MUSIC IN KÁLÁḄÀRÌ TRADITIONAL FUNERAL RITES

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ABSTRACT
Ḍụẹịn-ḍíḅí-a númè (Funeral rites music) in Káláḅàrì culture is a final honour for the dead and status symbol for the living. It is performed for titled men, elders, members of *Èkìnè* society and other socio-cultural clubs. Although *Ḍụẹịn-ḍíḅí-a númè* occupies an important position in Káláḅàrì culture, yet no musicological studies exist in terms of structure, significance and documentation as its traditional forms are on the decline. Ethnographic research design was adopted and data were collected from three Local Government Areas: Asari-Toru, Akuku-Tori and Degema that make up the Káláḅàrì of Rivers State. Participant Observation, In-depth Interview and Key Informant techniques were used in data collection. Performance of *Ḍụẹịn-ḍíḅí-a númè* which is categorised into four is event specific, contextual and rooted in Káláḅàrì belief systems. This paper concludes that musical performance at funerals engenders socialization and spiritual bonding in Káláḅàrì celebration of life after life.
Key words: Káláḅàrì music, Funeral rites, Káláḅàrì culture, Performance practice.

INTRODUCTION
Music in traditional African societies is organized around social, religious and political events during which individuals, as well as members of a group within the community, come together for activities like recreation, performance of rites, festivals and collective activities like clearing paths, putting out fires and so on (Nketia, 1974: 21). Burial ceremony in Africa is perceived as a rite performed by the living for the dead. Life does not end with death but continues in another realm. Death does not end the life or personality of an individual but is merely a change of 'state'. The concepts of 'life' and 'death' are not mutually exclusive because the goal of life is to become an ancestor after death (Anderson, 2007:1). This explains why persons who die are given befitting and appropriate burial accompanied by religious rituals and ceremonies involving music and dance. The African concept of burial has however been altered through wide spread secularization, urbanization, Christianization and Islamization. In recent times, the activities of the militants in the Niger Delta area have further altered the concept of death and burial in the culture, especially the music used for its celebrations. Against the foregoing background, this study documented the context of performance, categories and structures of funeral music (*Ḍúéín-ḍíḅí-a númé*) especially its traditional forms among the Káláḅàrì of the Niger Delta.

The Káláḅàrì of the Niger Delta are a group of people whose musical culture has not received much attention in terms of research. They live in the Eastern Niger Delta of Rivers State. According to Horton (1969), there are twenty villages that are broadly Káláḅàrì in language

and culture; three other villages are partially or minimally acculturated into Kálá̱bàrì and three large towns derived from the nineteenth century Kálá̱bàrì metropolis. In addition, there are dozens of fishing camps and two plantation settlements that are seen as work-places rather than home bases. Linguistically according to Jenewari (1991), they are classified under the great block of Ijo-speaking sub-group exemplified by their dialect and culture. Alagoa (1972) states that each village is made up of a number of descent-groups, whose founding ancestors are generally seen as unrelated to each other and are thought to have come from different directions to converge at the present site. Around the early eighteenth century in the Kálá̱bàrì metropolis, there were more than seven groups, all claiming separate origin and some level of autonomy (Alagoa, 1972:135). Therefore, the basis of identity of the Kálá̱bàrì before the pre-Atlantic Trade is a culture common to all its members which is distinct in every way from that of their neighbours.

The basic concern of this study is to investigate music associated with funeral rites in Kálá̱bàrì kingdom spread over Ásárí-Tọru, Ákúkú-Tọru and Dègèmà Local Government areas in Rivers State. These communities share the same language, traditional belief and culture. *D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè* (music in funeral rites) associated with all the stages of funeral rites in both traditional and non-traditional settings for men and women, chiefs and heads of compounds were discussed.

However, the research location does not cover the entire Kálá̱bàrì towns, villages and fishing settlements because of its expanse. The study was restricted mainly to Búgúmà, Abónnémà, Bákánà and five other settlements comprising Àbàlàmà, Ìdọ, Mínàmá, Sòkú and Ìlèlímà spread over the three Local Government Areas. Búgúmà was chosen for the following reasons: being the home land of the *Ámányánáb̲ọ* of Kálá̱bàrì Kingdom, it harbours three of the major shrines in Kálá̱bàrì; the shrine of *Ówámékàsó* the tutelary deity of the Kálá̱bàrì, the ancestral shrines dedicated to the spirit of the dynastic founder Amakiri, and the shrine of *Èkìnèb̲a*, patroness of the *Èkìnè Sẹkịapụ* cult. In addition, it is one of the three daughter settlements (Búgúmà, Abónnémà, and Bákánà) of the former trading state of Kálá̱bàrì. Àbàlàmà, Mínàmá and Sòkú are villages chosen for the study of *Ìkpàtàkà Dògí* a traditional funeral rite rarely practised in Kálá̱bàrì; Idọ being one of the settlements like others that was not initially Kálá̱bàrì but fully assimilated and imbibed Kálá̱bàrì culture.

There exist a considerable body of published materials on aspects of Kálá̱bàrì culture and society such as language, history, economy, socio-political organization, religious belief and rituals (Alagoa 1967, 1968; Da-Wariboko 1991, 2002; Erekosima 1973; Horton 1960, 1962, 1963, 1969, 1991a, 1991b; Jenewari 1991; Jones 1963; Alagoa, 1967, 1968; Erekosima, 1973; Ndimele and Williamson, 2002; Tasie 1978; Wariboko, 1997, 2007). Such materials, however, has so far been notably devoid of any extended work on the performance aspect of Kálá̱bàrì funeral rites and their associated music. It was to address this deficiency that this study paid attention to funeral rites from the perspective of performance and performance practices as well as documentation of the various categories of *D̲ụịẹn-d̲íb̲í-a úmé* which is gradually fading out. The study therefore addressed the dearth of information on the types, categories of funeral rites and associated music, practitioners and their recruitment, the importance as well as form and structure of music in Kálá̱bàrì funeral rites.

Types of death

The psychological and emotional trauma the bereaved experience as a result of the death of a loved one, the general reaction of the community shaped by their worldview of death and age of the deceased at the time of death, informs the categorization of death into *sí fi*[1] ('bad' death): death of children and those resulting from specific sicknesses, witchcraft, and sorcery as well as death resulting from over indulgence in food and drinks are termed bad death. Some of these deaths are mourned, but it is not fitting for them to lie in state or have their lives celebrated and *íḭ́ fi* ('good' death): death of a man or a woman at the age of sixty and above. Death at a good old age is in most cases happily celebrated, as it is believed that the deceased had achieved success in life and had been called away by the ancestors at a ripe age. The funeral ceremonies are extensive, requiring pre-burial wake-keeping and post-burial dances accorded the deceased.

Funeral rites for an elder whose death is classified as a good death is carried out within twelve days beginning from Wednesday of the first week through Sunday of the third week for thanksgiving in church by immediate family members who attend the church. Musical and dance performances take place before, during and after interment of the deceased. Four places of burial in both aquatic (*Àrịàpú-sìbí-kòò* and *Nọjị,*) and terrestrial (*Ḍụẹịn-ḍíḭ́í-pírí*, and *Àbbí Àmà*) environment were identified for those who die the bad or good death.

Categorization of Funeral rites music

Ḍụịẹn-ḍíḭ́í-a númè (funeral rite music) is categorized into *Ákwá* (instrumental music), *Ògbò ḭ́ẹ́ númè* (choral music) with instrumental accompaniment, *Ḍụịẹn-dúu-a númè* (a cappella dirges and chants) and *Sẹkị́ númè* (dance music) which were further grouped into ritual, semi-ritual and non-ritual music. These categories cover the full range of rites which include music performed at the commencement of the funeral rite and continue for two to five days before the arrival of the corpse; music performed during a series of lying in state of the corpse, and other musical types associated with dance and theatrical performance accorded the dead for another seven days after the interment.

***Ákwá* (Instrumental Music)** Instrumental music refers to musical type communicated through verbal language non-vocally on instruments. Traditional instruments like the *Íkíríkó*, *Ókóró*, *Àkùmà*, *Àkánkpò*, *Àkùsà*, *Álílí*, *Boboye* and *Ọbọ* are used as speech surrogate instruments to communicate during performances. They approximate various levels of primary and secondary speech tones within Káláḭ́àrì tonal language. During funeral rites two instrumental ensembles identified are *Kúkú fárí* used to accompany non-vocal choreographed dance steps and *Ókóró fárí* used at the installation and funeral of chiefs, king and their late mother.

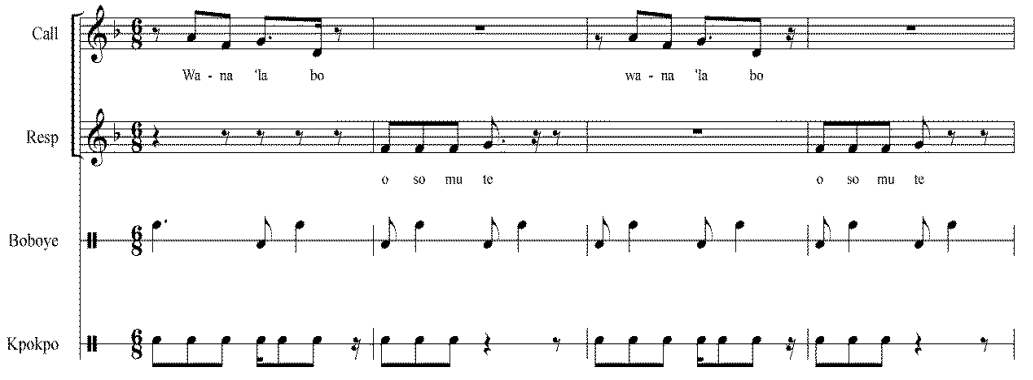
Ókóró fárí music at funeral is performed by four different musicians in an ensemble of *Ókóró* (wooden slit drums) of various sizes and one *Boboye* (membrane drum). There is interplay of call-and-response between the *Ópútóní fáríḭ́ọ* (Lead drummer) and the other three assistants leading to a complex rhythm. The largest *Ókóró* in the ensemble is a melorhythmic[2] as well as a percussive[3] instrument. It is used to communicate and discuss

with the spirits, ancestors, and the immediate audience who understand the drum language different from everyday Káláḅàrì language spoken by the people. The *Ókóró* mother drum apart from communicating coded messages serves as culture symbol. In this way it is deployed as a sacred instrument used to usher the deceased into ancestorhood. Only males are allowed to play and dance to the music of *Ókóró fárí* ensemble while females observe the performance from a distance over a period of six days after interment on the previous Saturday.

Plate 1. *Ókóró fárí* ensemble performing at a funeral in Búgúmà

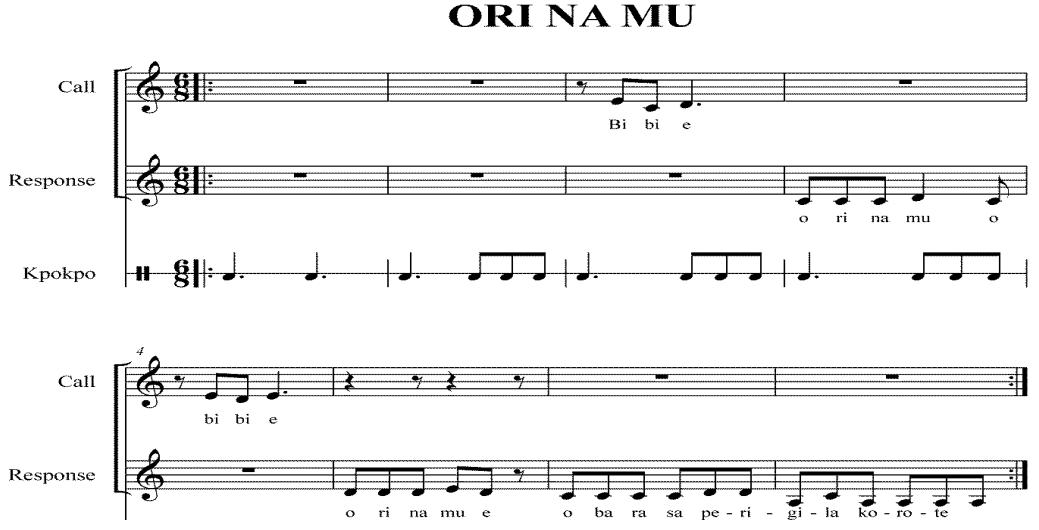
Ògbò ḅẹ́ númè **(Choral music)** these are songs performed by male and female singers either in single (males or females) or mixed (males and females) ensembles. Songs, especially the texts, which communicate divers themes, occupy a major part in both traditional and Christian funeral rites among the Káláḅàrì. They are accompanied by dance performance and instruments such as drums, clappers and bells. However, the focus of such performance is the song rendered during funeral as the dance movements are unregulated. *Wámìnà Álábò Ò Sò Mùté* (Our Chief Has Gone to Heaven) is a typical example of *ìgìrà sará númè* performed during the opening rites at the funeral of a chief or one who dies at an old age.

WANA ALABO O SO MUTE



These songs require a limited number of instruments like a drum (*Bóboye*) and a bell or a pair of wooden clappers (*Kpọkpọ*) which provide the supper structure as the songs are

performed. *Ámábọrọ númè* requires the same range of instrumental accompaniment at the end of funeral rite performance for an elder. The performance techniques of both types of songs differ in style. While *ìgìrà sàrá númè* is performed by youths in boisterous manner as if hell is let loose signifying the death and commencement of funeral rite of a chief, the *Ámábọrọ númè* is performed by everyone in the war canoe house in a procession by both young and old dressed in traditional attire signifying a successful completion of the funeral rite for a chief or an elder in the compound. An example is *Òrì Nà Mú* (Accompany Him).



***Ḍụẹịn-ḍúú-a númè* (A cappella dirges and chants)** Chants in the Káláḅàrì culture are mostly performed during funerals by women who are wives, daughters and close relatives of the deceased. They are expected to eulogize the dead with their compositions performed in non-stanzaic declamatory style. Such performances are done during *ḍụẹịn-ḅọrọma* when the body is lying-in-state and after interment. This performance of chants and dirges by widows lead to *ḍínkrámá*. *Yéhì Ì mìnáḅọ* meaning 'O! My Brother' is an example of a chant rendered extemporaneously by the elder sister of late Chief S.O. PrinceWill while he was lying-in-state. Performance of chants is in form of verbal expressions (like recitatives) intoned in a manner that combines musical effect with pitch variation at three levels: low, medium and high. Introductory parts are rendered in high tones, while low and medium pitches are used within the body of the chants.

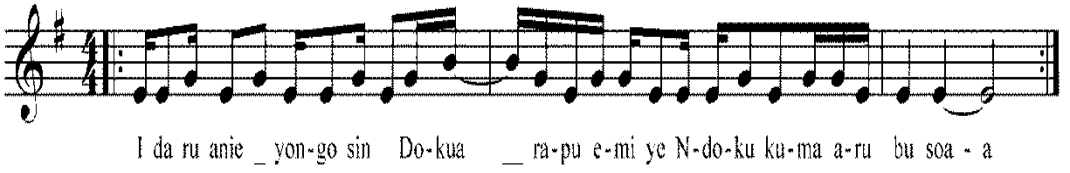
Yéhì Ì mìnáḅọ
Yéhì Ì mìnáḅọ Íwòrìsóté mo?
Tòmì kírí ó mínì éríarí-o?
S.O.tárí-álábò Ì mìnáḅọ Íwòrìsóté?
Tòmì kírí ó mínì éríarí-o?
S.O. àrì Í sínárí-o, ítàngà mú mò?
Ì mìnáḅọ àrì Í sínárí-o!
Tòmì kírí ó mínì éríarí

S.O. Ì d̲ìb̲ì tè Sòàrí
À kpàràkí te owúare-o!

Translation

O my brother have you left me behind?
The world (people) are you watching?
S.O. you're a chief, my brother, have you left me behind?
The world (people) are you watching?
S.O. I'm calling you, where are you going?
My brother, I am calling you
The world (people) are you watching?
S.O. you were to bury me, now you are going
I am kneeling down and crying

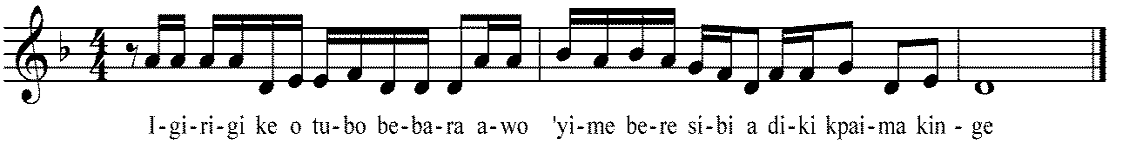
Ì da árụ meaning 'My Father's Canoe' is a dirge performed at the lying-in-state of the late father of the performer as an obligation on her part and an honour for the deceased.



Ì dà árụ anịe yọngọ sịn My father's canoe is strong and prestigious
Dọkụ àrì apụ emi-ye Filled with paddlers
Nd̲ọkụ kụma árụ b̲u soa-a They paddle with skill in the mangrove creeks

The dirge eulogizes the strength and wealth of the late father which qualified him to be installed as a chief. A traditional war canoe had thirty paddlers (usually warriors) who were under the leadership and full responsibility of the owner. The ability to maintain and sustain a war canoe was a criterion for installation as a chief.

Sẹ́kí númè **(Dance Music)** dance music is performed to accompany dance. The performace is called *Sìrì tí* (performance at the arena) which attracts spectators at the arena and sometimes involves choreographed dance movements. Such performances can be accompanied or unaccompanied by musical instruments. Songs and dance movements performed without the full compliments of musical instruments make use of *Bárá farí ye* (hand clappers) to generate appropriate rhythm for the dance. In Kúkú-fárí performance at *D̲ín krámá ti* or *Ìria páká*, attention is given to the dance movements performed by both male and female in response to rhythm of songs and the drums. Selected dancers led by *Ìrìabọ-iyingib̲ọ* or *Govina* (choreographer) and the *Kúkú fáríb̲ọ* (Lead drummer) communicate the rhythms of the various dance movements and the *ìrià pú* (female dancers) and *ówú* (male dances) respond appropriately to the leading of the *Ìrìabọ-iyingib̲ọ*. Everyone, including guests and musicians, are involved in *sìrì tí* (singing and dancing) at the *sìrì kú* (performance arena) in the compound square, to the admiration of the entire community. A typical example of dance music is *Igirigi kẹ O Tubọ B̲ẹb̲ára* meaning 'Dew told his child' used to accompanying *Ìria* (choreographed) dance steps during Ìria *páká*.



Igirigi kẹ O tubọ b̲ẹb̲ára	Dew told his child,
Ãwọ iyi me b̲ẹrẹ síbí-a	to have children is not the issue,
D̲ìkì kpaima kịngẹ	But taking good care of them

Musicians and Performance Practice

Music in funeral rites (*D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè*) and performance among the Kálá b̲àrì does not only depend on the musical demands brought about by activities and events during funerals, but also to a large extent on its organization of participants in terms of performance of rites and ceremonies involving music and dance. Nketia (1974: 35) identifies two major types of performing groups in indigenous African society: spontaneous or organized groups which are autonomous and those made up of professional musicians usually attached to traditional institutions. Spontaneous music is usually produced by a group of people who come together to perform a type of music prescribed for a specific occasion.

Musicians belonging to spontaneous music group in the performance of *D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè* are formed by young people of the same age group who are not in any formerly organised association. They voluntarily come together from different *póló* in the community to perform *Ìgìrà sàrá* music in response to the performance need of the music at the opening rite during the funeral of an elder who was a chief. A second type of spontaneous music group is made up of males and females of different ages from the deceased's *póló* performing *Ámábọrọ* songs at the closing funeral rite of a chief. These spontaneous musical groups are non-professional singers, motivated by community sentiments and by their reciprocal obligation in the event-music occasioned by the passing away of a chief.

Organized music clubs and cults perform during funeral rites on invitation by non-members and also at the funeral rite of members. The groups comprising members of clubs and *Èkìnè* cult are led by recognized professional musician within Kálá b̲àrì culture. Some professional *D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè* musicians among many others are Mr. Isobo David West, Mrs. Gladys Harry and Mr. Sasime Barango Tariah. The performance and performance practice of *D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè* is closely associated with age, sex and status of the deceased as informed by the tradition and belief system of the people. The venue and time of performance of the four categories of funeral rite music earlier discussed is determined by social, political, and religious attainment by the deceased when alive. The venue of performance for any type of music is context based and therefore cannot be performed anywhere else. In most cases designated rooms (*ẹdẹ*), compound square and specially decorated canoes for titled men are prepared for performance during funeral rites. According to Ekine (2010) pre and post performance are observed by elders in the family, mourners and musicians before, during and after the actual performance of funeral rite music.

Recruitment and Training of Musicians

Music education in indigenous African societies is both oral and practical in orientation (Nzewi, 2007). Among the Kálá̱bàrì, there are no musicians' family as found in some other indigenous African societies; however training is achieved through giving of instruction at intervals, participatory observation, imitation and rote learning from their teacher (Omibiyi, 1975). Trainee becomes proficient in performance on the instruments according to S.B. Tariah, I. DavidWest and G. Harry (key informants) through observation of professionals during rehearsals and performances. It takes many years of training to master the intonation and proficiency on the instruments especially the drums used for non-verbal communication during funerals.

Observation during field work reveal that trainees are enlisted in two ways: first, parents come with their children to the performer-composer who is either a master drummer or choreographer-vocalist to be trained. Second, professionals enlist their trainees when they discovered hidden talents in them through observing them playing empty cans improvised into drums while the other children were dancing in the cool of the evening. Having discovered these talents, they sort permission from their parents to release them for training in the art of drumming.

Musical Instruments

Musical instruments used by the Kálá̱bàrì at funerals reveal to some extent the vegetation, mineral resources exploited for the production, cross-cultural interaction and exchange with other ethnic groups around them. According to Sachs and Hornbostel (1961: 42) who categorized world musical instruments into four; membranophone, idiophone, aerophone, and chordophone, only three of these four categories are used in *D̲ụẹịn-d̲íb̲i-a númè* by Kálá̱bàrì. These are membranophones, idiophones and idiophonic-aerophone. These traditional instruments occupy a very important place in traditional Kálá̱bàrì worship of the ancestors and other deities. The most common are the wooden and membrane talking drums which comprise the *Íkíríkó, Ókóró, Àkùmà, Àkánkpò, Àkùsà, Álílí, Boboye* and *Ọbọ*. Among the membranophone is the *Àkùmà* (Plate 2), *Álílí* (Plate 3), *Bóboye* (Plate 4) are used alone or in ensemble with other instruments.

Plate 2: Àkùmà

Plate 3: Álílí

Plate 4: Bóboye

The idiophones are the most common in various sizes beginning with the biggest *Íkíríkó* (Plate 5), *Nkòrò* (Plate 6), *Ókóró* (Plate 7), and the smallest *Kpọkpọ* (Plate 8). The *Ókóró* is strictly used for the installation and the funeral rite of a chief or the King.

Plate 5: Íkíríkó

Plate 6: Nkòrò

Plate 7: Ókóró

Plate 8: Kpọkpọ

The third category of instruments used during funeral rites is the idiophonic-aerophone which produces sound by means of the vibration of air through striking the mouth of the pot with a fan like material made with foam. *Kúkú* (Plate 9) is made from clay and in recent times they

Plate 9: Kúkú

are made with sand and cement as well as metals. Four to seven water pots of different sizes produce graded pitch levels, which make the ensemble a composite keyboard musical instrument. In Kálá̱bàrì culture, the categories and types of music performed serve both religious and social-political functions. Music is made to appreciate, appease, placate and invoke divinity. Worship periods in shrines and churches are characterised by music and dance. The age, sex, status and contextual considerations dictate the categories and types of music as well as appropriate musical instruments required for celebrating the transition of a Kálá̱bàrì.

Understanding Song Text

Kálá̱bàrí song texts are the most reliable instruments for interpreting its culture by outsiders and some insiders as expressed through its music, dance and theatrical performances. Human behaviour according to Merriam (1964) as it relates to music can be better understood through song text. The theme of songs according to Nketia (1975) within a community or social group usually centres on events or issues of common interest and concern. Furthermore, Akpabot (1998) explained that in Africa, the text of a song is more important than the tune; and that the complexity of song text is a reflection of the society and can be used to evaluate or categorize a community's experience as either egalitarian or stratified.

According to Akpabot (1998:75) "a singer takes great liberty with the text of a song [during performance and] uses metaphors, proverbs, archaic expressions and cryptic utterances." Such songs Nzewi (2007:148) posited "could be logogenic or philosophical, pragmatic and social rationalizations of the sense and meaning of music." Kálá̱bàrí according to Jenewari (1991:20) is a tonal language. Therefore, Kálá̱bàrí uses small range determined by the tonal inflections of the language. The use of small range of tones determined by the tonal inflections of the language is in line with Kálá̱bàrí aesthetic principle which requires the communication of meaning and ideas of the text in both vocal and instrumental music. The range of vocal tunes in the culture does not exceed an octave guided by the philosophy of all inclusiveness as exemplified in songs performed during *ìgìrà sàrá* and especially *ámábọrọ* which involves all age groups of the war canoe house.

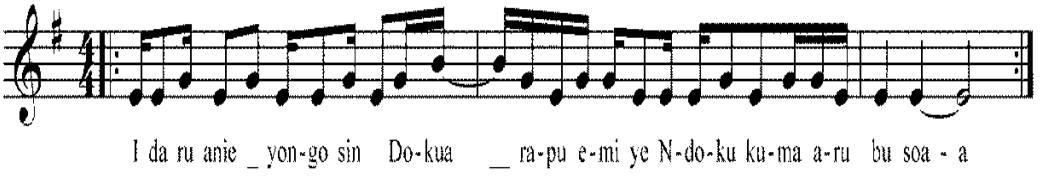
Among traditionalist, funeral song text are shaped and drawn from Kálá̱bàrì myths, philosophy of life, belief system, and worship of free spirits (*tẹmẹ*) such as the village heroes (*órú*), the water people (*ówú*) and the ancestors (*ḏụẹịn*). These *tẹmẹs* are complementary to one another and together provide an explanation for everything that goes on in Kálá̱bàrì. Ritual song texts during funeral rites are used in ancestral and non-ancestral worship. The delivery of funeral song texts are communicated in two ways; via instrumental medium as verbal non-vocal performance as exemplified in *ókóró fárí* and vocal delivery accompanied or unaccompanied with musical instruments.

Among the Kálá̱bàrì Christians, song texts used at funerals are drawn from Bible stories and their Christian experience as followers of Jesus Christ. The themes of texts are divers. They are mostly evangelistic, calling people to repent by using biblical characters like father Abraham, Paul and Silas, and most especially Jesus Christ through whom according to informants; the dead can be brought back to life on the day of resurrection. Other themes

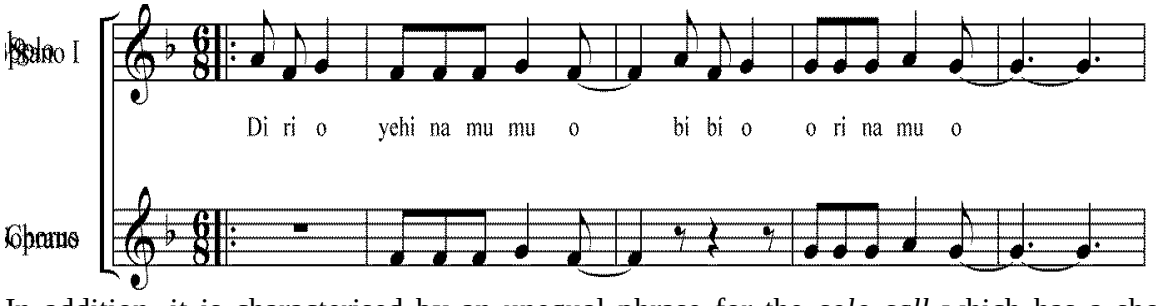
expressed in the texts are, attributes of God, praise and worship, victory over sin and death, and the coming of Christ to take those who believe in Him to heaven. Findings show that the textual content of *Ḍụẹịn-ḍíḅi-a númè* was based on five themes: praise for supernatural and human personalities, lamentations, prayers and scriptural teachings. The application of nine different communication techniques in its lyrics revealed rich literally corpus that characterise funeral music.

Musical form

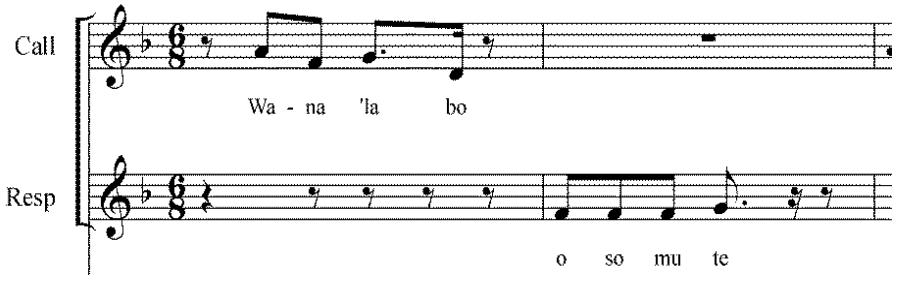
Structurally solo musical form occupies a major part in Káláḅàrí funeral rite. *Ḍụẹịn-duu-a númé* is an original song composed and performed unaccompanied by several people; the wives, children and close relative during the lying in state of the deceased. A typical example of a solo form is shown below.



Responsorial form is the most common structural form used in Káláḅàrì funeral music. This form allows for interaction between the chorus and the lead singer or soloist in a call and response style. This form is performed in several ways. The most common type is when a phrase is sung by the lead singer the chorus responding with exactly the same phrase. A second type is when the lead singer takes up the song; the chorus joins by responding to the call. The text in each of the calls is different and the chorus responds appropriately as shown in the example below:

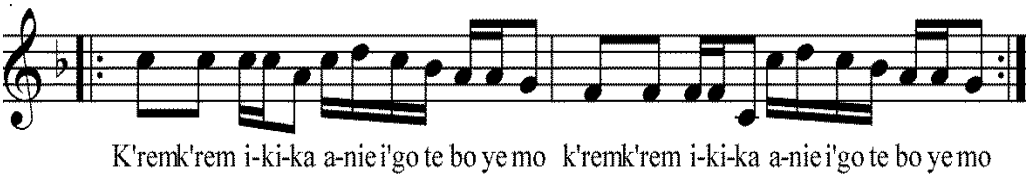


In addition, it is characterised by an unequal phrase for the *solo-call* which has a shorter phrase than the *chorus*. On the other hand, short *call* and a short *response* is another type of responsorial form shown in the example below:

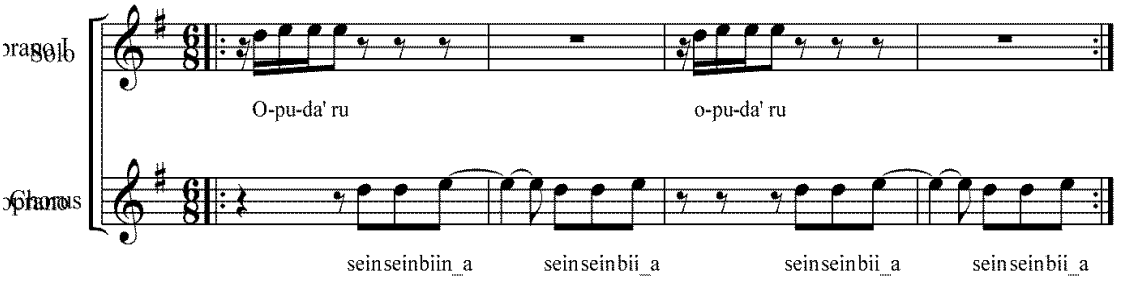


In the song *Wamna 'labo*, there is an equal balance in both phrases despite the difference in the text. Though, the cantor and the chorus do not sing the same text, the time for performance of each role is equal. Other types in the responsorial form are call and chorus refrain pattern, call and refrain as well as mixed structural patterns.

Repetition is one of the basic structural features in Kálá̱bàrí funeral music. According to Nzewi (2012:10), it is an 'intentional, proactive, strictly repeated short thematic idiom' used in solo or ensemble performance. Repetition of a whole song is performed exactly the way it was sung by the soloist. It helps to lengthen the performance, emphasize the text without variation in content and speed and helps possess the mind. The song *Krímkrím îkíkà* is a two phrased structure AB. It is performed once by the lead singer and is repeated several times by the chorus.



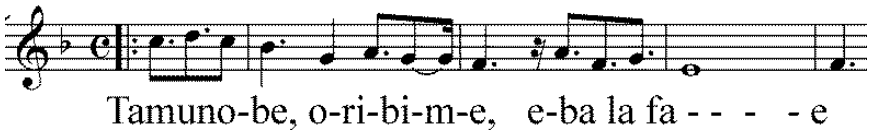
Another technique of performance is the repetition of a line or a phrase. This type of repetition is prominent in certain call and chorused refrain. This is exemplified in the song *Òpúdà àrù* performed as part of the funeral song during a canoe regatta.



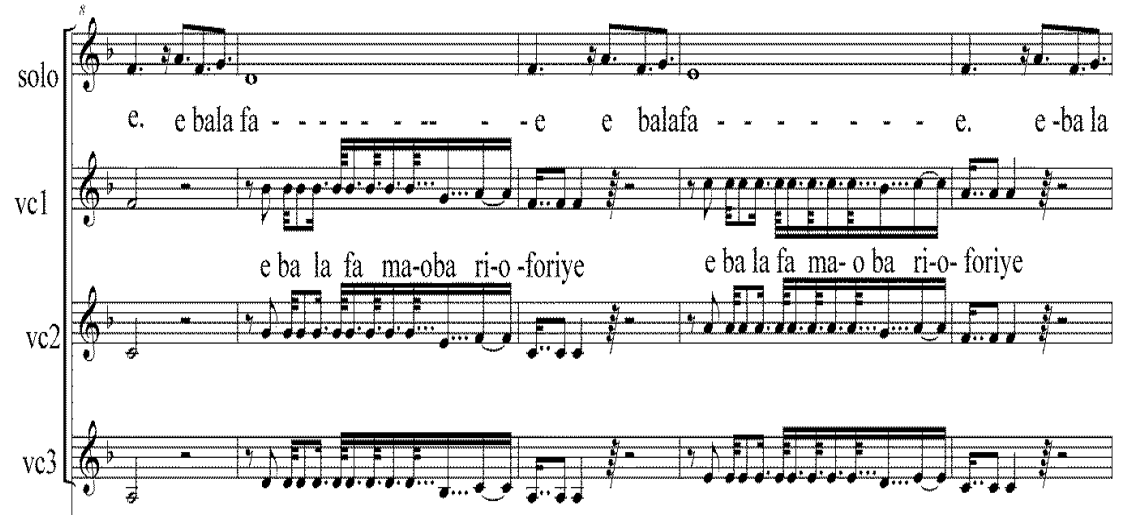
The chorused refrain is different in the use of short phrases of one or two words continuously repeated to a level during performance that the soloist only need to hum his line and the chorus keeps repeating the refrain. This type of performance psychologically helps to focus the men (thirty of them) as they display on the sea while paddling the canoe.

Internal variation of a recycled short theme is another micro formal device used in Kálá̱bàrì funeral songs. It is different from repetition in that it commands consistent and holistic alteration of the rhythm, tonal and pitches thereby creating a cumulative effect that excites the performer and listeners. An example of a song which made use of internal variation form is *Ìbàláfà-a*. The theme from which internal variation is achieved is made up of three short phrases with a descending melodic line in the key of F. The rhythm made use of dotted eight and quarter notes, sixteenth note and a semi breve at the end of the phrase.

a b c



The first two phrases are sung by the soloist and the chorus responds by joining in the third phrase (See Appendix 6 for the entire song).



Internal variation is achieved through the recycled short theme phrase c. Deliberate alteration was carried out first on the text, by the addition of four other words *má o bouri ófóriyé* meaning 'nothing will make me afraid' performed as *máobo'ri-ófóriyé*. Secondly, the use of a different rhythmic motif (syncopated use of double and triple dotted sixteenth and thirty-second notes) by the vocal ensemble and thirdly, the performance of the phrase *éḅáláfa máobo'ri-ófóriyé* at two different pitches: interval of a 4th and 5th above the tonic note F. The ensemble sings in harmony at an interval of a 3rd and 6th apart between the three voices while the soloist sings and improvises on the melody resulting in a mosaic of sound which is holistic. Findings show that composers of funeral music employ various compositional devices such as, repetition, internal variation, overlapping, contrast and improvisation in the development of their music.

Funeral, Church Policies and Militancy

Christian groups and denominations over time in the Niger Delta have put in place various policies to regulate the funeral rites accorded their members. According to Batubo (2010), three major issues have shaped the policies adopted by Christian groups in the area which are doctrinal, economic and especially with the security of lives and properties in the community. These have become necessary in order to avoid syncretism, delay in burying their dead, going into poverty after funerals by the deceased family, and to give their deceased members the last respects despite insecurity brought about by the activities of the militants in the Niger Delta. These policies have brought about changes in funeral music creativity; presentation forms and performance practices among Kálá̱bàrì.

Among Anglicans of the Niger Delta Diocese funerals of their late members must be carried out within twenty eight days from when the information of death reaches the Church elders. Non-compliance means that the church will not take part in the funeral. Furthermore, the church buries only those who are baptised, confirmed and have been involved in the life of the church and denomination before their death. During the funeral, the "day vigil" is organised on Saturday for about two hours, selected hymns and choruses are performed in praise of God while the corpse is lying in state. The series of lying in state as required by the tradition where children and wives of the deceased sing specially composed songs in praise of the dead and founding ancestors of the compound is highly discouraged and termed ancestral worship (Soberekon, 2010).

Other Christian groups like the Baptists and Pentecostals require one to three months within which the funeral must be carried out. Their members are prohibited from performing traditional funeral rites for their dead before, during and after the interment of the corpse. This has resulted in some form of antagonism between the traditionalists and Christians as most of the women and younger generation are refusing to perform the traditional funeral rites which are against their Christian belief. This has affected creativity and the amount of traditional music generated at funerals.

For the departed, death is a transition and a rite of passage lavishly celebrated through farewell and befitting funeral rites by the Kálá̱bàrì. It is taken as a project involving the immediate family, war canoe house and community depending on the status of the deceased. Sometimes the funeral of an elder is delayed for years because the children are raising money to build a befitting house for the dead and to take care of other ceremonies before the date is fixed. After such celebrations some individuals go bankrupt and never recover from poverty which leads to untimely death. This informed the time frame put in place by Christian groups to curtail as well as help their members avoid lavish spending during funerals (Batubo, 2010).
However, some other Christian groups like The African Church and Christ Army Church do not have legislation on the time frame within which a funeral should be done. Members are allowed to bury their dead in line with the traditions of the land. After the entire ceremonies they come to church on Sunday, the second weekend after the interment for thanksgiving.

In addition to participating in the burial, a memorial service is organised one year later by the bereaved family. Memorial services in the African Church are a demonstration of traditional belief in life after death and a proof that the deceased must be placated through their remembrance to avoid their wrath and incur their blessings. It is an occasion for lavish spending, much eating and drinking during when the church choir performs songs and dirges specially composed for the occasion. Sometimes these services are fixed on Saturdays to allow for more participation by relations, friends and well wishers. Memorial service is a great source of income for the church and the officiating ministers who demand as of right, one-third of the proceeds in accordance with the constitution of the church.

In the late twentieth century, the church in Niger Delta area began to experience attacks from misguided youths during wake-keeping at funerals. According to an informant who attended

a wake keeping ceremony in one of the communities in Asari-Toru Local Government Area in 2001, he ran to save his life from sporadic shooting by militant groups who invaded the compound at about 1:00am in the night leaving two persons dead and many injured. The militants are mainly unemployed youths disengaged by the political class and dumped as political thugs after the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections to high offices at the three levels of government: Local Council, State and Federal Government. The situation grew worse when rival groups rose against one another in order to assert their supremacy in the region.

During this period many fled and deserted their homes and communities for up to two years. Socio-cultural, religious and economic activities at sea, creeks, communities and Local Government headquarters came to a halt. The spate of armed robbery, rape, extortion, kidnapping of foreign nationals who were staff of oil companies in the region were on the increase. Furthermore, kidnapping of foreigners later snowballed into kidnapping of Nigerians for personal gains, vandalisation and stealing oil from pipe lines. This situation which became a threat to national security necessitated the militarization of the Niger Delta region by the Federal government in order to restore peace to the region.

The intervention of the Federal Government, among other measures by sending the military to crack down on militants in the region, brought stability; and people started returning to their villages and communities. Curfew was put in place from 10:00pm to 6:00am and all forms of gatherings; social, political, cultural or religious, were prohibited at night for many years. The subsequent pronouncement of the Amnesty programme in 2009 by the Federal Government for the Niger Delta Militants has brought some peace to the region. The performance of funeral rites in Kálábàrì has been affected greatly as a result of the unrest brought about by the activities of the militants in the region. Music at funerals and its presentation have reduced tremendously and in some situation displaced from their traditional context of performance. For example, *Ḍụẹịn Bóṛọmá* rite which involves the singing of dirges and special songs by the children and wives of the deceased during wake-keeping at night has been moved to Saturday between 10:00am and 12:00 noon. This situation has affected presentation form and performance context. Also affected is time spent for socialisation among family members, musicians and guests during funeral ceremonies as people still feel insecure despite military presence as shown on Plate 10 below.

Plate 10: Surveillance by Joint Military Task Force at a Funeral rite in Búgúmà

Conclusion

Certain conclusions from post field analysis can be made from this study. Firstly, the performance of *Ḍụịẹn-ḍíḅí-a númè* (funeral rite music) is rooted in Káláḅàrí culture and traditions. Performances manifest as instrumental and non-instrumental music by members of the bereaved family, house and community. Therefore, it engenders socialization and spiritual bonding among relations, friends and well wishers of the bereaved family to give sympathy and community support to the family of the deceased.

Secondly, the categories and types of *Ḍụịẹn-ḍíḅí-a númè* are determined and shaped by ritual, semi-ritual and non-ritual contexts. Four categories were identified: *Ákwá* (instrumental music), *Ògbò ḅẹ númè* (choral music) with instrumental accompaniment, *Ḍụịẹn-dúu-a númè* (a cappella dirges and chants) and *Sẹkị́ númè* (dance music). *Ókóró fárí*, a type of instrumental music performed by professional musicians is ritualistic and does not allow female participation. *Ìgìrà sìrá númè* and *Ámábórọ́ númè* are choral music performed by mixed ensembles in responsorial form. *Ḍụịẹn bórọma númè* are performed as dirges, laments and songs in solo form at the lying in state of the deceased. Pre and post interment funerary dance music of *Ókpókìrì*, and *Kúkú fárí* during *Ḍín krámá tí* are performed to give public acknowledgement that proper burial honours have been bestowed on the deceased who is deserving of honour.

Thirdly, song texts of funeral music are based on the belief system and culture of the people. They are philosophical; expressing historical, praise for supernatural and human being, prayers, laments, moral teachings and scriptural teachings as themes. Furthermore, the texts of music serve psychological and spiritual purposes of encouraging the bereaved and facilitating the process of the dead becoming an ancestor. Findings show that three musical textures were predominant in the data, namely monophony, homophony and heterophony.

These musical textures are structured in solo, call and response, overlapping, mixed structural and presentation forms.

Fourthly, *Ḏụịẹn-ḏíḇí-a númè* is central to Káláḇàrì funeral rites for both the traditionalist (as there is no opportunity for a second burial) and Christians. However, some of the funeral rites and its music are already extinct, some are at the verge of extinction and others are experiencing gradual transformation due to urbanization, globalization, insecurity, apathy on the part of the younger generation and the conversion of Káláḇàrì people to other religions especially Christianity.

End Note

1. *Sí fi* is referred to as 'bad death' which is further divided into *Kpọ-a fi* which imply untimely death below age fifty caused by sickness or disease and *Kurọ fi* which is an untimely death brought about as a result of inter ethnic wars, fatal motor accidents and plane crash which makes it impossible for the body of the deceased to be recovered.

2. Melorhythmic instruments such as the wooden slit drum play melodic phrases as well as rhythm patterns which are verbal but non-vocal.

3. Percussive instruments play rhythm patterns only, thereby creating a percussive effect in an ensemble.

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Oral interviews

Chief A. M. Princewill, (Member Council of chiefs) Buguma, 2010

Mr. Enefaa JohnBull, (Historian and Community elder), Buguma, 2010.

Mr. Sasimen Barango Tariah, *Àkwá Àláḅọ* (Chief drummer), Kalabari Ekine cult, Buguma, 2010.

Mr. Isobo DavidWest, Tariah, *Àkwá Àláḅọ* (Chief drummer), Kalabari Ekine cult, Buguma, 2010.

Mrs. Daisy Soberekon, (Secretary, PCC St. Micheal's Anglican Church, Niger Delta Diocese), Buguma, 2010.

Mrs. Gladys Harry, (Musician and Choreographer), Ido, 2010.

Chief Igbaibo George, (Senior and most experienced member of Ekine cult) Buguma, 2010.

Venerable J. A. Batubo, (Vicar in charge of Christ Army Church) Bakana, 2010.

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