phrases. See Wells, *Music of the Basotho*, 16.

⁹ Dargie promoted a method of composition using similar techniques: repeating a text over and over until a rhythm and melody began to emerge naturally.

¹⁰ See examples of transcribed songs in Wells (1994).

The *Sanctus* is an example of mixing two unlikely cultural candidates: traditional Xhosa music with Afrikaans text (the apartheid oppressor’s language and the oppressed music). In this piece, musical fragments from Ntsikana’s *Bell* and *Round Hymn*, two famous examples of localisation dating from the early nineteenth century, are used as the basis (cf. introduction of this essay). The opening words “Helig, helig, helig! God van krag en mag” (“Holy, holy, holy! God of power and might”) are set to what would have been the opening of the *Bell*, replacing the original words “Sele, sele, ahom, ahom, ahom” (“sele” and “ahom” are Xhosa praise words, which are roughly the equivalent of “alleluia” or “hosanna”). The second section (from the words “Die hemel en aarde...”) is based on the leader’s part in the *Round Hymn*. While the rhythm is occasionally adjusted to accommodate the words, the overall melodic contours are left intact.

Hei - - - lig, hei - - - lig, hei - - - lig!

God _____ van krag en mag. Die _____

hem - el en aar - de is vol van U heer - lik - heid. Ho

san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in die hoog - ste. Ge -

seënd is Hy wat kom _____

in die naam van die He - re. Ho

san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in die hoog - ste. _____

Afrikaans text (Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 1989:117)	English translation (Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 1989:117)
Heilig, heilig, heilig God van krag en mag. Die hemel en aarde is vol van U heerlikheid. Hosanna in die hoogste. Geseënd is hy wat kom in die naam van die Here. Hosanna in die hoogste.	Holy, holy, holy God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Figure 8. The *Sanctus/Benedictus* from the *New Cathedral Setting* by Andrew-John Bethke. Used with permission.



Figure 9. An extract from Ntsikana’s *Bell* as transcribed by David Dargie (1988:199).



Figure 10. An extract from the leader’s part in Ntsikana’s *Round Hymn*, transcribed by David Dargie (1988:199).

The enthusiastic response of the congregation to the setting may show that its aims have been met. Thorough reflection will confirm or deny this premise, but certainly for the time being, the setting represents a new and exciting avenue of transformation in the Cathedral community.

9. CONCLUSION

This essay has presented several examples of intentional localisation which have been introduced at Grahamstown Cathedral over the past three years. They give an overview of the larger programme of transculturalism which is being promoted through the worship tradition at the Cathedral. Four examples are presented. The first is the Prayer for Africa. This is an example of Thematic Transcultural interaction: an existing local secular song in call-and-response style (Xhosa) interacts with an English prayer and SATB four-part style (South African English). Both form (call-and-response and SATB style) and pre-existing material (Xhosa melodic content and English text) are combined with utmost respect,

maintaining the integrity of content as much as possible. However, the original meaning of the song (a Xhosa *igwijo*) has been completely changed for a Christian intercessional context. The arranger of the song, Andrew Tracey, belongs to the South African English tradition, but has in-depth and first-hand knowledge of the amaXhosa musical culture. Thus, on numerous levels this piece is Thematically Transcultural. The choristers' composition is an example of Domicile Intercultural interaction. Here hip-hop style inspired by western movie *Pitch Perfect* is combined with English biblical words (Psalm 23). The underlying meaning of the original musical style (American English/African American) has been redefined for a religious setting. Both the musical style and the text come from foreign cultures, hence the "Domicile" designation. The theoretical and philosophical depths of hip-hop and biblical psalmody have not been plumbed in this example. Rather the musical and textual genres have simply been superimposed. However, hip-hop does lend itself to a cyclic additive form which reflects an integral aspect of Xhosa music – the home musical culture of many of the choristers. Thus, there is an echo of home culture, albeit secondary in nature. The marimba arrangements of an existing South African setting of the Eucharist is Thematic Transcultural interaction. Here an aspect of Xhosa musical style, particularly from a rhythmic perspective, interacts with a western-styled musical composition on Zimbabwean marimbas. The melody and form of the pieces are left largely intact, while the harmony and rhythms of the accompaniment are transformed to reflect the available resources (the marimba). While the marimbas themselves are not strictly speaking local instruments, they allow for localised expression in a way that an organ or piano cannot. Since this hybrid style allows both the western melodic technique, Xhosa rhythmic tendencies and Zimbabwean instruments to co-exist on their own terms and without compromising their integrity, it is fair to say that the understanding and respect of each culture is deep. Finally, the Multilingual Eucharistic setting represents Domicile Transcultural interaction. Here the composer is not from the musical cultures which are represented. The music which has emerged is a result of intense academic research. Thus, at a deep level some type of cultural negotiation is taking place. Since the composer is a member of neither the musical nor the textual cultures which are presented, he is able to demonstrate the two can co-exist without the possible cultural baggage which would otherwise negate their co-existence. Like several of the other examples in this essay, the interaction is attempted with the utmost respect of all the musical and textual cultures, making it an example of transcultural interaction.

The tangible results of the programme on the ground are difficult to quantify. The Cathedral is comprised of a largely "migrant" congregation consisting of learners, students and university workers who only stay for brief periods of between one and four years. The congregation is also highly seasonal, growing considerably during school and university term time, but diminishing quite radically during the vacation times. Has the musical and linguistic diversity helped the congregation to grow numerically? That is a difficult question to answer given the context of the congregation. However, what the programme has done is to inspire a greater ownership of worship. This is displayed in the overall participation of the congregation; the stronger sound of communal singing in a large building (which can otherwise swallow sound); and a willingness to try new languages with a spirit of hospitality and grace. Perhaps it can be claimed that the endeavour has strengthened the resolve of the Cathedral community to hold together despite its incredible cultural diversity.

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