

ANALYSIS OF *EDI EDISE*: A COMPOSITION FOR AFRICAN ORCHESTRA

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ABSTRACT

This work is an original composition for African orchestra. It is a composition for African musical instruments particularly found in Annang land of Akwa Ibom State and its analysis. In African orchestra, there are categories of instrumental combinations. This paper focuses on the combination of melodic and percussive instruments and with peculiar rhythms found in Annang land. It takes into account the rich rhythms of Annang people of Nigeria as would be used in this original instrumental composition to exhibit the rhythms of Africa. The method involved in this study includes library review, collection of discography, selection of some traditional instruments, watching and analysis of live performances of Annang music ensembles, and transcribing the various rhythms found therein. The study seeks to bring to the fore, through an instrumental composition, the rich rhythms of Annang people. Various traditional musical instruments are selected for this purpose to form an African orchestra. This will truly create an identity for Africa in general and Annang in particular thus will make known Annang rhythms to the world adding to the knowledge base for musicologists, rhythms of Annang people. This orchestral piece can be used for study and performance of African rhythms, for entertainment and at concert halls.

Key words: Orchestra, *Edi Edise*, African rhythm, Annang, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

This research work is an original composition where the rich rhythms of Annang of Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria in Africa are used in an instrumental composition, referred to here as African Orchestra. Annang is both a language and a second largest ethnic group in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria (Nyarks, 2002). Annang in this context refers to an ethnic group that occupies an area of land in the Western part of Akwa Ibom State. The Annang people, as part of Africa, have a rich musical culture. Akwa Ibom State (Annang inclusive) falls within the tropical zone. Its dominant vegetation is green foliage of trees cum shrubs and the oil palm tree belt which holds the highest density in the world (Esema, 2002). This informs the nature of instruments; that are mainly instruments made of wood and animal skin, for example and xylophones.

This composition, therefore, takes into account the rhythms used in the playing of the instruments found in Annang land. The composition is entitled, ‘*Edi Edise*’, meaning, ‘Come and See’. This title suggests that people from all walks of life are invited to come and see the rich and captivating rhythms of Annang land through this composition. The instruments used are those of Africa found in Annang. They include *ntakorok* (woodblock), *nsak* (gourd rattle), *ibit iba* (twin drums), *obodom* (wooden slit drum), *nkwong* (big gong), *akangkang* (small twin gong), *abang* (pot drum) and *andikon eto* (xylophone). *Ikon eto* (xylophone) is used as rhythmic/percussive, harmonic and melodic instrument.

LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

Theoretical Framework

Orchestral music has come to stay both for the Western and non-Western cultures. Africa is not left out in this ‘race’. The Wikipedia definition of orchestra in the western sense, is thus; ‘An orchestra is a large instrumental ensemble that contains sections of string, brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments’ (en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchestra). It is defined in the western sense because African musical instruments are not grouped into such families (that is, string, brass, woodwind and percussion). The author defines orchestra thus, ‘An orchestra is a large instrumental ensemble’. The instruments may be that of the Western world or that of Africa. In this context, it has to do with Africa, hence the name, African orchestra. The author is in agreement with this submission, ‘An orchestra is a group of musicians who play together on various instruments’ (www.english-online).

This original composition makes use of complex rhythms: syncopation, cross-beats, polyrhythms and ostinato, among others. The author is in agreement with Novotney (1998, p.147), who points out, ‘African rhythmic structure is entirely divisive in nature but may divide time into different fractions at the same time, typically by the use of hemiola or *three-*

over-two (3:2).’ This is what Novotney (1998, p. 201) calls ‘the foundation of all West African polyrhythmic textures’.

Nketia (1992) has not left us in the dark as regards African instrumental works. He identifies the three main categories of instrumental combinations, thus:

- (i) Ensembles consisting exclusively of melodic instruments, that is, instruments of definite pitch.
- (ii) Ensembles consisting instruments capable only of indefinite pitches (percussive instruments), such as drums, bells, rattle among others.
- (iii) The combination of both melodic and percussive instruments is the third type of instrumental ensemble.

This work makes use of the third category of instrumental combinations, that is, percussive and melodic instruments. These instruments are used in this orchestra to give scope to rhythmic/percussive, harmonic and melodic functions.

There can be no composition without a Form. Every composition must have a Form. Therefore, this original composition is in Binary Form (AB). Udoh (2012, p. 183) discloses, ‘form is the general principle and scheme that governs the overall structure of a composition’. In other words, a musical form is the structural outline – comparable to an architect’s ground plan – in the composer’s mind when he sets out to write. It is simply the design or shape into which musical materials are moulded as done in this work.

Musical analysis is the practical process of examining pieces of music in order to discover how they work (Edgar, 1999). This musical analysis work of *Edi Edise*, sought to discover how the components in this composition relate to each other.

METHODOLOGY

Several methods may be used in a work like this. In particular, this paper makes use of library review, collection of discography from Annang Music practitioners (for example, the music of traditional musicians - Uko Akpan and Okon Udo Udo) and their peculiar rhythms. These rhythms were studied and used in this work. The traditional musical instruments used in this work are the ones found in Annang land of Akwa Ibom State to suit its purpose. Watching and analysis of live performances of Annang music ensembles, and transcribing the various rhythms found therein are also employed.

One of the objectives of this work is to create, through this composition, an identity for Africa in general and Annang in particular. This work is to bring to the fore, through an instrumental composition, the rich rhythms of Annang people with various traditional musical instruments to form an African orchestra. It also makes known Annang rhythms to the world at large helping musicologists/academicians in their research on the rich rhythms of Annang people. This orchestral piece can be used for study and performance of African rhythms, for entertainment and enjoyment and even at concert halls.

Selection of Instruments

There are several musical instruments that cut across the length and breadth of Africa and their use may be possible in a work like this. But there is a simple wise saying, 'Charity begins at home'. This informs the selection of instruments used in this study – the instruments that are found in Annang land of Akwa Ibom State. They include *Ntakorok* (woodblock), *Nsak* (gourd rattle), *Ibit Iba* (Twin drum), *Obodom* (Slit drum), *Nkwong* (gong), *Akangkang* (small twin gong), *Abang* (pot drum) and *Ikon Eto* (xylophone). These instruments (of indefinite and/or definite pitch) are carefully selected to serve its purpose. Nketia (1992) submits that African concept of musical sound gives equal prominence to sounds of indefinite as well as definite pitch, and this reflects in instrumental combinations

The third category of instrumental combinations (The combination of both melodic and percussive instruments) by Nketia (1992) as earlier mentioned is employed in this work, that is, percussive and melodic instruments.

Percussive Instruments: As used in this work, with their different pitches shown, they include:

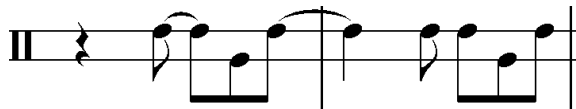
1. *Ntakorok* (woodblock) with one indefinite pitch thus:



2. *Nsak* (gourd rattle) with one indefinite pitch thus:



3. *Ibit iba* (twin drums) with two indefinite pitches thus:




4. *Obodom* (wooden slit drum) with two indefinite pitches thus:

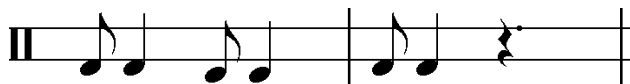


5. *Nkwong* (big gong) with two indefinite pitches when muted, thus:



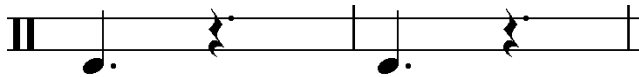
The muted sound is represented by a slash (\), thus: .

6. *Akangkang* (small twin gong) with two indefinite pitches thus:



and

7. *Abang* (pot drum) with one indefinite pitch thus:



Melodic Instrument: Only one melodic instrument is used in this composition. It is *ikon eto* (xylophone) with five definite pitches. It uses the pentatonic scale as shown, thus:



Though this instrument is regarded as a melodic instrument, it combines melodic, harmonic and rhythmic/percussive characteristics/functions.

Techniques Used

The major techniques used in this work include call-and-response, hocket, repetition and ostinato. Other techniques are explained in the analysis.

Call-and-response and hocket techniques. These techniques are common in African music. As observed in the web. 'As with emergent and resultant rhythms, the performer's ability to maintain the overall organisation of the piece rests in part on their perception of the various relationships of call-and-response and hocket patterns. These techniques find their highest expression in drumming.'

Repetition. Repetitions are used in this work either directly or with minor variations.

Ostinato. This is simply a persistent music phrase or rhythm. Some rhythms are persistently repeated on all the instruments used.

PERFORMANCE PRESCRIPTION

This original composition is purely instrumental, meant to be played with African musical instruments, thus: *ntakorok* (woodblock), *nsak* (gourd rattle), *ibit iba* (twin drums), *obodom* (wooden slit drum), *nkwong* (big gong), *akangkang* (small twin gong), *abang* (pot drum) and *ikon eto* (xylophone). The xylophone here is used to evoke both vocal and instrumental

rhythms of Annang traditional music. It is used as a rhythmic/percussive, harmonic and melodic instrument. The entire composition is to be performed at once and could be danced to if so wished.

Pre-Compositional Consideration

The 'Composition Outline' of this work is first considered. This includes Title, Medium, Style, Form, Meter/Time Signature, Tempo, Techniques, Texture, Extra Musical Element, Length, Mood, Audience, Motif, etc.

Composition Outline and Compositional Procedures

Title: *Edi Edise*

Medium: African Traditional Musical Instruments found in Annang land. They include *ntakorok* (woodblock), *nsak* (gourd rattle), *ibit iba* (twin drums), *obodom* (wooden slit drum), *nkwong* (big gong), *akangkang* (small twin gong), *abang* (pot drum) and *ikon eto* (xylophone).

Style: A combination of instruments of indefinite and definite pitches in rhythmic/percussive, melodic and harmonic exploration with the use of pentatonic scale.

Form: AB (Binary)

Form:

A	B
a a¹	b

a, 29 mm [4 + 4 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 6]

A a¹, 29 mm [4 + 4 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 6]

B b, 41 mm [4 + 5 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 9 + 4 + 8]

Key: C major. (For the xylophone)

Meter/Time Signature: 6/8

Tempo: Moderately fast

Techniques: Call and Response, hocket, repetition and ostinato

Metronome: ♩ = 90

Texture: Multi-rhythmic with harmonic and melodic lines.

Climax: Measure 59

Extra-musical Element: Rhythms from Annang land

Mood: Generally happy and dance-like.

Intended Audience: Concert hall



Length: 70 measures.

ANALYSIS OF EDI EDISE

A, a [Measures 1 – 29]

In measures 1 – 4, all the instruments come in with their peculiar rhythms. Also in measures 1 to 4, a common *Ntakorok* (woodblock) rhythm in Annang traditional music is presented as an idea which creates foundation/motif for this composition. *Ikon Eto* (xylophone), in the same measures, comes in with harmony in 3rds and 4ths to depict the harmonic pattern/identity of the Annang people of Akwa Ibom State. From measure 5 to measure 29, other instruments maintain their rhythms while *Ikon Eto* (xylophone) plays rhythmic, harmonic and melodic functions. This sub-section, ‘a’ ends in bar 29 with a rest.

A, a¹ [Measures 1 – 29]

This is simply a direct repetition of measures 1 to 29 by all the instruments involved.

B, b [Measures 30–70]

From measure 30 to 38, *Ikon Eto* (xylophone) in the form of ‘call’ introduces this sub-section with hot rhythms, harmonies and melodies while other instruments are silent. *Ntakorok* (woodblock) and *Ibit iba* (twin drum) in the form of ‘response’ come in with their peculiar rhythms from measure 38 to 41 while other instruments are silent. All the instruments respond/come in together with their various rhythms from measure 42 to measure 70. Hocket technique is evident here. Also in these measures (42 to 70), *Ikon Eto* (xylophone) keeps performing its rhythmic, harmonic and melodic functions. Measure 59 witnesses the climax with the highest note on G. The harmony is mostly in 3rds and 4ths. Measure 70 marks the end of this sub- section as well as the end of the entire composition.

CONCLUSION

This work has fused together the rich rhythms of Annang in this composition, entitled, *Edi Edise* (Come and see). It actually invites everybody to come and see and enjoy the rich culture of Africa, especially that of Annang through music. It employs multi –rhythms which are integrated into one. Call – and- response and hocket techniques are extensively used since they are common in African music. The different rhythms are heard as a single ensemble but made of many and different instruments. This work could be used as a piece to study and analyze African rhythms. It could be used as Examination piece for African ensemble, for enjoyment and /or for other purposes deemed fit.

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APPENDIX

EDI EDISE

Isaac Udoh

(AFRICAN ORCHESTRA)

♩ = 90

Ntakorok

Nsak

Ibit Iba

Obodom

Nkwong

Akangkang

Abang

Ikon Eto

5

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

♩ = 90

9

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

13

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

The image displays two systems of musical notation for an African ensemble. The first system covers measures 17 to 20, and the second system covers measures 21 to 24. The instruments are arranged as follows:

- Nk (Nkomo):** Two staves, each with a double bar line. The upper staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lower staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). Both staves contain rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together.
- Ns (Nso):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), containing rhythmic patterns similar to the upper Nk staff.
- Ib. Iba (Ibala):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), featuring a more complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Ob (Obala):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), containing rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Nk (Nkomo):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), featuring a rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Ak (Ako):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), containing rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Ab (Aba):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), containing rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Ik. Eto (Ikoto):** A single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), containing rhythmic patterns with eighth and sixteenth notes.

Measure numbers 17, 21, and 24 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation includes various rhythmic values, rests, and phrasing slurs.

25

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

29

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

33

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab

Ik. Eto

37

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab

Ik. Eto

41

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

45

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a multi-instrument ensemble. The score is divided into two systems, starting at measure 41 and 45. The instruments are: Nk (two staves), Ns (one staff), Ib. Iba (one staff), Ob (one staff), Nk (one staff), Ak (one staff), Ab (one staff), and Ik. Eto (one staff). The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests and ties. The Eto part is written in a treble clef. A double bar line with repeat dots is used to separate the two systems.

49

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

53

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a multi-instrument ensemble. It consists of two systems of staves, labeled 49 and 53. Each system contains eight staves for individual instruments: Nk (top), Ns, Ib. Iba, Ob, Nk, Ak, Ab, and Ik. Eto (bottom). The notation is in a common time signature. The instruments are represented by various note values, rests, and articulation marks. The Ik. Eto part is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score shows a rhythmic pattern that repeats across the measures.

57

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

61

Nk
Ns
Ib. Iba
Ob
Nk
Ak
Ab
Ik. Eto

65

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

69

Nk

Ns

Ib. Iba

Ob

Nk

Ak

Ab

Ik. Eto

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE

FINE