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STTEPPING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION? WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC IN AN ORCHESTRAL PROGRAMME FOR DISADVANTAGED AFRICAN YOUTH

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Abstract

There is no spelling error in this article's title – it refers to STTEP, an outreach project currently housed at the University of Pretoria, and concentrating on the teaching of western orchestral instruments, plus background areas such as music theory, to disadvantaged children and youth from a variety of townships around Pretoria, South Africa. STTEP's direction can well be described as "right" - pupils are already surrounded by all kinds of global phenomena, and their formal music studies in western classical music are not making them forget their roots. In fact the contrary has been found to be the case and some interesting cultural fusions are already seen; always a sign of a living culture.

Introduction

After the 1998 ISME (International Society for Music Education) conference in Pretoria the Finnish branch of ISME formulated a development cooperation project with the then already existing South African STTEP[i] music school, which focuses on the teaching of standard western orchestral instruments to disadvantaged black children and youth[ii] from townships around the city of Pretoria, South Africa. The Music School of the Municipality of Jyväskylä, conducted by Sini Louhivuori, took an initiative as a friendship school for STTEP and two cooperative music camps were organized in South Africa during the years 2000-2002. In July 2001 nine STTEP Music School students also visited Finland. During these visits the pupils of STTEP also had the possibility of working together with a famous Finnish music pedagogue and folk fiddler, Mauno Järvelä.

The first author of this article serves on the Board of the STTEP school, and is attached to the Department of Music of the University of Pretoria (UP), on whose campus STTEP is currently housed. This constitutes her ongoing involvement in the project, and she serves as the major link between the UP Music Department and STTEP. She is also the coordinator of the exchange programme between the music departments of the universities of Pretoria and Jyväskylä. The second author has worked both as an intermittent teacher in the project, during several visits to South Africa since 2000, and as a researcher, using the project as the topic for her licentiate thesis at the University of Jyväskylä. The aim of her doctoral research, completed in 2004, was to find out the effects that western classical music, learned and performed by the STTEP participants as a kind of special hobby, has on the lives of the pupils. Does this involvement and hobby not destroy the pupils' traditional culture? It is this question that both interests and disturbs many music educators and researchers all over the world. According to the

UN Declaration of Human Rights, article 27, everybody has the right to practise culture. But who has the right to decide which culture?

In this article the authors wish to demonstrate that STTEP's direction can well be described as "right". STTEP pupils are already surrounded by all kinds of global phenomena, and their formal music studies are not making them forget their roots, as clearly evidenced by their own statements, when interviewed on this aspect. In fact the contrary has been found to be the case: many pupils have become aware of their own traditions and some interesting cultural fusions are already seen – which is always a sign of a living culture.

The pupils see STTEP as a priceless opportunity that was not possible during the apartheid[iii] era. Many pupils stressed that if they did not play an instrument it would be very obvious that they would spend their time on the streets doing crime. STTEP gives the students meaningful activity especially on Saturdays, when they are free from school, although it is interesting that the school's weekday afternoon programme has grown increasingly in recent years. Playing also provides pupils with new equipment for dealing with their feelings – it appears to have a therapeutic effect. Most of the pupils come from difficult backgrounds and now claim that their instruments are their best friends. Many friendships have been born through STTEP: pupils spend spare time playing together, during which time some prejudices have been overcome between different language groups, for example. On the other hand some problems - for example with stage fright - that are probably familiar to all western classical music schools have occurred.

Background

STTEP Music School was launched in 1995, a few years after the husband and wife team of Philip and Julie Clifford had moved to Pretoria from the UK. Julie was working as a violinist in the orchestra of the State Theatre, in the centre of the city, when the Mercedes Benz company granted funds for some black orchestral cadets to join the orchestra and to be educated as professional musicians. It was soon realised that actually there were no such people who would have even the basic skills required to be able to join the project. Julie Clifford, together with Michael Hankinson, who was then conducting the State Theatre orchestra, contacted some churches in the surrounding townships, organised small orchestral concerts there and during these events tried to ascertain the wishes of the local people concerning music education for themselves and their children. A group of 170 adults, mostly choir singers, were interested in learning western music theory and staff notation. Many of them took their children with them to the lessons which were then organised at the State Theatre and the children turned out to be interested in the orchestral instruments which they saw there. The idea of STTEP Music School was born.

Just under ten years later, as ascertained during specific semi-structured interviews conducted with 13 pupils, three girls (girls 1-3) and ten boys (boys 1-10), by the second author, some of the STTEP Music School students were aiming to be professional musicians, but for most of the children, playing this music is just a hobby, but one which is giving more meaning and flavour to their lives[iv]. Most of the students initially have no or very little background in music studies, regardless of their age, although at

some of their schools there has been a little music theory education, playing the recorder or in some cases even private instrumental lessons. STTEP tuition is started from the very basics. The main working day at STTEP is Saturday because that is a free day from regular schools and most pupils would have nothing else to do than "hanging around in places", to quote one of them. The students arrive at the school in the morning and then they have private instrumental lessons, orchestral rehearsals, music theory, history and aural training until the afternoon. Instruments can be borrowed from the school for a small fee: care is taken that the hobby is affordable for everyone, but commitment must be demonstrated and responsibility taken for looking after instruments.

The students come from different townships and suburban areas around Pretoria and they are transported to and fro by bus to make the education available for everyone. Despite the expense of the transport, it has two distinct advantages: those children who are picked up by the bus, attend more regularly than if they are dependent on other transport. It also makes it possible for pupils who come from quite a wide geographic area to mix – otherwise, pupils from one township might not be able to cooperate regularly with pupils from another township, on another side of Pretoria.

At STTEP several of the more advanced players work as assistant teachers for the younger ones in addition to their own studies. They gain important experience of tuition and taking responsibility and at the same time they give valuable help, for example in language problems between a white, English speaking teacher and a black pupil whose home language is one of the nine indigenous such languages in South Africa. Some of the older players still come to school to help and play even if they are over 20 years old and have already started their own careers in a different line.

Theoretical framework

In the research methodology described below, Leeman and Reid's "metanarratives of liberal democracies and the culture-based studies of the local context" (2006: 59) were considered, as well as the assertion by Buttjes and Byram (1991: 276) that "The substantial implication of intercultural pedagogy as an ideologically critical category of society is the transformation of that very society". According to these authors (Buttjes and Byram 1991: 277), "Intercultural education within the framework of societal theory cannot be understood as free of ideology … Intercultural pedagogy as a critical category means intervention into societal practice rather than affirmation." The research underpinning this article demonstrated this, and the issues of culture and power relations and their pedagogical relevance were also considered[v].

Culture and power relations were particularly important to consider in this research at a time and in a country which had only recently emerged from its near half a century of apartheid policies. The "disadvantaged" pupils referred to are all Black Africans, whereas the two researchers are White (as are most of the teachers in the project), and can thus be seen as belonging to the racial grouping of the previous elite, and oppressors of the Black majority in the country. Nevertheless, the authors took heart from the "social turn" of "the last few decades of educational research", described by Belz and Müller-Hartmann: "This theoretical shift is in reference to the view that teachers, learners, learning, and teaching are always and everywhere embedded in cultural, historical, institutional, and power-structured contexts. Although these contexts bear

significantly on the ultimate shape that learning and teaching assume, learners and teachers are not mere automatons caught in a tangle of macro-level forces; instead, their individual agencies are co-constructed by the interrelationships of their own desires, abilities, and histories and the particular mix of artefacts, cultures, institutions, people, and situations in which they are located and in which they interact … Social realism provides a theoretical framework and concrete investigative methodology with which to examine and interpret complex social action … This paradigm … dovetails well with the social turn in educational research in general" (Belz and Müller-Hartmann 2003: 71-73).

It was accepted both in advance of and during this research that, as McAllister and Irvine (2000: 20) state: "Measuring change, especially cross-cultural change, is a complex and difficult process." However, as Cushner (1998:2) notes: "Although education alone cannot change the face of many problems that exist today, it can influence the future by preparing the minds of young people to include a diversity of viewpoints, behaviors and values". Elsewhere Cushner (1998: 6) remarks that "School programs and practice teaching Eurocentric (or any other "centric") experience, heritage, and perspective that exclude the views of others must be transformed, and young people must be helped to develop the knowledge, motivation, and skill to challenge and change systems characterized by discrimination and oppression". The authors of this article may have been concerned specifically with the teaching of western instruments and music theory to African children, but this endeavour was not seen in the sense that Jandt (2004: 305), describing William J. Starosta's major contribution to the development of the academic study of intercultural communication, calls promoting one's own culture because it allows one's "supporters to survive in a difficult world." Rather we considered the caveat of Bennett (1993: 21) that "Intercultural sensitivity is not natural. It is not part of our primate past, nor has it characterized most of human history … Education and training in intercultural communication is an approach to changing our 'natural' behaviour. With the concepts and skills developed in this field, we ask learners to transcend traditional ethnocentrism and to explore new relationships across cultural boundaries".

As Cushner (1998: 6) writes, "Pedagogical approaches to addressing issues of diversity … are quite varied". We considered the four approaches to multicultural education identified by Eldering (1996): the *disadvantage approach,* the *enrichment approach,* assuming that mutual appreciation, respect, and better understanding result from increased knowledge, the *bicultural competence approach*, and the *collective equality approach*, focusing on groups' collective equality rather than individual equality. We believe that the work in STTEP answers to the last three of these four approaches, resulting in the advantages that Eldering describes from these foci. Although aware of the STTEP pupils' disadvantaged backgrounds, we forged straight ahead from that point onwards, using music in the way described by Skyllstad, in his chapter in the book by Jandt (2004: 377): "Music, dance and theatre are important arenas for training in democratic participation and conflict transformation. The cultural crises we now see unfolding may be traced to our modern societies discontinuing these vital processes of social learning … Musical interaction creates social values".

The three different models of cross-cultural development explored by McAllister & Irvine (2000)

were considered: Helms's Racial Identity Theory, Banks's Typology of Ethnicity, and Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, but not one specific model was followed. Nor did we focus on understanding culture in terms of 'otherness', as Leeman and Reid (2006: 58) note that educational theory has done, in determining how best to manage differences. Agreeing with Woodrow et al (1997: 3) that "even theory … is culturally created and leads to different conceptualisation in difference societies". These authors further note the turning of such differences into "discriminating consequences by the social power brokers". Later in their book (1997: 21 – 27 they describe the claims of the theories of collective identity as "nothing less than obvious. There is no clearly defined set of phenomena (characteristics of identity) to which theories bring more and more suitable interpretations, in the way in which theories of perception progressively lead to a better realisation of the perceptive processes ... it seems that the array of theories of collective identity is more a question of food for thought than a fait accompli. It is probably where social psychology and the disciplines with which it is associated (sociology, history, semiology) prove the least certain in the prediction of events and the prevention of crises. All the more reason for further work". We found that STEPP's influence on pupils and their cultural roots and wings proved to exemplify Gandhi's vision with which Woodrow et al chose to end their book (1997: 337):

'I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet.'

Research methodology

The methods of the research described in this article were qualitative, including observation in general, participative observation, semi-structured theme interviews with the pupils and teachers, trip diaries written by the pupils and a research diary kept by the second author during the periods of her direct involvement. Thirteen pupils were particularly targeted during the interviews, conducted in December 2000, May 2001 and January 2002. The literature study was mainly based on material supplied by the founders of the project, the Cliffords, general background literature in fields such as intercultural education and cultural and musical identity, and reports of research during which STTEP pupils were utilised as subjects for music perception studies by other University of Jyväskylä staff.

The position of the second author, as researcher conducting interviews related to this project, could be viewed in the light of the emic–etic concept described by Pike (1990:31). In order to be able to use and understand the emics of a society, the researcher works as a member of the society but simultaneously and flexibly keeps some distance, thus deliberately remaining as an outside observer so as to be able to analyze both his or her own actions and the actions of the society, as well as the meaning structures found (Pike 1990:28-29, 34). In line with concern for both research reliability and ethical constraints the effects of the research as well as feelings of responsibility as a researcher have been constantly reflected upon, as the next figure shows:

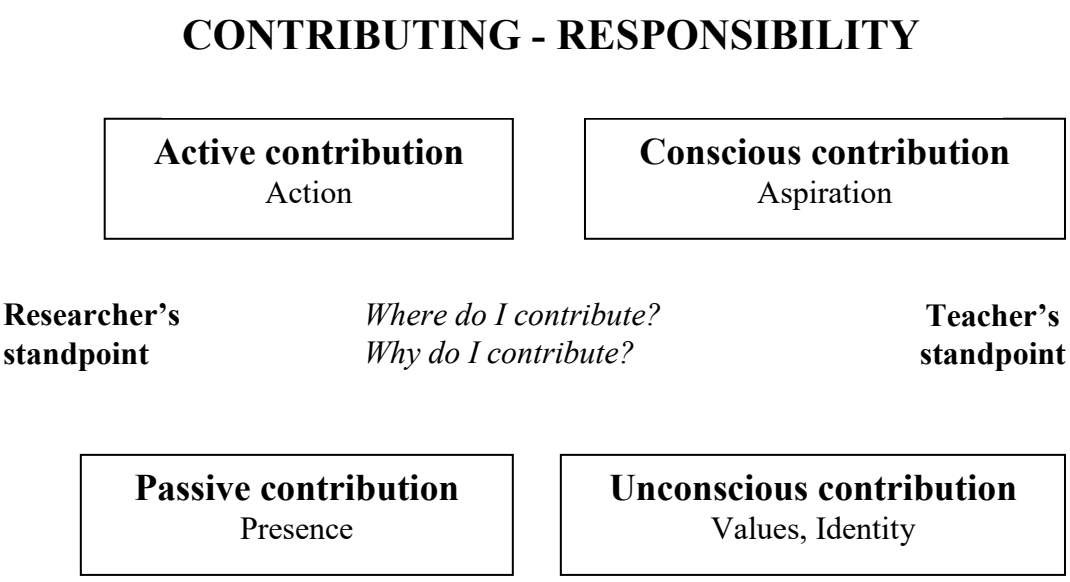

FIGURE 1: The ways of contribution (Salminen 2004:30).

During the research and teaching project the questions "Where do I contribute" and "Why do I contribute" were constantly asked and the potential answers considered. The aim was actions that would be ethical, striving towards what is "valuable" in every situation encountered. As a researcher, contributions have been more passive and less conscious whereas a teacher's contribution tends to be more active and conscious. Through reflection the aim was to move from any unconscious and passive aspects towards conscious and active.

We operated from the assumption that it was more valid to try and understand deeply the lives of single STTEP students than collecting large amounts of quantitative data in which there would be more space for possibly hidden intercultural misunderstandings. As we evaluate the effects of the STTEP Music School and western classical music as a hobby, even single cases already have much to tell.

STTEP's direction and underlying philosophy

The goals of running STTEP Music School have not only been to produce professional black instrument players and thus to help the continuation of western art music culture in South Africa – goals which are questioned both within and outside the country. The founders of the school have stressed repeatedly that their main motivation for running it is the children: improving their lives and developing their love for music. The direction the school follows is not only determined by its founders and their fellow-teachers, but is also reflected in the pupils' perception thereof: this is clearly revealed in the quotations below from the interviews conducted with some of them. However, from the position of hindsight of 2007, Philip Clifford does note two important points: in the first of these he writes, "whereas a small group of STTEP's pupils took from their work with Finns a true inspiration (to quote Darryn Williams), too many others thought that they had got on to an escalator that would gently raise them to the top floor with no further

effort. Things are tougher at STTEP nowadays, I am glad to say" (email to the first author, dated 1 March 2007). The second point that he makes is that "Looking back on the last ten years, we see that musically we have travelled further than we foresaw in, for example, 1999; BUT it is equally clear that we should have aimed much higher from the beginning, and that we now have to pay specific attention to the development of our most talented pupils. We have no particular ambitions for the founding of multi-racial or all-black professional orchestras. They will come, no doubt, if we want them. STTEP's work, though, is the development of a healthy, powerful, well-resourced musical life in the community."

The philosophy behind STTEP is clearly student centred. The teachers try to take into account the backgrounds of the pupils as much as possible and support pupil-initiated activity. A good example of the fruits from this are the fusion music styles described in this article. The students are also asked for an opinion when important decisions are made. On the other hand the teaching methods and arrangements are very close to a traditional western classical music school system – quite obviously because that is the background of all the teachers.

The 13 interviewed pupils saw STTEP as a possibility to a better life. Seven of them stated that they would be on the streets doing crime without the music school. Some of them were considering music as their future profession even if they realised that the path would not be easy, especially in their society. The youths were proud of their hobby and felt themselves privileged, although not everybody's friends and families understand or support them. It was their own progress in their chosen hobby that was supporting their self-esteem and many have found their best friends in STTEP. The orchestra of the school works as an important social link between children and youth from different areas and language groups. Instead of watching TV, many pupils are now meeting their new friends and playing together during their free time. Encouragement in this is provided by the fact that STTEP now has a more specialised orchestra, known as Amacademy. Pupils can be selected for Amacademy from the large, general orchestra, in which all pupils play, from the very youngest beginners, every Saturday.

> *It´s interesting to play because you become proud of yourself and your parents, they support you and things like that. (Girl 2)*

> *Maybe now I would have been somewhere in the streets or doing something that is illegal. Because STTEP has been taking lots of youngsters who live in townships. A great opportunity to move away, to abstain from bad things. So, to be honest, if I didn´t joined STTEP I ´d probably be doing something illegal. (Boy 5)*

> *I don't really click too much with other groups like at home because mostly I'm always doing music and stuff and they get like bored with it, they just wanna do some other stuff and I try to mix myself in. And I think I'm pretty capable of mixing anywhere. - - - Yeah, in my neighbourhood I have friends, but sometimes I get bored of them because I also wanna do music and then I don't feel like staying with them all the time. [S: What do you usually do with your friends?] Go around places, getting into troubles and stuff like that... doing some things. (Boy 9)*

Ten of the 13 interviewed pupils stressed the meaning of music in dealing with one's feelings and in relaxing:

> *The violin is like a best friend to me because every time I´m at home when I´m alone I play a nice tune and just listen to the melody and I´m happy again. It´s like a friend to me. (Boy 4)*

> *I think there is more to it than just see me playing. I can express my emotions through music and that's probably why I practise a lot because when I´m angry I still practise and it calms me down so I think the reason why I love it so much is that I got passion for viola and music. (Boy 5)*

One boy even saw the power of music as so strong that it would be impossible for a person who is able to use music in expressing one's feelings to be involved in crime:

> *I would give each and everyone work to do to get some money and then give them music lessons to do some music. Because music is nice – you can't do crimes when you do music, I don't think you can. You can't steal, you can't beat anyone. (Boy 7)*

Mostly the musical surroundings of STTEP music school students consist of western popular music. Music programmes from TV and radio are closely followed. Many pupils, though, also still have contact to their more traditional musical roots. Traditional songs are sung on special occasions and rituals as well as sometimes when friends and family get together. However, in some cases parents do not teach their children about their roots because they would prefer to ensure that they fit in well in the modern, largely western society.

> *My real cultural roots? I've never asked my mom that. Honestly, I don't know. I'm not saying it's my fault or anything but... as we were growing up, everything was going fine, we knew our cultures. And then they started mixing us, we went to white schools, we started being mixed with white kids and then you end up not knowing exactly where you are. You end up not knowing your roots and I'm sure if you don't ask your parents about it they will never tell you. So, frankly, I don't know where my cultural roots are but I'd actually consider that I'm a Ndebele. Because my dad was a Ndebele and my mom is a Ndebele. So it's a combination, my dad and my mom. And I lost my dad when I was young, so I lived with my mom. So somehow I adopted her culture. But as we were growing up, my brothers and I were taken to white schools and that had an effect on us because now we don't exactly know our roots. But we do the rituals, you know, slaughtering of cows and sheep and everything, but to be frank I don't know where my culture is. That's why I'm saying, I'm creating my own culture saying that I wanna live life to fullest, that is my own culture and I wanna stick to it. But if I have kids, most definitely I want them to know where I come from. (Boy 5)*

For many youth, STTEP music school was the first place they were exposed to and learnt western classical music. It may have been possible for them to see and hear, for example, orchestral music from different media, and initially even within the confines of the State Theatre building, yet they could not imagine it to be something for them: they associated the genre with white people. However, after starting their studies at STTEP they noticed that this kind of music could enrich their lives:

My favourite music, it just, I like classic. When I tell my parents, it´s really rare to have a kid like classic but I like classic. - - - A bit of house-music, mixes of things but my first thing is classic. I like it because it´s music that comes I would say out from the soul, it is not teasing when I like relaxing. Just the kind of music that our soul like. (Boy 2)

Two pupils from the 13 interviewed had taken some instrument lessons before attending STTEP: they were privileged to go to a more expensive, upmarket school where playing an instrument was possible. For the others, STTEP offered the first possibility to start the hobby. They did not even know of any other options for learning instruments. The equal possibilities that STTEP presented were highly appreciated. Particular gratitude was directed to the friendly personnel and to the warm atmosphere of the school. A special flavour to the hobby was also obtained from the international contacts that the school has, and the opportunities that they enjoy as an outreach project of long-standing. (For example, one of the older participants, who now studies at the University of Pretoria, could play in the university's symphony orchestra. However, he chooses to return to STTEP, helping out as a teaching assistant and playing with the current pupils. When asked about this choice, he noted that the Amacademy group are asked on occasion to perform for the President of the country, but this is not the case with the university's symphony orchestra!)

Oh, STTEP-school is very important. Because, you see, the children, there are many children who want to play an instrument, but they cannot afford it because of the money. And I think STTEP is very good because it keeps the children off the streets and there are a lot of challenges and experiences… that I think is great. And the people, all STTEP is childrens lover, they are also the best. They are all friendly and loving. (Boy 4)

One 17 year old boy thought that the change in his life through STTEP was so positive and radical that he was already planning how to pay everything back as an adult:

I think I owe all about STTEP. Let me say that if I´m gonna be a professional violist I´m probably gonna make sure that STTEP is running well. I´m also gonna teach there for free because it´s actually based, it´s supposed to teach disadvanced children to play and it´s been a success since – 95. And I strongly believe that the person who made that STTEP to be the best are Phillip Clifford and his wife and some of professional teachers. And I think that the dedication from students is currently well. I think… STTEP is heaven for me. Yeah, STTEP is heaven for me. Because without STTEP I wouldn´t be talking to you right now and without STTEP I wouldn´t know who´s Mozart, who`s Beethoven. But because of STTEP-music school has taught me a lot, in about 13 years or so I´ll repay it very constantly by teaching there for free and I´m gonna make it sure that it´s running well. There are some of my colleagues, it is, that if we become professional musicians, then we gotta give back what we´ve received from STTEP. So this is why I love it very much. (Boy 5)

Discussion in terms of musical identity and musical fusions

A STTEP music school student is a "normal" child or young person living in the Pretoria area, who watches MTV, drinks CocaCola and is highly aware of fashion

clothes. Usually it appeared that several generations of his or her forefathers had already lived in the city area. Some of the students still have contacts with the old traditions of their cultures and their families may, for example, still make use of traditional healers as opposed to western medical practitioners. Overall, however, they are so widely surrounded by global culture that it would be naive to blame the hobby of playing an orchestral instrument for destroying their traditions. On the contrary, some interesting fusions have already taken place among the STTEP pupils: they have started to play together some traditional songs and kwela[vi] music with their western instruments. In October 2002, for example, at a church in the township of Atteridgeville to the west of Pretoria, from which some of the pupils come, Amacademy performed this kind of music and the whole audience was clapping hands and dancing with the music.

The process of change and fusion can actually be seen as a vital element for any culture. If ongoing development ceases, the culture is in danger of becoming a museum piece and dying. An example of this can be taken from traditional Thai art music: after it was "saved" and regarded as a museum piece it no longer had anything to do with the ordinary Thai people (Morton 1976, 223; Nettl 1985, 159). With STTEP music school youth it is clear that being exposed to different music cultures such as western classical music and Finnish folk fiddelling has raised their interest in different cultures – including their own.

International cooperation has also been fruitful in this aspect of cultural development: during the first interviews in December 2000 the pupils did not note their ability of singing and dancing traditional South African songs, but understood only western singing and ballroom dancing as "real". During their visit to the Kaustinen Folk Music Festivals in Finland in July 2001 the pupils were stimulated to wonder about the interest that Finnish people have in their own traditional music and also in South African traditional music. In the interviews of January 2002 almost every student told about the changes which occurred in their conceptions of culture and they were already able to analyze their own culture to some extent. Most of them also pointed out the importance of knowing and practising one's own culture for identity formation processes.

For the identity of STTEP pupils, their roles at the school or in the orchestra have become very important to them. A part of self-concept was formed in comparison to other players and to that role which was achieved in the orchestra. In addition to forming real elements of the identity of the students, the hobby has also produced an important tool to be used in identity processes. Playing helps the youth in processing, adapting and analyzing their feelings. Yet the contrast between a violin performance in a matinée and a traditional relaxed singing and dancing event during a music camp is striking, and leads the researchers to wonder to what extent the pupils' musical identity is yet solidly established. Playing orchestral instruments, some pupils have suffered from the same kind of performance anxiety familiar to many western classical music students.

Discussion in terms of STTEP participants' performance on music perception tests

STTEP pupils have been used in research experiments conducted by colleagues of the authors, based at the University of Jyväskylä. In a study by Toiviainen and Eerola (2003), the degree to which familiarity with a musical culture affects pulse perception

was investigated. Excerpts of 16 African and 16 European folk songs were presented in two separate blocks to 19 African and 20 European listeners. The African listeners were STTEP participants, with a mean age of 16.6 years and between 1-4 years of training in a western musical instrument. As Africans who had been exposed to European music, it was not surprising that the research results showed them not to differ significantly from the European group with respect to the mechanisms they employed in finding the pulse in European melodies. However, results suggested that the African group utilised style-specific knowledge in deducing the beat in the African melodies.

A 2006 article by Eerola et al, entitled "Perceived complexity of western and African folk melodies by western and African listeners" reports on further research utilising STTEP pupils in comparison with 36 Finnish participants. This time the larger STTEP group of 62 had a mean age of 16.4 years and had received 1-6 years of training in a western musical instrument. A cross-cultural comparison was used to investigate the ratings of melodic complexity of western and African participants for western (Experiment 1) and African folk songs (Experiment 2). In Experiment 1, western folk songs represented a style familiar for both groups and the results showed the differences in stylistic knowledge and high predictive rate of melodic variables. In the second experiment, African folk songs were only stylistically familiar for the African group and the results illustrated a lower predictive rate of variables and differences between the groups in rhythm and structural variables. This research suggests that melodic complexity ratings are influenced by musical enculturation, and on the basis of these results, could it possibly be argued that STTEP's direction is "wrong"?

Conclusions and questions for further research

Recent research appears increasingly to demonstrate that 'cocooning[vii]' is not successful in the maintenance, let alone continuation and development, of culture. And so it is clear to the authors of this article that, rather than having a deleterious effect on their traditional culture, their involvement and identification with the music of an 'other' culture (if western classical music can be so described) actually awakened and strengthened STTEP students' interest in their cultural heritage and traditions. We asked a question in our Introduction to this article, having noted that the UN Declaration of Human Rights states (article 27) that everybody has the right to practise culture: but who has the right to decide which culture? All the research done to date with the STTEP students, conducted in various ways, such as the interviews and music perception tests referred to in this article, indicates that none of the musical interventions in their lives can be described as "wrong", for any measurable reasons. Furthermore, no-one involved (pupils, their parents, teachers and intermittently involved outsiders) actually has to decide "which" culture, in an either/or kind of paradigm. Certainly it was found that the western and the African enriched each other, with neither culture "suffering" as a result.

Considering enrichment in other directions, such as for westerners, could it be possible to learn something from the social, African way of learning and playing music when mistakes made could even be described as joyous occasions, demonstrative of shared humanity and not of shame? If we, as cultural outsiders, are concerned about the 'saving' of traditional African music culture, could we not as well ourselves learn some

elements from it, and apply them, too, within the genre of western classical music? Could music be an important tool in supporting one's identity processes, self esteem and creating understanding between different cultural groups in other multicultural cases, for example with immigrants and refugees? Could the role of social musical hobbies prove to be of importance in breaking the culture of poverty? Does this research offer pointers to societies, other than South Africa, also struggling with huge changes? Can these lessons from the world of music offer additional insights within the wider field of intercultural education generally?

When the one boy stated that "You can't do crime if you do music" he was clearly referring to the power and intrinsic value of music – not only to the fact that children would have an alternative activity to that of crime. Perhaps the hidden side of the power of music is even more obvious to that boy than to those who have long had the possibility of western classical music education.

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[i] The acronym was devised to acknowledge the South African Music Education Trust (S), the Tshwane district, under which Pretoria falls, and the then Transvaal Philharmonic Orchestra, no longer in existence.

[ii] In this article a variety of terms are used for STTEP participants: children, youth, pupils, learners, students. The ages of participants vary from 4 upwards. Initially, one of STTEP’s problems was that only older children and teenagers started the instrumental lessons. This meant that there was usually insufficient time for them to develop more than fairly basic instrumental skills. One of the successes of the project has been that children of an increasingly younger age have applied to register; this makes much greater their chances of developing higher level performance skills. The downside is that sometimes the opinion has been expressed, even by participants themselves, that the school is used by parents as a “babysitting” service.

[iii] Apartheid was the policy/system of segregation or discrimination on grounds of race of the previous Nationalist party government in South Africa. The families of pupils referred to in this article as living in “townships” around the main city of Pretoria would have been forced, under apartheid, to live there.

[iv] For example, Philip Clifford wrote in an email dated 1 March 2007: ”By coincidence, Amacademy (note: see reference later in the article to this more specialised STTEP orchestra) had a lengthy discussion on Sunday concerning the members’ obligations to each other, or ethical entanglements with each other.

We eventually agreed that these bonds are most keenly felt in musical matters; that we want to hear each other play, to play with each other, and that Johann Sebastian's or Amadeus's music comes second".

[v] "As soon as intercultural pedagogy is seen as enlightening practice, its contrast to affirmation becomes decisive and radical … "With regard to its empirical principles intercultural pedagogy has to define itself within the enlightened practice and within societal organisation and movement. The ideological terrain of racism, cultural racism and cultural colonialism must be drained. The substantive task of the practice of interculturality is to break racism …" (Buttjes and Byram 1991: 281).

[vi] Kwela is a happy, often pennywhistle based, street music with jazzy underpinnings.

[vii] Cocooning is the name given to the trend that sees individuals socializing less and retreating into their home more. The term was coined in the 1990s by Faith Popcorn a trend forecaster and marketing consultant. Popcorn identified cocooning as a commercially significant trend. However, apart from such commercial aspects, it is also possible to think of this term specifically in relation to cultural heritage and its preservation, as opposed to openness to what can be gained from other cultures.

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