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Composition in crisis: case studies in South African art music, 1980 - 2006

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Chapter 1: From autonomy to heteronomy: A change of paradigm in South African art music, 1980-2006

Introduction

Composition in South Africa has been an increasingly contested artistic and ideological space since the early 1980s. In this dissertation I argue that the demise of apartheid and the rise of democracy resulted in an institutional and aesthetic crisis for the field of composition, embodied in musical terms by a shift away from a Eurocentric paradigm to a cross-cultural one that embraced various 'African elements' within a framework of modernism and discourse of accessibility. In this chapter I consider the factors – both internal to the field of art music and those resulting from larger societal changes – that contributed to this artistic and ideological shift. Partly I am concerned with the politics of the field itself: the struggle for power within a highly contested cultural space. More broadly I am interested in the position of the field relative to changes in society at the macro level, in terms of race, class, and economic imperatives. A central question is, to what extent did the restructuring of the field in response to these changed imperatives affect the aesthetic choices of composers?

The autonomy of art music during apartheid was challenged by the politicization of the field during the 1980s. The extent and rapidity of social and institutional change, and the new self-consciousness that it evoked in composers previously only concerned with "production for producers" (Bourdieu 1993:15), resulted in a crisis that foreshadowed an aesthetic revolution, or change of paradigm. In this chapter I present the theoretical basis for this claim and explain some of the historical reasons for its emergence. The extent of this change and some of its manifestations will be examined in detail in the case studies that follow this chapter. These case studies offer contrasting historical and aesthetic perspectives on key figures and institutions at work during the period 1980 to 2006: chapters two, three, and four examine the work of composers Kevin Volans (b. 1949), Peter Klatzow (b. 1945), and Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957) respectively, whilst chapter five is a critique of the one of the main institutions of art music in post-apartheid South

Africa: the orchestra. These narratives are by no means unitary, meta- or comprehensive and are limited in scope, historical background, and perspective. I write them as evidence of a contested and divided field and one embroiled in a challenging period of change.

Although the three composers I have chosen for this study are central protagonists in the field of South African composition, they are not the only ones. Other important figures of an older generation such as Arnold van Wyk, Stefans Grové, Hubert du Plessis and John Joubert are not under the focus of this work. In part this is because they have been written about fairly extensively elsewhere (see Klatzow 1987, Muller 2000b, entries in the *South African Journal of Musicology*, Muller and Walton 2006 for example). Other composers who are important but only mentioned in passing include Michael Blake, Hans Huyssen, Mokale Koapeng, Bongani Ndodana, Hans Roosenschoon, Martin Scherzinger, Roelof Temmingh, Pieter Louis van Dijk, Carl van Wyk, and Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph.

My use of the term field and its application to the South African context now requires some elaboration as this will form an important part of my argument for paradigm change here and later in the dissertation.

Part I: The changing field of composition

> Constructing an object such as the literary field requires and enables us to make a radical break with the substantialist mode of thought (as Ernst Cassirer calls it) which tends to foreground the individual, or the visible interactions between individuals, at the expense of the structural relations – invisible, or visible only through their effects – between social positions that are both occupied and manipulated by social agents which may be isolated individuals, groups or institutions (Bourdieu 1993:29).

For much of the twentieth century (and still today), musicological studies have tended to focus on isolated individual geniuses and their works as autonomous from social concerns. Since the 1980s there has been a wide-ranging attempt to incorporate perspectives from the humanities, social sciences and cultural studies so as to situate

music in its cultural contexts. This has been a feature of the 'new' or 'critical' musicology. In this work, to some extent instigated by the figure of Joseph Kerman (1985), there has been a critical element at play, one that seeks to interrogate both the musical and philosophical premises of its own conception, resulting perhaps from the postmodern condition of self-reflexiveness indebted to anthropology. Despite these and other tendencies there has been little scholarship on the broader cultural implications of art music that include detailed studies of both the institutions and the music that constitute these cultures. A notable exception is Georgina Born's *Rationalizing culture: Boulez, IRCAM, and the institutionalization of the avant-garde* (1995), although this work is short on musical analysis, and this partly results from the extremity of the musicological and sociological methodologies.

Sociological analyses of artistic production are helpful (as in the case of Bourdieu) but have tended to "avoid making prescriptive value-laden judgments about art" (Harrington 2004:32-33) so as to retain their 'scientific' status in the academy. The institutional theories of art offered by George Dickie and Arthur Danto, as well as the ethnographic approach advocated by Howard Becker, represent therefore "overly stringent examples of projects of value-neutrality in sociology of the arts" (Ibid:32). This approach can be attributed to the influential work of Max Weber (1949) who "maintained that all researchers should seek to refrain from value-judgments in their empirical inquiries and not take advantage of the scientific prestige of their occupation in order to propagate partisan normative agendas through their work" (Harrington 2004:33). Despite this stance Weber conceded that in practice these 'problematic' value judgements continued to be made and actually played an important role in the research process. "Weber affirmed that no sociological research can be coherently thought of as fundamentally 'value-free' because he argued that it is the existence of values and 'value-ideas' in the minds of researchers which first makes socio-historical reality meaningful to researchers and first conditions their selection of the very aspects of reality they hold to be relevant to investigation" (Ibid). In this dissertation I have attempted to marry a sociological approach – that of Pierre Bourdieu in particular – with a musicological one that examines the work of composers critically and within the contexts of those composers themselves,

arguing that such analyses of works and individuals are pertinent and indeed complementary to sociological analyses.

A reading of Bourdieu's essay 'The field of cultural production: Or, the economic world reversed' (1993) is at the heart of this work. The complexity of the cultural field with respect to subsidized art forms, and art music in particular, is usefully theorized in this essay by Bourdieu, and in other works of his such as *Distinction* (1998) and *The rules of art* (1996). The essay on the field of cultural production is however the most detailed exposition of his method and has wide-ranging applicability for the 'restricted field of production'[1] of the 'high' arts (for example: classical music, the plastic arts, 'serious' literature). One of the characteristics of this sub-field, as Randal Johnson notes, is that "the stakes of competition between agents are largely symbolic, involving prestige, consecration and artistic celebrity. This, as Bourdieu often writes, is "production for producers" (R. Johnson 1993:15).

Due to the complexity of Bourdieu's thought it is important to understand his (1993) essay within a larger theoretical project that "attempts to construct a 'science of practices' that will analyze "'all practices' as 'oriented towards the maximization of material or symbolic profit'", as David Swartz (1997:66) puts it. This resulted in a

> research program [that] would unite what has traditionally been thought of as economic (i.e. interested and material) and noneconomic (i.e. disinterested and symbolic) forms of action and objects. [Bourdieu] writes that 'the theory of strictly economic practice is simply a particular case of a general theory of the economics of practice' (1977:177). Thus, symbolic interest and material interest are viewed as two equally objective forms of interest (Ibid:66-67).

This understanding of practice necessarily involves analysis of various forms of symbolic and cultural capital and their relationship to economic capital.

[1] In Bourdieu's analysis this is a subfield opposed to the 'field of large-scale production' (broadly conceived as commercially produced and disseminated works for the masses). In my work I sometimes also use 'subfield' to denote divisions within the discipline of music, such as performance or composition.

According to Swartz, "[f]ields denote areas of production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge or status, and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate and monopolize [ ] different kinds of capital" (1997:117). Capital represents power "over the accumulated product of past labour…and thereby over the mechanisms which tend to ensure the production of a particular category of goods and thus over a set of revenues and profits" (Bourdieu 1991:230). Bourdieu generally speaks of four generic types of capital: economic capital (money and property), cultural capital (cultural goods and services including educational credentials), social capital (acquaintances and networks), and symbolic capital (legitimation). Of particular importance with regard to the field of composition are the strategic use of symbolic and cultural capital by composers and institutions so as to further their own interests or trajectories within fields.

> The literary or artistic field is a *field of forces*, but it is also a *field of struggles* tending to transform or conserve this field of forces. The network of objective relations between positions subtends and orients the strategies which the occupants of the different positions implement in their struggles to defend or improve their positions (i.e. their position-takings), strategies which depend for their force and form on the position each agent occupies in the power relations (Bourdieu 1993:30).

The largest of these fields is that of the dominant class, race, and economic imperatives of South African society as a whole. In reference to the period this dissertation deals with it refers to two distinct periods: apartheid (1980-1994) and post-apartheid (1994-2006) society respectively, although changes in this larger field occurred gradually during this entire period. This large field intersects or overlaps with a smaller *field of power* that – in this particular study – is constituted by educational institutions, commissioning bodies, performers, concert organizers, various publics, and critics (for example). These two fields impose particular kinds of power relations on composers and their immediate sphere of influence, what is termed by Bourdieu the 'limited field'. The alignment of these three fields and the kinds of power dynamics particular to each level of interaction is a site of struggle for power between 'actors'. Their actions are not determined only by these relations of power but are mediated by individual *habitus*, a term used by Bourdieu

to acknowledge agency. He defines habitus as the system of "durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (in Johnson 1993:5). Habitus accounts for the particular dispositions of composers that are not reducible to conscious strategies but are characteristics inculcated in youth and through personal and professional experience.

Bourdieu views the field of artistic production as an 'economic world reversed'. In his analysis of the literary and artistic fields, he shows how this 'restricted' field operates along a continuum between poles of autonomous (dictated by its own logic) and heteronomous (dictated by pressures from the field of power: i.e. political and economic pressures) hierarchization. When the field shifts towards an autonomous pole of hierarchization actors in the field are interested in those pursuits guided by the accrual of symbolic capital. This is in contrast to a shift towards the heteronomous pole which results in a different kind of logic: now composers in the field are interested in those pursuits guided by the accrual of economic and political capital as determined by the dominant classes in the field of power. Bourdieu argues that in largely autonomous fields where 'production is for producers', and I would argue that the field of composition during apartheid was like this, there is "a generalized game of 'loser wins', [based] on a systematic inversion of the fundamental principles of all ordinary economies" (1993: 39). I suggest that the crisis that emerged in the late-1980s was a result of a radical shift in the field away from an autonomous mode of production and towards a heteronomous pole governed by political and economic interests. Aesthetically this shift was most visible in the increasing number of works that drew on African elements during this period.[2]

It can be argued that cross-culturalism emerged as a result of changes within both the field of production and the field of power. Although there have been diverse

[2] The move towards African elements was not unheard of in the 1980s but gathered momentum significantly during the 1990s.

compositional approaches to cross-culturalism (and these cannot be subsumed into a single aesthetic orthodoxy or set of conventions), I argue that these can be seen collectively to constitute 'a new way of seeing the world', and hence a new paradigm of thought. This 'new way of seeing' reflects artistic dispositions that are self-consciously aware of the larger political economy and field of power and are thus somewhat conservative. What they all have in common is a new understanding of their role as composers and of the (new) politics of music-making in South Africa: that composition is not an isolated and autonomous activity confined to academia but a symbolic cultural discourse. This shift in understanding is thus partly understandable in terms of what Bourdieu describes as a shift towards a heteronomous mode of production in the field (as outlined above).

Yet the complexity of actors' positions and their dispositional habitus means that the field alone does not determine artistic production. When a composer whose habitus does not align with the field of production, the possibility of practice is less certain and can result in work that is at the outer perimeter of the field's influence. Jason Toynbee notes that there are two "structuring factors [that] tend to shape the making of art. First there is the 'field of production'", and second there are the artists who "are disposed to aim for a particular position in the field according to 'habitus'" (2003:106).

> Critically, the push of musician habitus and the pull of the field tend to converge, and it is through the highly charged *near* alignment of these forces that a "space of possibles" (Bourdieu 1993, 176-177, 182-185) then opens up. What Bourdieu calls possibles are nothing less than creative choices in the terms I am using here. They are made much more frequently when the field starts to shift, or when new kinds of authors begin to push forward. In these circumstances the space of possibles expands, and creative possibilities further out along the "radius of creativity" become audible (Toynbee 2003:107).

When a composer who is part of another field arrives (or arrives back) in what is essentially a foreign field, then s/he potentially does so with less of the constraints (implicit, explicit, internalized or not) of the new field. In chapter two I suggest that this was the case with Kevin Volans, who, coming (back) from a very different field in

Germany, challenged the structure of the field of composition in South Africa because of his sympathy with very different aesthetic and political imperatives there. As a result of this different way of seeing the world, it is possible to view Volans as an 'anomaly' (see chapter two), to use Thomas Kuhn's (1970) usage of the term.[3] The importance of anomaly is that it results in actors having to rethink their paradigmatic understanding of practice, an idea expressed by Kuhn in his analysis of scientific revolutions.

Crisis and revolution: The concept of the paradigm

One way of conceiving patterns of thought and 'ways of seeing' (that I discussed above with regard to cross-culturalism), is as a 'paradigm'. I use Thomas Kuhn's work on *The structure of scientific revolutions* (1970) to present and theorize the crisis in South African art music during the 1980s as a *change of paradigm* that occurred as a consequence of widespread changes in the field of production and society at large. I use the concept quite flexibly and broadly in relation to Kuhn's arguments concerning revolutions, and in conjunction with Bourdieu's analysis of the field. Although others have applied Kuhn's theory of paradigm change to the artistic field (notably in *The Structure of Artistic Revolutions*, Clignet 1985), I engage in a less 'comprehensive' approach (see Shepherd 2003).

Kuhn's argument is that a paradigm shift in science manifests itself in a crisis, and that this crisis *precedes* a revolution.

> When one scientific paradigm, or body of premises, axioms, and theories, could no longer answer the questions it had generated, a crisis would occur in the scientific community supporting and advocating the paradigm. The crisis would be followed by a revolution in which the old paradigm would be replaced by a new one capable of answering the previously unanswerable questions. This new paradigm would be based on a different set of premises, axioms, and theories, and would, quite literally, see the world differently. A classic example of one such paradigm shift is

[3] This 'new way of seeing' is not characteristic of everyone who spent time overseas (Hendrik Hofmeyr did too), but in Volans's case it helped him 'see' more clearly the field he had left.

> that instigated by Einstein's theories of relativity early in the twentieth century. Scientists who accepted his theories at an early stage did so not because of any empirical 'proof', which had to wait some years, but because of the elegance and effectiveness of their explanations. Kuhn concluded that scientists shifted paradigm allegiance not for scientific reasons, but for reasons that were primarily aesthetic (Shepherd 2003:71).

There are important ways in which I re-articulate Kuhn's notion of a scientific paradigm of artistic production. I am referring to a paradigm of *thought* – not just musical thought but what Foucault refers to as the structured and structuring character of *discourse* (2002). In a particular artistic paradigm production is constrained and maintained by the cognitive limits of this discourse. The 'work' that constitutes a particular paradigm does not simply answer to its questions and problems (as in science it might), but constitutes a body of knowledge *and* the appropriate means of understanding that knowledge. In this context, an artistic crisis occurs when the very conditions of existence for this paradigm are fundamentally undermined on social, political, economic, and ethical grounds. The new paradigm enables new ways of seeing; and an important feature of paradigm change conceived in this way is that the 'claims' made by the new paradigm are fundamentally political rather than only artistic.

In this work I theorize two paradigms for composition that involve radically different 'ways of seeing'. Throughout the dissertation I show how the decline of the first and emergence of the second were the result of a shift in the field from an autonomous to a heteronomous mode of production. Later in this chapter I show how this change of paradigm resulted in a crisis for the field, and how this manifested itself both musically and institutionally. As I have already suggested, the first paradigm was characterized by a field that construed itself as autonomous from 'non-musical' concerns, and that reflected a Euro-American focus: I call it the 'Western' or 'autonomous paradigm'.[4] Composers invested in this paradigm composed works that addressed a Western musical discourse, and they were opposed to the inclusion of African elements or aesthetics. This paradigm

[4] The ideology of autonomous art has been treated extensively elsewhere and need not be remarked on further here (see Wolff 1993 or Clarke 2003 for example).

epitomized what Bourdieu terms 'production for producers' (1993:15) and upheld the Eurocentric policies of the apartheid state.

The second paradigm arose out of a variety of factors, some of them political, some of them aesthetic. In the post-apartheid era (when this paradigm solidified) composers were part of a field that occupied a more dominated position within the field of power than before, and as such were *more* susceptible to the *new* political and economics imperatives of the field of power. This shift towards a heteronomous mode of production in the post-apartheid era (actually from the early 1990s onwards) was one feature of this paradigm. Another feature of this paradigm, and the one that in many ways encapsulates its new allegiances, is the way it embodied 'cross-culturalism'. Unlike practice during the 'autonomous paradigm', the new 'cross-cultural' or 'heteronomous paradigm' was characterized by composers engaging with 'Africa' on a regular basis, and by their awareness of economic and political constraints on production. (That nature of these engagements will be critiqued in the case studies to follow.) The change from one paradigm to the next was gradual and took place most visibly in the early 1990s when a crisis became apparent in the field.

In Kuhn's model crises occur when the previous paradigm is no longer relevant or effective. He explains how the remnants of an old paradigm are sustained in the new one, but also that some of the good features may be lost. When an artistic revolution accompanies a socio-political one – as was the case of South Africa 1980-2006 – it is not simply a case of equating the one paradigm (i.e. the autonomous paradigm during apartheid) with the other (i.e. the more heteronomous (cross-cultural) one in the post-apartheid era). Composers did not change *everything* about their practices so as to conform to new imperatives in the largest field of (politics), race, class, and economics. Instead, and as a result of their particular habitus and position within the field, they found ways of re-articulating their positions and their work within changing contexts. This meant integrating some of the features of the new paradigm into their work while still retaining features of the old. A good example of this is discussed in chapter four where I show how Hendrik Hofmeyr retained the structural principle of 'organic unity' even in

works that he titled and presented as 'African'. The reason for Hofmeyr (and others) to adjust their aesthetic outlook in this way is symptomatic of a 'crisis' in the field.

> Probably the single most prevalent claim advanced by the proponents of a new paradigm is that they can solve the problems that have led the old one to a crisis. The claim to have solved the crisis-provoking problems is, however, rarely sufficient by itself. Nor can it always legitimately be made. Fortunately, there is also another sort of consideration that can lead scientists to reject an old paradigm in favour of a new one. These are the arguments, rarely made explicit, that appeal to the individual's sense of the appropriate or the aesthetic – the new theory is said to be 'neater', 'more suitable', or 'simpler' than the old (Kuhn 1970:154-156).

A choice of theory – or in this case aesthetic – is never an arbitrary one because it is the product of a composer's habitus, position in the field, and personal agency in responding to both smaller and larger imperatives. In the case studies that follow I show how composers came to 'reject' the old paradigm in favour of a new one that was more 'appropriate' to these diverse forces. The emergence of this paradigm is complex and the rest of this chapter documents the musical, social, and institutional contexts out of which it arose.

Part II: Apartheid and after

This dissertation covers a period of 27 years (1980-2006) and documents change in the field of art music from the late-apartheid to the post-apartheid era. This was a period of radical and rapid change in all spheres of society, and the contrast between those political and social freedoms experienced by citizens in post-1994 democratic South Africa are a world apart from the repressions of the apartheid era (1948-1994). In this chapter I focus on changes that occurred leading up to 1994. The latter period is dealt with in chapters three, four and five and briefly in the conclusion. In 1980, South Africa was internally segregated and externally quite isolated from the world, governed through a political system that privileged white minority interests at the expense of the black majority. Legislation was passed that enabled the state to enforce the apartheid system by violent

means through the deployment of police and security forces. Opposition to apartheid became a feature of the 1980s and unrest affected large sectors of society. Pressure was exerted by political organizations even though most of them were banned or in exile, and trade unions (workers) and students were often at the forefront of conflicts with the security services. Schools in the townships and university campuses (an important aspect of the 'second field' of South African composition) were sometimes set alight by violent protests aimed at conscientizing society and contesting minority rule. The apartheid system was expensive to maintain and increasingly lacked support from all sectors of society, including many of those privileged by it. By the late 1980s change was thus inevitable both from a social and an economic point of view (see R.W. Johnson 2004, MacDonald 2006). International sanctions imposed on South Africa took their toll on industry and civil society; and though those institutions and leaders aligned with white minority interests were still powerfully positioned in government and commerce – and such power was dismantled only piecemeal later – the groundswell of opposition could not be stemmed by the limited state resources.

Changes in the fabric of society were embodied in the art and particularly music of this late-apartheid period (Byerly 1998). Notable contributions from painters, sculptors, film makers, writers, poets, and composers foreshadowed and participated in the political changes sweeping the country. This dissertation considers how composition in particular was influenced by the restructuring of the cultural landscape in South Africa, and how art music embodied broader social change. The withdrawal of state resources and funding for the arts, as well as policies of affirmative action, educational reform, and social development after 1994 threatened the hegemony that art music held in the academy and in schools, and eroded its economic viability. This was partly because art music had been symbolic of a Eurocentric outlook and value system for the apartheid government, and its position was thus inevitably highly contested at the dawn of the new era.

Although the first democratic elections were held in 1994, change was already under way long before this, culminating in the unbanning of opposition parties and the release of political prisoners (most notably Nelson Mandela) in February 1990. Without attempting

a comprehensive analysis of art music or politics in this period, I focus on what I argue to be this critical moment in the history of South African composition; the emergence of an aesthetic of cross-culturalism as a new way of seeing the world for composers, in short, a new paradigm. This emergence and its impact are directly pertinent to the particular narratives being written here. This study cannot provide a history of composition during apartheid, its manifestations, and its aftermath, although its tendrils permeated every aspect of South African society from 1948 to 1994, and after.[5] What I can do is acknowledge the 'long view' of apartheid and its continued presence within post-apartheid society and this work. The policies of segregation did not permit racial mixing or cultural dialogue; races and cultures were required to remain distinct during apartheid and music that attempted cross-over was banned (the popular band *Juluka* headed by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Nchunu in the '80s was a prime example of this censorship). Division along lines of race and ethnicity was at the core of apartheid and it was these notions of difference that were contested in important ways by cross-cultural art music.

The extent to which art music and discourse about art music was implicated in the machinations of apartheid is a difficult and complicated matter to unpack. Due to the fact that composers were for the most part located in academic institutions where Western high art was promoted as the norm, it can be argued that their music implicitly upheld the Eurocentricism of apartheid policies. The fact that most composers drew solely on the Western classical tradition, however, did not necessarily mean they accepted these policies *tout court*. Hubert du Plessis's *Slamse Bielde* (1959) and other of his songs draw on Cape Malay music and texts in ways that undermine the view of a monolithic apartheid 'music'.[6] Stephanus Muller (2008) has argued that one of the most celebrated composers of the apartheid era, Arnold van Wyk (1934-1984) contested the segregation and censorship of apartheid through, for example, musical 'silences' in his *Missa in illo*

[5] Some of these arguments are pursued in the recent volume *Composing apartheid: Music for and against apartheid* (ed. Olwage 2008).

[6] In relation to the first post-apartheid 'International Classical Music Festival' Christine Lucia has noted: "What under Western hegemonic discourse before 1994 was just 'music' because it was music of the dominant minority has, reasserting itself under the pressure of post-apartheid South Africa, renamed itself (Classical music) and redrawn its boundaries (International)" (Lucia 2005a:xxii).

tempore (1982); and Winfried Lüdemann (2006/7) has suggested something similar for the composer's much earlier *Primavera* (1952).

I will argue, nevertheless, that composers as supported as van Wyk and others, were involved in an implicit politics that continued to position art music as autonomous, as constitutive of a hegemony of thought and action that both denied critical voices and insulated them, confining intellectual engagement to abstractions in a vacuum. So although Van Wyk's *Missa* can *now* be read as *contra* apartheid, one has to ask if this reading was possible during apartheid. How, for example, was it received by school children in Stellenbosch at its premiere or by the press and fellow composers in van Wyk's 'field'? Not, it seems to me, as a text that implicitly challenged the state or the status quo at that time.

According to Randal Johnson, "[t]he degree of autonomy of a specific realm of activity is defined by its ability to reject external determinants and obey only the specific logic of the field, governed by specific forms of symbolic capital" (1993:15). Yet the autonomy of apartheid-era art music was a function of its value as symbolic capital for the state; its 'silences' were a condition of its support. Yet these 'silences' were largely hidden and introverted during the early decades of apartheid, largely ignored by musicologists and critics. The analysis of works at this time was directed towards composer's intentions or uncritical validation of works as Lucia points out (2005b, 101-102). It was only really in the 1980s that composers *overtly* contested the political and aesthetic strictures of apartheid with more direct statements (musical and verbal); and less through overtly political texts than through the incorporation of African musical materials, once downgraded by the state as 'primitive' (and practiced by musicians who 'belonged' not in mainstream South African society but in 'homelands') and excluded from the curriculum.

In my Honours essay on cross-culturalism and the angst of post-apartheid musicology (Pooley 2005) I argued that there was an about-face with regard to the political understanding of art music in the 1990s. Whereas during apartheid it was seen to be autonomous (in line with the prevailing understanding of the avant-garde in the West at

that time), with the transition to democracy art music that retained a degree of Eurocentricity became aligned with a colonial past, unacceptable to the postcolonial democracy of post-apartheid South Africa. And this art music that could change with the times and be regarded as more appropriate and politically acceptable in the 'new' South Africa, was characterized by Lucia as embracing the 'local' (see chapter three). Within the field of musicology she has characterized two 'local views' in the 1980s that

> polarized into two musicological camps: crudely put, musicology for conservatives who engaged with the hegemonic discourse of Western classical music regardless of the way it propped up the regime (indeed, as if it had nothing to do with politics); and ethnomusicology for liberals who engaged mainly with African music and with a discourse of resistance (see Byerly 1998) or for new African scholars who engaged – problematically for them in terms of the apartheid ethos of separate development – with their 'own music' (Lucia 2005a:xxxv-xxxvi).

Lucia's perception of the way commonly held views of both practitioners and critics were aligned with particular politics, is problematized by Grant Olwage in his introduction to *Composing apartheid* (2008), although he concedes that their enactment was institutionalized.

> To talk of music as being *pro* and *contra* – for example, for or against apartheid's racisms – positions music 'as position'. Once again music is separated: a part of one party or the other, and it is then institutionalized as such. We might thus write a history of apartheid music as institutional history. Certainly, music institutions of all kinds – radio stations, primary school music classes, choirs, universities – were by and large separated by race-ethnicity, and it was through these and non-music institutions – political parties, juridical apparatuses – that the musical separations of race and ethnicity […] were enacted (Olwage 2008:5).

Composers bound (whether institutionally or not) to the older, more conservative paradigm that conceived of music as socially and aesthetically autonomous – bound only to the determinants of practitioners themselves – naturally rejected pressures from outside of the limited field, at least superficially. This is not to say that these external pressures did not exist, only that they were subsumed or implicit within the workings of the limited field (a condition of existence for the autonomous paradigm). Lucia has also noted the extent to which composers experienced this greater autonomy during apartheid.

> The greater autonomy of art music composition in the 1970s and '80s was due, I suggest, to the way it was protected from (and by) the racialised class politics of the third field, enjoying certain privileges even from *within* a dominated position in the hierarchy of power, such privileges including financial support endorsed by that power. For as Bourdieu points out, when the limited field of cultural production achieves total autonomy from the laws of the market, recognition and legitimacy are informed not by a logic of economics but by one of politics. This is not to say individual composers agreed with the politics of the larger field, but rather that larger politico-economic power – then as now – encouraged and supported a particular notion of music. Such support might be read for example in terms of airplay on radio and appointments to jobs; or commissions (Lucia 2005b:93).

A choice of aesthetic is never an arbitrary one. It is socially significant, as it reflects not only upon a composer's social context and intellectual lineage, but also on her/his position within a field of production. The high-modernist aesthetic of the majority of composers of the 1970s and early 1980s was enabled by the support of art music as a whole by the apartheid state and other corporate entities aligned with it, as I have argued. It was a form of symbolic capital for the state and upheld a Eurocentric outlook and value system, all of which were taken for granted by most composers. The high-modernist aesthetic paradigm waned in the mid- to late 1980s when some composers became interested in cross-cultural aesthetics. The power, security, insularity, and autonomy that the field of composition experienced during apartheid decreased proportionately to the power wielded by the white Afrikaner elite. With the shift to a black-nationalist government in 1994, art music lost most of its supporting structures and had to fight for survival in the 'new' South Africa. The education system was a crucial element in these restructurings.

The education system

The cultural system was fed in the 1980s by music departments at the following universities: Cape Town, Durban-Westville, Natal, Orange Free State, Port Elizabeth,

Potchefstroom, Pretoria, Rhodes, South Africa, Stellenbosch, and the Witwatersrand.[7] Young musicians were taught the Western canon of masterworks by white (male) composers and African musical traditions were seldom studied. Nor was there an awareness of Western classical music's South African context, a perspective that might have enabled a more self-reflexive engagement on the part of trainee musicians. The universities fostered a culture of art music amongst predominantly white students and fed the performing arts council system with new recruits each year.[8] For those who could not attend these universities it was possible to study externally through the University of South Africa (or the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College London, or Guildhall), whose graded music examinations, licentiates, and degrees were internationally-recognized benchmarks (of a kind). Apart from the universities there were various other organizations and festivals that promoted art music. These included the Afrikaans Taal- en Kultuurvereniging (ATKV), Johannesburg Eisteddford, Johannesburg Music Society, South African Society of Music Teachers, and National Youth Orchestra Foundation.

The significance of all this institutional support was that art music was the taken-for-granted object of study in the apartheid curriculum. As Lucy Green has observed, "[m]usic education participates in the construction and perpetuation of ideologies about musical value" (2003:265), and both school and university curricula took Western art music to be the chief or only musical culture worthy of study during apartheid, even though they were unrepresentative of the diversity of musical cultures in South Africa. The practice of composition was undoubtedly affected by this, as was the way it was taken up as a career. For Janet Wolff

> the way in which artists and writers take up their careers, and therefore the particular values and attitudes they bring to them from their family and class backgrounds, affects the kind of work they do as artists. And if specialized training is also involved, the processes of the institutions of training are also likely to 'form' the artists and influence the direction of his or her development (1993:42).

[7] And on the other hand 'fed' in a much more restricted and ethnically circumscribed way by the Universities of the Western Cape, Zululand, Venda, Fort Hare, Transkei and other institutions.
[8] The 'White Paper on Arts Culture and Heritage' of 1996 details the extent and nature of this support.

All South African composers of the generation under discussion here spent their formative years, I argue, in a narrow if not repressive cultural environment that excluded African music (and its people and culture) from the curriculum. This may not only have restricted the creative possibilities available to them, but inculcated a view of African music as 'other'. The consequences of this view are explored in parts of chapters three and four where I show how Western discourses that treat African music at 'arm's length' continue to be employed in the post-1980s works of both Klatzow and Hofmeyr.

The lack of engagement with the 'local' was equally apparent in musicological circles, as noted above. 1980s studies on contemporary art music were restricted by the perceived need for scholars to consult composers as the authorities of their own work.[9] This unfortunate situation has resulted in a number of theses and articles that are uncritical and descriptive rather than interrogatory. Some of these works – some of which are discussed in detail below – are primarily involved in validating composers' works as inherently meaningful and important. This somewhat defensive and 'celebratory' approach was, in my view, a product of the dominant 'autonomous' paradigm.

Subsidization of art music during apartheid

As annual budget allocations show (from the 'White Paper on Arts Culture and Heritage' of 1996, and the *Race Relations Surveys* of the 1980s and 90s), art music was extremely well supported by the apartheid state, in financial terms and symbolically. This was despite the economic challenges posed by issues such as education and poverty – especially in rural areas and amongst the black population – which itself strongly suggests the importance of art music as symbolic capital. Millions were spent on infrastructure and institutional support for the arts, and this was primarily entrusted to the

[9] Some of the articles in Klatzow (1987) are representative of this trend. See for example James May's entry on Klatzow in which he discusses the composer's intentions for works (and see chapter three here for an extended discussion of this issue).

Performing Arts Councils (PACs) set up in each of the four provinces in 1963.[10] The PACs were responsible *inter alia* for staging opera, ballet, theatre, and symphony concerts, and such events took place in state theatres in Pretoria (the 'State Theatre'), Johannesburg (the City Hall and Civic Centre) Cape Town (the City Hall and Nico Malan theatre), Durban (the City Hall, the Alhambra Theatre, and then The Playhouse), and Bloemfontein (the City Hall and Sand du Plessis Theatre). These theatres were bastions of Western 'high culture', built at enormous cost to taxpayers, and were for white audiences, symbolizing the segregationist ethos of apartheid by both keeping blacks out and asserting the 'superiority' of white culture, as Carol Steinberg (1993) recorded: "PAC productions could not 'perform in front of mixed audiences', and they could not 'have mixed races on stage' (Anon, 1987:8). PACT, like its sister PACs, was established, in accordance with government's wishes, as an organization that would serve the cultural interests of whites" (Steinberg 1993:34).

The PACs were aimed at uplifting and supporting communities of white artists and audiences: "Suffice to say that the almost total lack of state funds received by potential and practicing black performing artists, and the absence of performing arts training institutions and theatres in black communities has severely impeded the development of the performing arts among black South Africans" (Ibid). Despite the fact that racial policies were gradually scrapped during the 1980s, the PACs nevertheless continued to produce mainly white productions that catered for white audiences. By the 1990s, however, there was no longer a sense of exclusion based on race or the perceived inferiority of black culture (Ibid:6), and the PACs started to restructure themselves so as to be inclusive of all racial and cultural groups in South Africa, NAPAC taking the lead with the Commission for Restructuring the Performing Arts in Natal (CRAN) in 1994.

The national broadcaster (the South African Broadcasting Corporation, or SABC) was another important supporter of the 'high arts' during the 1980s, and devoted hours of programming to art music on television and radio. The SABC's broadcast and recording

[10] During the apartheid years there were initially five provinces (including 'South-West Africa' now Namibia) and four that included the Cape (CAPAB), Natal (NAPAC), the Orange Free State (PACOFS), and Transvaal (PACT).

studios were situated in centres around the country, and were used to produce and record art music for airplay on the broadcaster's stations. Hans Roosenschoon (himself a former employee at the SABC) provides statistics on the amount of art music ('serious music' as it was called) played on SABC radio stations in 1990.

> Radio South Africa, the national service in English, with an estimated average listenership of some 400,000, had a musical content in 1990 of around 30 percent, of which about half was 'serious' music. Radio Suid-Afrika, the national service in Afrikaans, with an estimated average listenership of some 900,000, had a musical content during the same period of about 20 percent, with a similar proportion of 'serious' music (Roosenschoon 1999:278).

"These figures, musically speaking," he wrote in 1993, were "quite encouraging" (Ibid). The SABC also was home to the 75-member strong National Symphony Orchestra of the SABC (founded in the late 1950s), a semi-professional chamber choir, and the much larger SABC Choir. "At its headquarters in Johannesburg, the SABC has five large music production studios, including an orchestral studio-cum-concert hall containing a versatile pipe-organ. Two record libraries, one for 'serious' music and one for 'light' music, are stocked with many thousands of records, tapes and compact discs" (Ibid:279). Most of the South African orchestral works on record were made at these studios and by the National Symphony Orchestra during the 1980s and early 1990s.[11] Musicians were often imported from Europe and the former Soviet Union to bolster the ranks of the orchestra, which performed with acclaimed soloists and conductors from Europe and the United States who toured the country on a regular basis.

An important figure in South Africa art music during the 1960s and 1970s, with regard to the support of new music and composition in particular, was Anton Hartman. He was instrumental in organizing visits by Henk Badings (1958), Igor Stravinsky (1962), and Karlheinz Stockhausen (1972). However, with the imposition of the UK-led international 'Cultural Boycott' in 1961, this exposure to international artists became more limited.

[11] Examples are Peter Klatzow's *Still Life with Moonbeams* (1975) and *Incantations* (1984), Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph's *Sefirot Symphony* (1989), Arnold van Wyk's Symphonies 1 (1943) and 2 (1952) and *Primavera* (1960), Hans Roosenschoon's *Timbila* (1987), and Thomas Rajna's *Piano Concerto No. 1* (1985), amongst many others.

The Cultural Boycott gathered momentum in the 1960s and '70s, and by 1981 most UK and American arts organizations refused to perform or have their productions performed or aired in South Africa.[12] The only comparable figure to visit the country in the 1980s was Morton Feldman, who attended the 1983 SABC Contemporary Music Festival.

The SABC was also an important source of commissions for composers. Roosenschoon mentions in particular the series of commissions made by the SABC Music Department in 1986 to celebrate the centenary year of Johannesburg and the fiftieth anniversary of the Corporation's founding; and by the end of 1987 Roosenschoon estimates that the SABC had commissioned approximately 120 works since its founding (1999:279). By the early 1990s, economic and political change in the larger field resulted in the organization gradually ceasing to commission any new works at all. Lucia has noted the importance of commissioning as "symptomatic of the way a limited field can be dominated by the immediate field of power while still operating with some autonomy from it and be relatively unaffected by the largest field".

> During the 1970s and '80s powerful media and business interests – most of them supported directly or indirectly by the apartheid government – provided the bulk of commissions (the SABC and the four provincial Arts Councils, the Rupert Foundation, the Oude Meester Foundation, the National Arts Festival, Adcock Ingram, and Total). In the 1980s and '90s SAMRO and the Foundation for the Creative Arts became major commissioning agents. Universities, local municipalities, businesses, and wealthy individuals also commission(ed) works (Lucia 2005b: 94).

The change in commissioning agencies since 1994 has resulted in a reduction in number and also a change in the *kinds* of works produced. Whereas in the 1980s works were often written to celebrate apartheid cultural institutions (such as the SABC) or other symbolic interests, in the post-apartheid era commissioning bodies such as SAMRO have now insisted on the inclusion of African elements to celebrate the new nation more generally. Klatzow has described how "SAMRO jumped on the bandwagon a little late. But when they did they did so with all four feet" (author's interview, 25 January 2007).

[12] See www.anc.org.za/ancdoc/history/boycotts/cultural.html, accessed 26 May 2008.

Their importance has magnified in the post-apartheid era because they are now one of the only commissioning bodies and publishers in South Africa. Commissioning has become a politicized activity with some composers, such as Hendrik Hofmeyr, objecting to their 'African elements' stipulations.[13] This, then, was another important factor affecting the crisis of 'aesthetic' change.

Autonomy/heteronomy of the compositional field

Educational institutions, the Performing Arts Councils, the SABC, and various public sector organizations were thus generally supportive of 'high culture' and art music during apartheid and established its power as an autonomous field. Partly this was because art music was symbolic of a Eurocentric outlook and value system that promoted white culture. Apartheid's segregationist policies had been put in place to ensure that cultures did *not* mix and that communities remained distinct. The inaccessibility of high art to the majority – both in terms of the cultural and the economic capital required for its appreciation – was a space in which this segregation was achieved *par excellence*. It is important however to distinguish between the broader field of art music and the sub-field of composition. Composition benefited from the support afforded the larger field but did not have the same kind of recognition and prestige afforded performers and performing institutions (such as orchestras, ballet troupes, and opera companies).

Due to its dominated position both in the field of power and in the restricted field of production, composers seldom engaged in direct political acts. According to Hans Roosenschoon composers "voiced their conceptual rejection of apartheid not only verbally, but also, and perhaps more deeply, via the elemental voice of their art. The contribution of South African composers and their support bodies to change (especially, through music, at the important level of the subconscious) are worthy, therefore, of recognition" (1999:265). The contentious claim that 'composers and their support bodies' contributed to change 'at the important level of the subconscious' is indicative of efforts

[13] Author's interview 25 January 2007.

– especially by composers and establishment figures (Roosenschoon worked at the SABC and was a director at SAMRO in the early 1990s) – to rewrite history in a way that repositions them as politically correct in the post-apartheid field. It is also, however, indicative of the lack of *'conscious'* attempts by these same composers and institutions to voice their support for change. Indeed, it is strange that Roosenschoon fails to mention to the 'conscious' efforts of Volans in this regard.

Part of the reasons for the lack of critique then, can be explained by the field being confined to the academy where composers were reliant on state-supported grants and salaries. There were other factors too, such as the diminutive status of the field being itself where only a handful of composers were active during the '70s and '80s, and it must also be acknowledged that despite the generous funding afforded the sub-field of *performance*[14] – through subsidies, grants, and sponsorship – art music composition was relatively less well off. Penny Clough has pointed out that there was

> minimal encouragement, financial or otherwise, from either the State, Arts Councils or other organizations partially or wholly concerned with music. Moreover, aside from the cultural backlog and isolation that the South African composer has to overcome, he has also to deal with a kind of 'transplanted culture syndrome', where anything local is inevitably considered inferior to the parallel overseas product. The artist himself also often feels he has to follow an American or European mainstream of composition to produce anything worthwhile (Clough 1984:4).

This sense of alienation has persisted into the post-apartheid era, although it was perhaps at its climax during the years of the Cultural Boycott. Clough's description may have been true at that time, but relative to the post-apartheid milieu where orchestras faded, commissions dried up, and production decreased, it is important to note the extent to which composition during apartheid was promoted by the state and other private interests, *despite* its relatively diminutive status. This fact is exemplified by the number of composers who studied with a 'master' in Europe or the United States. This was regarded as essential in order to gain skills, recognition and reputation. Some of those who studied abroad included Stefans Grové (who studied with Walter Piston at Harvard

[14] See chapter five on the relationship of performers and performing institutions to art music composition.

for two years), Peter Klatzow (who studied at the Royal College of Music and with Nadia Boulanger for three years and a year respectively), Arnold van Wyk (who studied with Howard Ferguson at the Royal College of Music for four years), Kevin Volans (who studied with Karlheinz Stockhausen for three years), Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph (who studied with Ligeti for a year). Despite the exposure these composers had to a more vibrant musical culture than that in South Africa, and perhaps a less segregated one, there remained the problem of engaging with the 'local'.

These overseas links contributed to what Mary Rörich (2003) criticized as the inward-looking, self-congratulatory nature of the 'avant-garde' aesthetic pursued by composers in the 1980s. She refers to the SABC Contemporary Music Festival held in Johannesburg and attended by all major composers in South Africa as follows:

> 1983 was not a good time to bring 'new music' to South Africa: we were too white, too blinkered, too needy, too up our own fundamental orifices. It is a different matter [she says] in 2003. There is no longer a South African 'international avant-garde' in music. It is, thankfully, quite dead. Its inability to engage with context and change, its lack of generosity and elitism are the final nails in its coffin (2003:11).

This reflects the wide-scale changes that have been wrought in the field, but also the 'elitism' and 'inability to engage with context and change' so indicative of the work discussed later in this dissertation (especially in relation to Klatzow). Writing in 1984 Penny Clough argued that the majority of composers at that time were furthermore "consolidators rather than innovators, conservative rather than avant-garde" (1984:4). In her thesis on the younger generation of composers she interrogates the aesthetic practices of a number of composers under the age of thirty-five, including: Jeanne Zaidel (-Rudolph), Hans Roosenschoon, Allan Stephenson, Chris James, John Coulter, Dirk de Klerk, Barry Jordan, Phillip Vietri, Ian Solomon, Kevin Volans, Matteo Fargion, David Kosviner, Johan Cloete and Jacques de vos Malan. Only two of these composers had attempted cross-cultural works: Volans and Roosenschoon. The latter's *Makietie* (1978) and *Ghomma* (1980) both incorporate popular (Cape) Malayan and 'Xhosa' folk tunes to an orchestral setting. Volans's 'African Paraphrases' (1980-85), on the other hand, were

far more complex engagements, that drew on diverse music from across Southern Africa, using quotation and paraphrase interspersed with composed sections of his own (as I explain in chapter two).

The emergence of cross-culturalism

The emergence of a paradigm for cross-cultural composition was both musically and socially significant in the context of 1980s South Africa; but it was not only a local (South African) phenomenon – as Martin Scherzinger has pointed out.

> In the interconnected global ethnoscape of the late-twentieth century, the aesthetics of 'art' and popular music alike increasingly bore the mark of hybridity and cultural crossover. It is a world in which once-secure musical boundaries became highly porous; in which transnational cultural exchanges produced an array of richly intersecting multicultural musical forms; indeed, a world in which 'polystylism' was itself considered a representative hallmark of a postmodern condition that challenged the very concepts of cultural authenticity and artistic originality (2004:584).

Although South Africans were less exposed to the 'global ethnoscape' under the Cultural Boycott and the censorship of the apartheid government, most had studied abroad and continued to keep up with musical trends in the West.[15] An awareness of the musical possibilities of 'polystylism' became evident in works by both popular and art music composers (Juluka and Volans being representative examples). In the context of South Africa's cultural policies of the 1980s, however, the nature of these kinds of musical engagements that crossed boundaries was subversive and even revolutionary, as I argue in chapter two. A shift in focus from European practices that had little or no space for a committed engagement with the cultural 'other' towards an encouragement of these practices, was politically radical at this time. Volans's attempts at revaluating African music as an *art* music; a move that contested the very notion of segregation on which the philosophy of apartheid rested was the most important of these acts.

[15] During the 1980s, too, there was a far greater availability of new music scores and recordings than now (Michael Blake pers comm).

Although some composers had used various kinds of cross-cultural techniques since the first half of the twentieth century (such as Percival Kirby and Michael Moerane), it was only in the late 1970s and early '80s that African cultures became more available sources for composers (largely through the work of ethnomusicologists). Since then the production of cross-cultural works has increased – perhaps in line with commission requests[16] – and now become a common if not dominant trend in South Africa composition, with almost every major South African composer having contributed to this cross-over aesthetic. This has not gone unnoticed in the musicological discourse and there have been a number of essays in the *South African Journal of Musicology* that have dealt with the dangers of cross-culturalism (see for example Jürgen Bräuninger's article 'Gumboots to the Rescue' 1998:1-16).

According to Martin Scherzinger, the

> tendency towards unfettered transcription, paraphrase, and quotation of local African music became a hallmark of South African 'art' music in the 1980s and 90s. Unlike the 'art'-music tradition in west Africa (broadly speaking a tradition committed to integrating African and European musical structures), the new South African model was to identify local forms of African music *as* a self-contained form of 'art' music[17] (2004:607).

Scherzinger's 'new South African model' (or *paradigm* in terms of my theoretical approach) seems to be only one aspect of a more complex network of ideas during this period. Although he cites Volans and Blake as examples, there were other composers on the South African scene involved in very different kinds of appropriative strategies. Most significant of these was Stefans Grové, who began his 'Africa series' with the *Sonata op Afrika-motiewe* (1984). This work was the first in a long series of almost thirty works composed to date (2008), and was a 'model' for other composers who have pursued its subsumptive brand of cross-culturalism.[18] If Volans had moved away from the

[16] See Michael Blake (2005), and Kevin Volans's 'Composers statement: *White Man Sleeps*' (www.kevinvolans.com, accessed 1 February 2008).
[17] One exception to this general rule is Hans Roosenschoon's *Timbila* (1985), which combines the music of Venancio Mbande and the Chopi xylophone players with a symphony orchestra.
[18] Grové has remained an influential teacher since his return to a professorship at the University of Pretoria in 1976.

complexities of the avant-garde in the early 1980s, Grové was still invested in the (modernist) procedures of the American post-serialists with whom he studied in the 1950s.[19] In many of Grové's works of this period 'Africa' is denoted in the titles, but seldom audible in the music itself (i.e. one does not hear African instruments or sounding elements). Materials that he himself collected informally – or his own personal experiences, and reminiscences, some of which belong to his imagination (Muller 2005) – are incorporated within his basically modernist palette in such a way that the 'other' always remains somehow hidden and at a distance. (This kind of 'subsumption' of African elements into a Western idiom is critiqued further in chapter four with regard to Hofmeyr's piano music.) In a programme note to the performance of this work he writes: "This sonata … is the first work I composed after my stylistic Damascus Road experience.[20] It can be seen as a bridge between my Eurocentric and my Afrocentric styles" (in Muller 2005, 289).

Stephanus Muller, comparing the work with Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907), describes the African 'song' element in it as being "a bit like these stylized African masks, sharing their space with the two remaining etiolated European faces: ahistorical, anonymous and devoid of the political potency infusing the song of the African who, under the strain of centuries of oppression, breaks into song" (Ibid 291). This relates to what David Nicholls has called the more acceptable "covert influence" of non-western music in American composition, more tolerable to the music establishment than the "overt" use of such music which pushes "beyond imperialism's zone of tolerance" (1996, 589). The 'arm's length' reference that maintains a (stylized) sense of difference in Grové's 'Africa series' needs, however, to be seen in the context of other historical narratives in this history of cross-culturalism in the 1980s.

Following debates around Volans, Grové, and Roosenschoon's work, SAMRO's musicologist Michael Levy wrote the article, 'African and Western music: shall the twain

[19] Grové was the first South African to receive a Fulbright scholarship to study in the United States. After a brief period of study at the University of Cape Town he moved to Harvard where he studied with Walter Piston. Later he held a prestigious post at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore.
[20] Stephanus Muller (2006) describes this Damascus Road Experience in the collection of essays on Grové, *A Composer in Africa*.

ever meet?' (1986). It was conceived as a survey of the perceptions and positions of South African composers on the issue of cross-culturalism. Although only eight percent of composers responded to Levy's question ('we would like to hear your views as to *how*, if at all possible, the Western and African styles could be reconciled in our music'), both the statement/question and the responses were highly significant as evidence of the state and status of cross-culturalism:

> South African composers of art-music have for decades been drawing their inspiration mainly from 'Western sources'. Whether their musical aesthetic (their styles, forms, themes and harmonies) be 'conservative', 'modern' or 'avant-garde', they seem in general to have turned for their models, in the first instance, to Western and Eastern European as well as to North American composers. To mention a few, Bartók, Berg, Webern, Shostakovich, Stockhausen, Ligeti, Penderecki, Cage, Feldman, and other luminaries of earlier and contemporary music have set the scene for South African 'serious music' composers. Geographical isolation in the extreme latitudes of the southern hemisphere is clearly not a barrier preventing adequate access to these models. Lack of immediate contact with their authors has also done nothing to dampen the apparent desire of South Africans to align themselves as practicing composers, with what they obviously regard as the 'mainstream' of their art.
>
> The question which composers in this part of the world seem for so long to have shunned, apart form very occasional and peripheral considerations, is whether their fundamentally 'Western' orientation leaves them open to genuine artistic influence from African folk-music. It would seem at first glance that this question need not occasion much soul-searching on their part. After all, they do have before them the precedent of the nineteenth-century 'nationalist' movement in Europe itself (Levy 1986:111).

In this view presented by Levy, African and Western styles are polarized as radically different, and perhaps even irreconcilable. The methods of 'reconciliation' suggested by Levy – such as the 'nineteenth-century 'nationalist' movement in Europe' remain just that, European. What we see also in this article is that composers continue to abide by a predominantly Western musical discourse that ignored the work of Volans (whose influence and import goes unmentioned in this article). A new paradigm for composition was clearly not yet visible at this time. It was only later in the 1980s that composers in greater numbers (and in varying ways) began to adopt strategies of inclusion.

The crisis

These various musical, social, and institutional factors then, are what I am referring to as the 'crisis' that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The crisis was a result of a shift in the field of production from a position of relative autonomy to greater heteronomy. In musical terms this crisis precipitated itself in the emergence of a cross-cultural aesthetic for composition, one that engaged with the 'local' or the 'African'. In institutional terms it manifested in a reduction in state funding and support generally, with orchestras and other performing arts institutions closing down. Institutions such as SAMRO that retained an interest in art music embarked on commissioning strategies that supported this new cross-cultural trend.

Yet the crisis was also one of *conscience*, as reflected in statements by composers such as Klatzow and Roosenschoon, who tried to show how they had been committed to the new paradigm all along (see chapter 3 for an extended discussion of Klatzow's response), and with it, to the struggle against apartheid. This was the result of a new paradigm of thought that emerged in the early 1990s, that opened up a new understanding of art music's social and political meanings. What had been 'unthinkable' for actors in the 1980s 'autonomous' paradigm – with Volans the anomalous outcast – became a matter of central importance for those in the more self-conscious cross-cultural paradigm in the '90s. The crisis resulted in a wave of new works that used African elements selectively and in a multitude of ways (as mentioned above) and was evident in the politicized reception of these new works. In the following chapter I consider how Volans, as a 'revolutionary figure' (in Kuhn's sense of the word) contributed to paradigm change and to the first shock waves in this.

Chapter 2: The 'revolutionary': Kevin Volans's 'African Paraphrases'

When Kevin Volans returned to South Africa in 1982 to take up a lectureship at Natal University he had already begun a series of works that would catapult him to international success and controversy. Some of these were conceptualized as 'African Paraphrases' and they are the focus of this chapter.[21] Volans's reputation as a leading composer of new music internationally was established with the Kronos Quartet recording of his *White Man Sleeps* (1986; recording 1987), a work that embodies both the aesthetic and political significance of his early period and is analyzed in part two of this chapter. I argue that the processes evident in this and other early works are embodied in later work (from the mid '90s on) that as time wore on bore little *surface* resemblance to African music, but that certain compositional procedures and 'habits' from the early African pieces persist.

In this chapter I distinguish between two different levels of engagement with Africa in Volans: the first characterized by quotation and paraphrase and an allegiance to aesthetic criteria derived from African music, the second showing these same attributes internalized and viewed as a second-level engagement. I also show how 'Africa' as aesthetic and political idea migrated along a continuum of engagement from first-level signification (in the form of quotation and paraphrase) to a more abstract role in his later works such as *Cicada* (1994).

[21] The original title 'African Paraphrases' has been subsequently been withdrawn (Volans, personal comment). At this time he was also writing works that were not 'African Paraphrases', such as *Monkey Music* and *Newer Music for Piano* (1981): premiered at IRCAM and the ICA respectively.

In the collection of 'African Paraphrases', as he called the earlier works,[22] Volans draws on transcriptions of African traditional music and uses it as the material for his compositions. At the same time he attempts to embody African aesthetics in performance practices (interlocking instruments) and instrumentation (rattles). His later work, however, is distinguished by the use of such material at a second level of (abstract) structural organization where elements are not necessarily heard as African yet have traces of the procedures and forms evident in the first period. These works include *Cicada* (1994) and the *Concerto for piano and winds* (1995). In a sense then I am describing two poles along a continuum of engagement with Africa, with overt quotation on the one hand and a distilled refinement of African compositional methods and aesthetics on the other. I am aware of the dangers of labeling particular elements as 'African' in what David Smith calls "a game of spot the gesture" (Smith 1995), and am thus careful to situate these as perceptions or notions that are constructed by Volans and others. The essentializing of what constitutes Africa musically is a problem that I turn to later in the chapter, specifically in relation to the African/Western binary set up by Volans himself in his writings.

This chapter is in four parts. In part one I consider Volans's formative influences, including his studies with Stockhausen in Germany and his early recording trips and studies of African music. I argue that the European avant-garde had as much aesthetic significance for the production of these 'African' works as did Volans's experience of African music. In part two I critique the 'African Paraphrase' project itself, before going on to show how early procedures were synthesized in *Cicada* and other later works in part 3. In conclusion (part 4) I consider Volans's position within the field of composition in South Africa and ways his 'African music' contested notions of difference and

[22] Some of them were submitted as a volume with this title in 1985 for the degree of Doctor of Music at the University of Natal, Durban (referred to in italics). It comprised *Mbira* (1980, now withdrawn officially from Volans's worklist), *Matepe* (1980), *White Man Sleeps* in two versions (1982 & 1986), *Journal: Walking Song* (1983), *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* (1985), *Leaping Dance* (1984), *Kneeling Dance* (1984), and *Walking Song* in two versions (1984 & 1986). The 'African Paraphrase' concept however was broader, embracing works such as *KwaZulu Summer Landscape* (1977-79), tape of natural sounds (originally quadrophonic) that was first performed in May 1979 at the Experimental Intermedia Foundation New York; *Studies in Zulu History* (1977-79), an electronic tape (originally quadrophonic) first performed in 1982 at the ICA; and *Cover Him with Grass* (1979; originally called *Lesotho Mountain Village*), a (stereo) tape of natural sounds first performed at the ICA in 1982.

'apartness' during the apartheid era, creating an anomaly within an otherwise 'autonomous' field. I argue that despite his being 'revolutionary' in putting forward a new 'cross-cultural paradigm' for composition deeply rooted in musical procedures themselves (see chapter one), this paradigm was not taken up and he was in fact alienated from the establishment and the art music community at large. I draw on Bourdieu's analysis of the field of cultural production (1993) to show how Volans positioned himself and his music both nationally in South Africa and internationally. The stratification of Bourdieu's method into various levels of analysis from the personal to the meta- enables an understanding of the complex and sometimes contradictory explanations for works of art. This method of analysis also prevents us from falling into a reductive 'cause and effect' logic with regard to artistic production and helps to explain the complex intersection of personal, musical, and political factors in the genesis of Volans's mature style.

Part I: Formative influences

Born in 1949 to a white middle-class family, Kevin Volans was brought up in the liberal English-speaking town of Pietermaritzburg, capital of the province of Natal. He was born just one year after D.F. Malan's Afrikaner National party had won power and instituted the formalized apartheid that was to last until 1994. Despite Volans's opposition to this apartheid system – as voiced in his music and writings – his life and music has continued to be shadowed by its presence. Volans was embroiled in the field of South African art music at a time of crisis, and his music has continued to be politicized because of his South African origins. The contradictions in Volans's relationship with his homeland since he left it again in 1985 are perhaps a result of a tension between close affinity and a sense of alienation.

Volans's intellectual development was already under way during his school years at Maritzburg College where he matriculated in 1966.[23] As a teenager he was a keen painter

[23] For a more detailed history of Volans's career and development see Lucia 2008 (forthcoming).

with a particular interest in the Abstract Expressionists whom he imitated in many of his own works. He also studied piano during his high school years and composed a concerto in the romantic tradition. These twin interests in art and music were to be formative of his career as a composer. He has drawn extensively on both aspects of creative experience and painting continues to play an important role in his composition: he has even described himself as a 'sound artist' rather than a 'musician'.[24] The influence of painters like Philip Guston, Gerhard Richter, and Jasper Johns are often noted in his programme notes and interviews.

Despite these early creative interests, however, Volans enrolled for a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering at the University of Natal, Durban, in 1967. Half way through his first year he changed to architecture. Still dissatisfied at the end of his first year, he moved to Johannesburg to enroll for a Bachelor of Music Degree at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in 1968. He completed this degree in 1971, specializing in piano and writing a long essay that reflected his growing interest in composition: 'The *Klavierstücke*: Stockhausen's Microcosm' (1971). After graduating from Wits, Volans enrolled for a Masters degree at Aberdeen University. A few compositions survive from this period, including a computer piece and a graphic score that originated as *Compositions for Composer* and was subsequently revised as *Grafik* (1974).

Volans first met Karlheinz Stockhausen in 1970 during the latter's visit to Johannesburg. They were to meet again at the Darmstadt Summer School in 1972, and this led to a successful audition at the Cologne Hochschule where he became one of five students accepted into Stockhausen's composition class in 1973 (Lucia 2008).

> Cologne in the early 1970s was *the* European center for new music, especially electronica, just as it was for experimental theatre, film, art, and architecture. Volans took seminars on composition and new music with Stockhausen and Richard Toop, music theatre studies with Mauricio Kagel, piano with Aloys Kontarsky, improvisation with Johannes Fritsch, and electronic music with Hans-Ulrich Humpert. Volans studied every aspect of serial and electronic techniques (Ibid).

[24] Volans, personal comment, December 2007.

When Volans completed his studies with Stockhausen he was appointed as his teaching assistant from 1975 to 1976. He remained in Cologne after this as a 'freelance composer' until 1981. By the mid-1980s Volans was invited to stage concerts of his works in New York (Experimental Intermedia Foundation), Paris (IRCAM, Pompidou Centre), Darmstadt (Internationale Ferienkurse), Berlin, London (Institute of Contemporary Arts), Brussels, Frankfurt (TAT), Munich (Munchener Kammerspiele) and other venues. He was also active as a pianist, performing at major new music venues in Germany, Holland, England, Belgium, Ireland, and on European radio and television (Volans 1985).

> Together with Zimmerman, Barlow and Henderson, Volans initiated a project in 1977 that consolidated a more concrete break with the establishment (Zimmerman's term for his part of the project was 'Lokale Musik'). The idea was that composers became ethnomusicologists, researching folk roots in their own region of the world and incorporating what they learnt into their work in various ways. Zimmerman studied folk music and dance from Franconia, Barlow the street music of Calcutta, Henderson Australian indigenous music, and Volans the rural music of Natal and Lesotho (Lucia 2008).

Volans was probably not aware of traditional African music as a youngster growing up in Pietermartizburg. The segregationist policies of apartheid required the black population to live outside of the urban areas (except for work purposes)[25] and their music was thus seldom heard by whites (except on radio). This may have been the reason for his decision to record music in rural areas instead of his hometown Pietermaritzburg. He made four field trips between 1976 and 1979 documenting performances and repertoires such as Princess Magogo's 'ughubu' bow songs at Ulundi. The recordings and writings he made during this period resulted in many hours of programming for Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), Belgian Radio and the Voice of Germany.

Apart from the musical experiences he had during the field trips, Volans was deeply affected by the sounds and landscapes of Zululand and Lesotho and made recordings of daily life. Some of these were used in three taped works: *Studies in Zulu History* (1977-

[25]The Group Areas Act (1950) and the Native Laws Amendment Act (1952) enabled the state to evict and restrict access of non-whites to urban areas. Most blacks were restricted to 'homelands' created by the state in undesirable parts of the country that were distant from major cities.

79), *KwaZulu Summer Landscape* (1977-79) and *Cover Him in Grass* (1979). Others were made on a separate trip to Venda and the Kruger Park and were included in the *String Quartet No. 5: Dancers on a Plane*. The creation of these initial soundscapes and his experiences of rural life and music were complemented by his study of ethnographic transcriptions made by ethnomusicologists such as John Blacking, Andrew Tracey, Gerhard Kubik and Christopher Ballantine (see below). Volans also learnt some of the traditional instruments, including the *mbira dza vadzimu* and had some knowledge of the *nyanga* panpipes. Together these diverse interests had a profound effect on his social and musical consciousness and fed into the 'African Paraphrases'.

The decision to engage in a cross-cultural aesthetic in the 1980s was not solely due to his experiences in Africa, however. The situation in Europe was equally important for the genesis of these works. Volans was dissatisfied with what he regarded as the stagnation of the avant-garde. "The new music scene in Germany in the 1970s was obsessed with style, but in an utterly prescriptive – indeed proscriptive – way. Stockhausen's students were not allowed to write tonal music; they weren't even allowed to write octaves, because they created an unwanted emphasis on one pitch over another and thereby gave the impression of a tonal centre" (in Gilmore 2006:23). Having studied serialism with Stockhausen, Volans was knowingly rebelling against the 'rules' of the older generation: "my whole mission in the later 70s was about overcoming dogma and style – how to write music that was not restricted by the idea of what new music was supposed to sound like" (Ibid).

Some of these ideas came out of the idea of the *Neue Einfacheit* or New Simplicity in the 1970s, a movement that was turning to forms and styles that were less complex and pre-determined than those of established figures. In 1981 he and his Cologne colleagues Christopher Newman and Gerald Barry founded a 'newer music society' that embodied these ideas, setting them out in an informal manifesto forged at the first meeting of the society on 25 June 1981 at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum Café.[26]

[26] My thanks to Christine Lucia for providing me with a copy of this document. The society was something of a joke and was set up on the same day that the Cologne Society for New Music was founded).

> The main aim of the society is to promote work and activity possessing an understanding and knowledge of artistic freedom. Such work would manifest itself in a diversity of media and forms. Such work would not necessarily be bounded by any particular historical style. Such work would be distinguished by a certain recklessness, the consequence of true integrity. Such work would therefore be personal, would not excuse itself, would abhor security. Such work would necessitate a direct view of the world, stripped of sophistication, and rooted in a sense of wonder. Clearly, such work could draw freely from all available sources. The Society applauds diversity, quality and imagination. Such work is, in effect, indefinable.
> Gerald Barry, Christopher Newman, Kevin Volans (Volans 1981).

The direction that all three composers took in the years to follow was indicative of the ethos of this 'society' (more intellectual than institutional); most importantly perhaps their pursuit of the ideal of 'artistic freedom' that sought 'a direct view of the world'. Although this resulted in music that can be regarded as part of the New Simplicity, this does not mean that it was simple; only that "simplicity was no longer forbidden – neither was tonality, or metric rhythm, or [significantly] quotation or paraphrase of other music" (in Gilmore 2006:23).

All of these factors, then, were evident in the 'African Paraphrases' where Volans used consonances and quotations in a manner that delighted some and caused outrage when the works were performed at Darmstadt in the '80s.[27] As Gilmore points out, "these composers refused to make style the arbiter of value" (Ibid). The eclecticism of their work was sensitive to the plural reality of a globalized music culture, not one obsessed with its own history and style. This meant drawing from music outside of the Western tradition through the use of quotation, paraphrase, and transcription in a way that allowed such music to 'speak for itself'.

> As one of a group of young composers in Cologne in the mid-1970s who rebelled against the 'rules' of the older generation of serial composers, I became interested in African music not as a source of new sounds – an aural objet trouvé – as the previous generation of serial composers had done, but as a counterbalance to the tenets of the prevailing avant-garde. The music of Stockhausen, Boulez, Nono etc. was largely conceptualist, had no themes, motifs, or repetition,

[27] Volans, personal communication. January 2007.

> was rhythmically asymmetric and was non-hierarchic. African music on the whole is anti-conceptualist, melodic, repetitive, rhythmically regular, as well as non-hierarchic. But it is very different from minimalism (Volans in Lucia 1996).

The meta-narrative of German cultural thought – that there was a teleology or linear progression of thought governing the composition of works in the Western art music tradition – and that those which did not conform to this narrative were 'irrelevant' or 'mannered' – was stifling to younger generations of composers who were exposed to a diversity of cultures. This prompted Volans to compose in a way that actively engaged with the material appropriated by retaining its structural and aesthetic integrity. This was in contrast to contemporary works such as *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe or Timbila* in which Western techniques remained largely 'untouched' by this 'other' music. His project was different. Rather than subsume this music within a Western framework, his approach sought to reconcile the two. This was a political move in terms of both fields: the German and the South African.

> My desire to explore the differences between African and European music was in stark contrast to that of the previous generation of New Music composers, who in their quest for a 'world music' in the 1960s, succeeded in integrating the music of many cultures into one (usually electronic) Western music. I and my Cologne-based colleagues in the 70s were interested in cross-fertilizing techniques of different musical traditions to arrive at a new musical perception – one that went beyond Eurocentricity on the one hand and 'hands off' ethnomusicology on the other. Above all, we wished to avoid 'local colour' – the essence of airport art. It was for this reason we all avoided the facile nature of electronic music, and in particular were careful not to introduce exotic instruments into Western music. We stuck to a Western instrumentarium on which we could explore new aesthetics, new techniques and (equally importantly) new colour. The choice of instruments was vital ('Of White Africans and White Elephants', www.kevinvolans.com, accessed 1 February 2008).

Navigating between 'Eurocentricity' and 'hands off' ethnomusicology proved highly controversial because of the *material* that Volans appropriated and the manner in which he used it, particularly in *Mbira*.[28] Indeed, some commentators have accused him of

[28] A correspondence between Volans and Andrew Tracey resulted in Volans withdrawing the piece (Christine Lucia, pers. comm.).

violating copyright laws and appropriating the material of others for personal profit.[29] Volans's acknowledgments at the time actually read:

> Besides my indebtedness to the Shona musicians on whose music these pieces are based, I owe thanks to Andrew Tracey, who first documented and notated the music of the Mbira dza Vadzimu and the Matepe, to Paul Simmonds, who first taught me to play the instrument and with whom I premiered the first version of this piece, and to Deborah James for months of performing together on mbira and harpsichords (Volans 1985:[n.p.(2)]).

Volans used transcriptions made by ethnomusicologists as the main source of his material in the first three 'African Paraphrases', thus at one level of remove from the performances of the original artists. How do we think about this in terms of copyright then, especially when these performances – already commodified and mediated by foreign intervention – are in fact the product of collective activity within their culture (*Nyamaropa*, one of the Mbira pieces used in *White Man Sleeps* (1982) is a work whose history dates back to the nineteenth-century at least). This problematizes the very notion of copyright in a non-Western context, as Martin Scherzinger (2004) has pointed out:

> The problem is that while these rich recontextualizations produced fascinatingly complex cross-cultural intertexts, the economic realities underlying their production tended to benefit only some of the agents involved: despite their efforts to acknowledge their sources, both Simon and Volans are listed as the exclusive composers of the above works. And, once commodified, the copyright privileges that accrue to these pieces extend to the samples made by MDC and Furtado respectively…financially speaking, only the Westerners benefit from the borrowings. This is not to criticize the work of Simon or Volans (both of whom have made considerable contributions to the causes of African music and musicians), but to demonstrate the skewed logic of capitalism in a context of drastic economic exploitation on a global scale: 'from an international perspective, copyright can be seen as a key plank in Western cultural and commercial imperialism', used 'as a weapon … by the multinationals against small nations'[30] (2004:587-588).

[29] See Jürgen Braüninger's 'Gumboots to the Rescue' (1998) in which he criticizes Volans for appropriating this music for his own aesthetic and commercial ends. But see also Grant Olwage's response to Braüninger (1999/2000) in which he notes, "Had *White Man Sleeps* gathered dust in the dissertation section of [Natal] university library, never to make money, I doubt that it would have irked so" (105).
[30] The quote is from Frith 1993, xiii. It is important to note that the 10 seconds of material appropriated from Volans's *White Man Sleeps* was entirely of his own composition and not 'African music' per se. Hence the royalties that accrued to him were correctly assigned.

Volans has been very sensitive to criticism leveled at him with regards the appropriation and use of other peoples' music (as noted above with the withdrawal of *Mbira* from his catalogue). Yet despite the moral problems associated with appropriative strategies Volans achieved his *artistic* aim, I argue, of arriving at a 'new musical perception'.

This was achieved on a number of levels, the first of which was timbre. The African instruments on which the original music quoted or paraphrased was played were replaced by Western ones, yet they embodied the unique aesthetic of African instruments, their beauty and hand-made quality – factors that contrasted them with the mass-produced instruments of the West (such as the piano). It should be noted however that the choice of instruments was partly a result of other factors, such as the Baroque revival movement popular in Cologne at the time. The instruments that Volans chose for the first three works – *Mbira, Matepe*, and *White Man Sleeps* – were harpsichords, viola da gamba, and (African) rattles. The reasons for this choice are interesting. Volans himself was a virtuoso keyboard player and thus an initial reason for using the harpsichords may have been practical. The harpsichords were unique – each with its own particular sound colour – and had uneven register and ranges. The contrast between the two instruments was important and reflected traditional practices where the combination of two interlocking *mbiras* (perhaps even made by two different people), for example, created a unique sound world. Furthermore, Volans wanted *Mbira* and *Matepe* to be tuned according to 'African' principles and this was possible on both the harpsichord and the viola da gamba. The decision to write new music for eighteenth-century instruments was conceived as an 'attack' on Western music, as Volans noted in an interview with Christine Lucia in 1996.

> By introducing some strictly non-Western aspects of African music into the European concert repertoire I hoped to gently set up an African colonization of Western music and instruments and thus preserve some unique qualities, albeit in a new form. It was a bit like introducing an African computer virus into the heart of Western contemporary music. Thus I concentrated on the anti-hierarchic nature of traditional African music, the interlocking techniques, shifting downbeats, the largely non-functional harmony, the open forms, the extremely fast tempi of some music, the non-developmental use of repetition, contrasting and irregular patterning, the tone colour, the energy and the joy (so absent in Western music of the 70s and 80s) (Composer's statement, www.kevinvolans.com, accessed 1 February 2008).

This act of African music infecting (colonizing) Western can be read as purely political; at the same time it was as much a response to the new music scene in Germany as to the South African one. Underlying Volans's conception of the differences between African and Western music here is a sense of the 'embeddedness' of music in social life: "African music is primarily 'folk' music and is inextricably tied up with not only the immediate social situation in which it is performed, but also the social relationships within the cultural group itself" (Volans 1986:79). This understanding is also reflected in his tendency to essentialize the general characteristics of Western and African music that don't necessarily bear resemblance to the diversity of practices in each context. When Volans speaks of Western music, the assumption is that he is speaking about the Western art music tradition whereas when he speaks about African music his discussion is limited to 'traditional' music. He chose to exclude popular music from his 'African Paraphrase' project because of its already 'Westernized' state.[31]

Kofi Agawu (2003) has however questioned attitudes that accentuate the differences rather than the similarities between African and Western music, enforcing them as the 'other' in a classic binary opposition to a Western norm**.** "[B]y constructing phenomena, objects, or people as 'different', one stakes a claim to power over them" (Agawu 2003:229), and he argues that amongst some of the strategies pursued by scholars (and the same is sometimes true of composers) is to 'undercomplicate' European practice in order to convey Africa's uniqueness. Yet this (ironically) deprives Africa of full participation in global critical acts and is designed, according to Agawu, "to keep Africa away from center stage" (2003:chapter 7). One may read Volans's approach during the 1980s – the simplifying of Western music and its infiltration with an African computer virus – in a similar light.

One might, for example, see non-functional harmony and anti-hierarchic organization as a part of the Western art music tradition of the time, and the diversity of practices in Africa as subsumed into a set of defined characteristics in which the transcriptions become 'typical' rather than unique. Volans tries to use these to set up a tension between

[31] Volans in Lucia 1996.

Africa and the West and with a sense of yearning for the simple and unqualified joy that Volans found so lacking in Western art music of high serialism. But in terms of Agawu's argument Volans is caught in a larger discourse of Western domination that can be seen as subverting his efforts.

It is possible to view this as a dialogue between two distinct traditions – but not as self-evidently opposing notions: each is partly 'constructed' by Volans for the sake of this project. This is not to deny his sincere engagement with the musical aesthetics and values of African cultures in the 'African Paraphrases'. I have already noted the various ways in which the 'hand-made' quality and sense of community (through interlocking, for example) are retained in these works. Nevertheless, these works speak only of two particular musical traditions: that of certain rural African musical cultures (described as African) and that of the Western avant-garde (described as Western). This discourse thus excludes the majority of (popular and traditional) musical practices from both the West and Africa, and in this is an implicit value judgment: those musical traditions excluded are themselves deemed less valuable. The 'African Paraphrases' are thus framed unavoidably by a discourse of power that, in the words of Timothy Taylor (1995), re-enacts the colonial moment, despite the composer's good intentions. I now look in more detail at some of the *music* in which this engagement takes place.

Part II: The 'African project'

> I planned a series of pieces which were graded (as a learning curve) from pure transcription (in the manner of Bach), through paraphrase (as in Liszt), quotation as objet trouvé (Charles Ives), assimilation (in the tradition of Stravinsky and Bartok) to what was then called an 'invented folklore' – what I thought of as a new music of southern Africa, or music for a new South Africa (Composer's Statement, www.kevinvolans.com, accessed 1 February 2008).

Mbira (1980) was the first of these 'new' African pieces and was largely derived from transcribed material. Although Volans has withdrawn it from his worklist, it remains available in the UND *African Paraphrases* ('unpublished' in the sense that it is a doctoral portfolio, although each work is copyrighted in the score under Newer Music Edition,

Volans's own publication imprint at the time), and is in many ways a seminal work that deserves recognition for its foundational status in his oeuvre. There is an introductory note to the score that states that the piece is "based on the traditional Shona tune *Nyamaropa* from Zimbabwe" and that the "basic patterns … are traditional to Mbira dza Vadzimu music" (Volans 1985). All the patterns are based on a chord progression derived from the analyses of Andrew Tracey (1970). Figures 1a and 1b show Tracey's transcription of the 'basic tune' or *chara* of *Nyamaropa* and one of the variations on it (the right hand plays the notes of the top staff on the right-hand keys of the instrument, the left hand plays the notes of the lower staff on the left-hand keys). Figure 2 shows part of Volans's score for *Mbira*. The chord progression that Volans derives from the tune is illustrated in Figure 3. Fig 2 shows the direct use of Nyamaropa IV (Fig 1b), but for the most part the variations in *Mbira* are Volans's own.

Figure 1a *Nyamaropa I* basic version of the tune (Tracey 1970, 13)

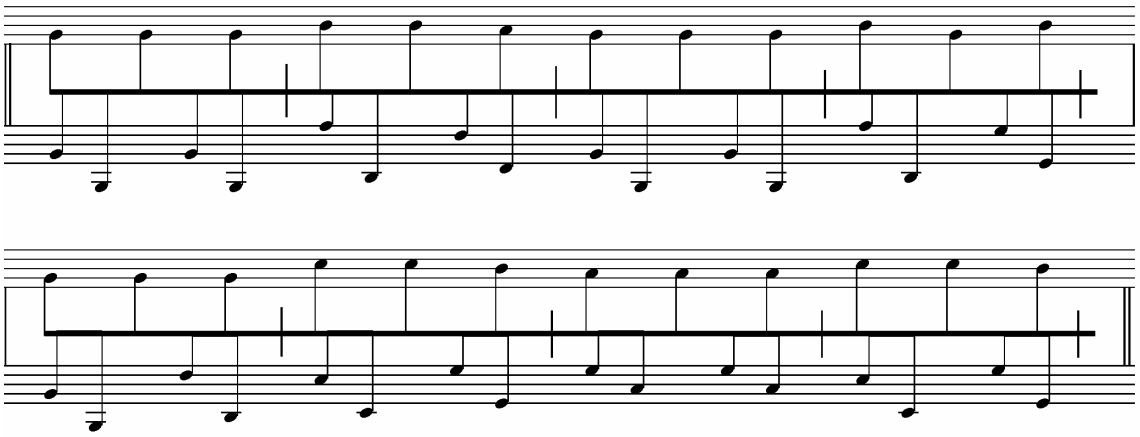


Figure 1b *Nyamaropa IV* (Tracey 1970, 16)



Figure 2 *Mbira* extract from letter A © 1985 Newer Music Edition (withdrawn work)

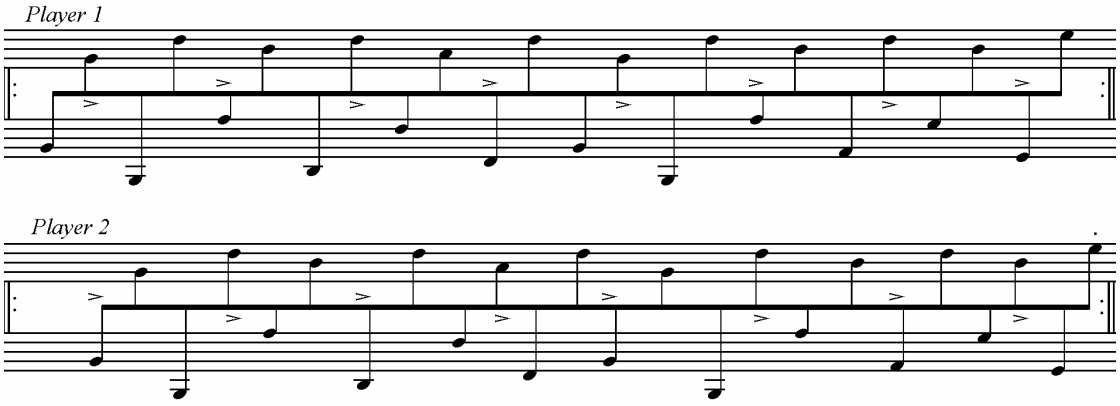


Figure 3 *Nyamaropa* chord progression © 1985 Newer Music Edition



The original mbira music was arranged for harpsichords and Volans used rattles to provide rhythmic accompaniment that in the customary Shona manner would be played on the hosho. This is a rhythmic point of reference for the two interlocking instruments, enabling the two harpsichordists to coordinate in fast tempi. Martin Scherzinger describes it as follows: "Volans simply presents ten full minutes of basically unaltered transcriptions of the mbira tune *Nyamaropa* (performed by Gwanzura Gwenzi) for two retuned harpsichords" (2004:609). This is not true: it is as *transcribed* by Andrew Tracey from Gwenzi's playing – and Tracey's ascription to Gwenzi in *How to play the mbira*

(dza vadzimu) is moreover quite vague: "This pamphlet is intended to help you to start playing the mbira [through] five Zezuru songs … mostly taken down from the playing of Gwanzura Gwenzi" (Tracey 1970:1); and later when the song *Nyamaropa* is being taught it is simply "a big song for the mbira dza vadzimu" (Ibid:13): The Volans work is conceived as an extended improvisation on what Tracey calls the "basic version or *chara* of the song", in which, as in Western variation technique, it is the chord progression rather than any 'melody' that is the basis of variation, and it is therefore not 'unadulterated transcription' as Scherzinger says. It is composition in the form of variations and in fact uses techniques and ranges unavailable on the *mbira*.

Looking at it from another angle, the use of transcription in this work has an interesting history. As Robert Morgan has pointed out:

> Quotation technique and serialism may seem far removed from each other, yet they share at least one essential attribute: in both, the composer begins the compositional process with 'preformed' material already at hand and manipulates it through various combinational and permutational methods. (Most of the earliest composers to turn to quotation in the 1960s had serial origins). (Morgan 1991:412).

The introductory note to the (1985) score states that performers should know their parts very well in advance and practice both independently and together. This reflects the open-endedness of the work in the sense that the notes are not entirely determined by the notated score – the work is partially improvised and its duration can vary considerably. "I have given a sequence of patterns in the score that I find pleasant, as well as adding a non-traditional coda. The number of repetitions is at the discretion of the performers, but a performance of the piece should not last less than ten minutes" (Volans 1985:[n.p.]).

In his later description of the 'African Paraphrases', Volans suggests that "the main interest here was to find ways of composing non-conceptually – of being open-ended in a far more radical sense than that of Boulez or Stockhausen"; and he added, "I think Matepe does this best" (in Lucia 1996). *Matepe* has received less attention than either *Mbira* or *White Man Sleeps.* It is also scored for two harpsichords and rattles, and is based on a 'traditional' piece by Aroyiwa Mwana which was performed on the matepe

(again taken from Tracey's *How to Play the Mbira (dza vadzimu)*). Both the first two pieces are played in what Volans describes as African tuning and this tuning system is given in the score as follows:

G standard pitch	F# -40 cents	E -40 cents	D -15 cents	C +14 cents
B -40 cents	A -29 cents	G standard pitch		

These tuning systems were an essential part of the 'uniqueness' of the sound world Volans sought to create, and this is partly why he was loathe to transcribe *White Man Sleeps* (1982) for string quartet (see below). In *Matepe*, however, Volans used certain traditional patterns emanating from this work: "Of the patterns given, nos. IIA (player 1) and IIIA (player 2) are traditional. The rest are of my own composition" (Volans 1985:[n.p.]) (See Figures 4 and 5: each example gives the entire 48-pulse cycle for *one* player; the other player's parts are not shown.)

Figure 4 *Matepe* pattern IIA player 1 © 1985 Newer Music Edition

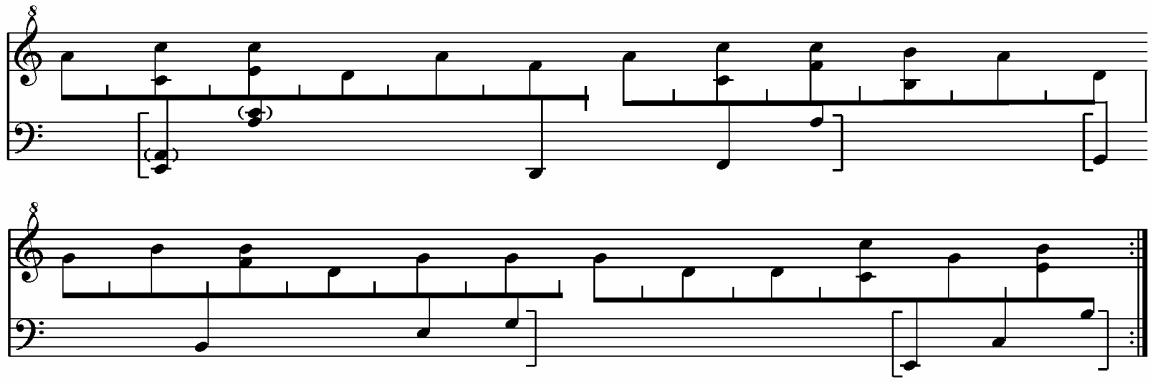
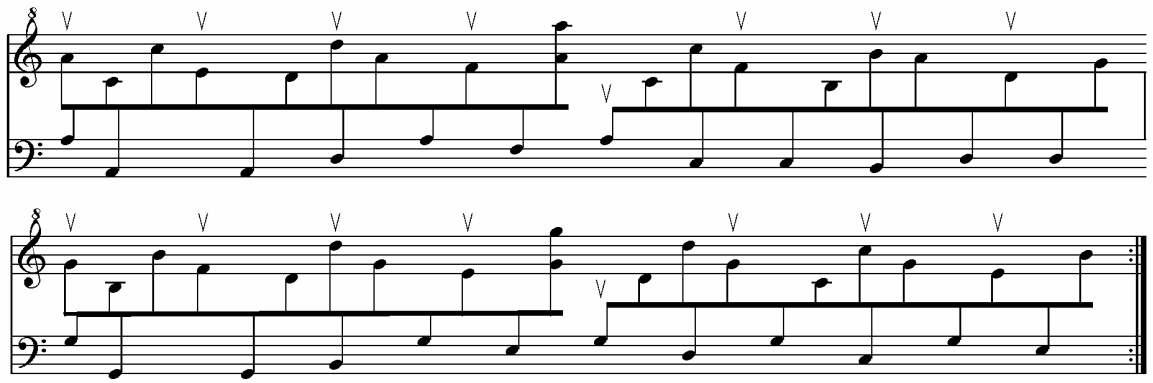


Figure 5 *Matepe* pattern IIIA player 2 © 1985 Newer Music Edition



As in *Mbira*, all the patterns in *Matepe* are based on a chord progression lasting for a cycle of 48 pulses grouped in such a way that they imply eight chords. The performance directions are as follows: "A performance of this piece should involve improvised variation based on this chord progression" (1985:[n.p.]). The progression is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 *Matepe* chord progression © 1985 Newer Music Edition



In Shona mbira music pieces are played to invoke spirit mediums and these pieces are passed down through oral tradition. Volans, coming to the tradition as an outsider, resorts to a notated version (Tracey's transcription) of one of these 'classics' in order to continue in this tradition, taking it in a very different direction. Thinking about Volans's project in this way complicates the straightforward assumption that he was 'appropriating' the work of a particular musician – as if that work belonged solely to Gwenzi (in this case). Yet critique of the 'African Paraphrases' has tended to ignore the nature of Volans's aesthetic 'intervention' as a composer during the early 1980s in South Africa, instead focusing on broader political (colonialism) and economic (copyright) issues that are usually not historicized (see part four of this chapter).

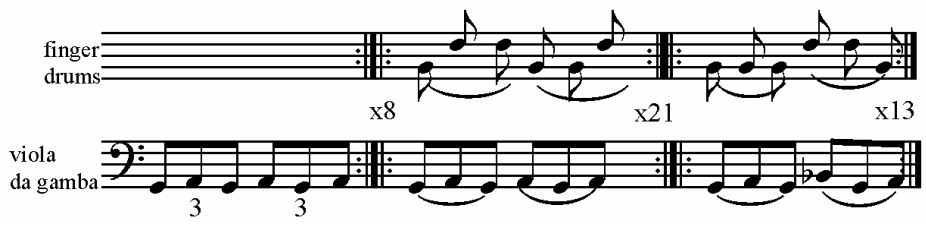
Apart from – and perhaps arising out of – his indebtedness to mbira music in the first two 'African Paraphrases', there is another interesting characteristic to this early Volans work that becomes more important in his later music: the use of repetition. Volans has consistently distanced himself from American minimalists such as Steve Reich and La Monte Young, suggesting that his music is a far cry from their mechanical 'process music'. Volans described his position thus in 1996:

> I felt really opposed to minimalism. The whole point of the new simplicity wasn't European minimalism, it was neither serial nor minimal. And I felt that the whole American minimalist thing was… What Steve Reich had got out of African music was some of the patterns, but he'd machine tooled it…and I felt that what Steve Reich is to African music is what Axminster carpet is to a Turkish rug. This machine-like quality can be attractive, but what I wanted was to hand make quality (in Lucia 1996).[32]

Volans was looking for a 'hand-made' quality (again) that embodied the unique qualities that he saw in African music, both in terms of the musical instruments and the material he used. This quality was different from the 'machine-like' quality of Reich's minimalism.

In *White Man Sleeps* repeat structures are still prominent (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 *White Man Sleeps* (original) repeat structures in the Fourth Dance © 1985 Newer Music Edition



There are two versions of this work, the first for two harpsichords, viola da gamba, and percussion (1982), the second for string quartet alone (1986) – a commission from the Kronos Quartet. The string quartet versions differ from the harpsichord one in a number

[32] The first of his pieces that he describes as minimalist is *Cicada,* which I discuss later in this chapter.

of ways: although all three include five dances, these are re-arranged and edited or extended in the second version (both are part of the *African Paraphrases* portfolio). The transcribed material from which most of the original *White Man Sleeps* comes is of Southern African origin. "There are five dances (not movements) based on different regional practices: Tswana, San Bow, Nyanga Panpipe, Lesiba bow, and Sotho concertina music" (Lucia 2008 forthcoming).

"The development of African material is [furthermore] transformed almost beyond recognition in *Journal (Walking Song)* (Durban 1983), the first version of *Walking Song* and *Kneeling Dance* (Durban 1984; derived from the 'Third Dance' [of *White Man Sleeps*]), and *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* (Paris 1985)" (Ibid). These works moved away from transcription and paraphrase. In *Leaping Dance*, for example, "the idea was to write interlocked piano music at a speed that would be absolutely unplayable if it were not interlocked. I was also interested in the idea of playing the same music at different speeds, right next to each other, so the same piece twice as fast" (Volans in Lucia 1996). Here we see Volans beginning to move away from Africa as the *musical* focal point, although certain aesthetic properties remained central, even in *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket*.

This work, almost the last of the 'African Paraphrases' and in many ways outside them, does not paraphrase a transcription at all: it is an original composition for solo percussionist (Robyn Schulkowsky). The scoring is as follows: 4 bongos, 2 congas, 1 bass drum with pedal, 2 glockenspiel tones, mounted on bass drum, and marimba. There are nevertheless important aesthetic similarities between this work and the other Paraphrases. The drums have to be "tuned high, but in such a way that their pitches are not very definite. The interval between the highest bongo and the lowest conga should be slightly less than an octave. The intervals between the notes should be roughly equal. A pentatonic scale should be avoided at all costs" (Volans 1985:[n.p]). So like *Mbira* and *Matepe*, Volans avoids the use of pitches that conform to Western equal temperament on the one hand, and in this case any kind of 'glib African pentatonicism' on the other.

This, I suggest, is the pursuit of a 'middle way' between a simplistic understanding of African music and its subsumption within a Western frame;[33] an approach that shows Volans's sensitivity to the oversimplification of African music. Volans has criticized other South African composers who have resorted to what he calls "a kind of unconvincing eclecticism which attempts to marry melodic elements of African and European music without any real transformation of playing and compositional approaches – 'the aural equivalent of airport art'" (in Ansell 1996). Volans took this 'transformation of playing' even further in later works that continued his project of the 'colonization' of Western art music.

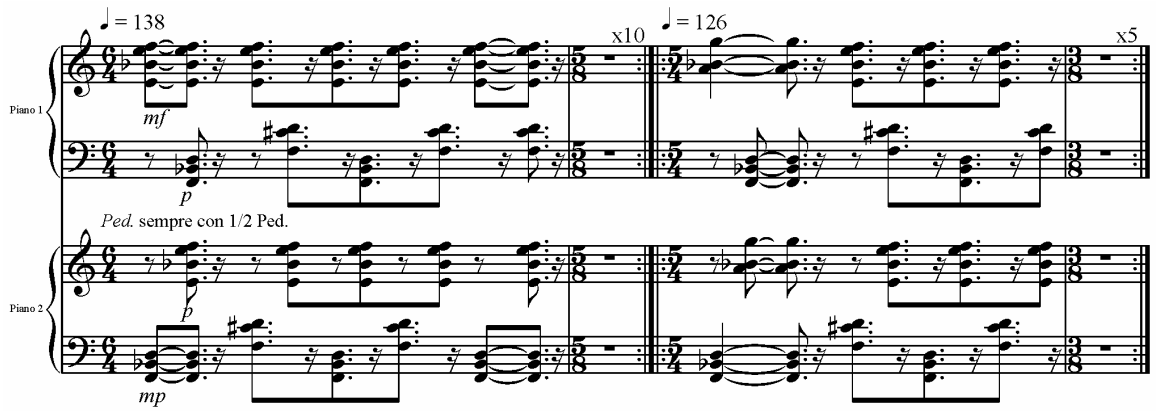
Part III: African elements after the 'Paraphrases'

The continuum of engagement with African music is evident in the transition from the use of transcription in *Mbira* to the 'middleground' position of *She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket* (moving away from Africa), to the more abstract *Cicada* (1994). The latter is clearly not part of the same aesthetic project that Volans was pursuing during the 1980s but nevertheless has some of the performance and compositional techniques employed in those works. The use of interlocking is the most obvious of these and has become a feature of Volans's oeuvre to date, including even recent works such as the *String Quartet No. 6* (2000) and the *Concerto for Double Orchestra* (2002). Although it is difficult (and perhaps unwise) to ascribe origins for this idea, there is a family resemblance in these works with the patterning of the Paraphrases, especially those derived from mbira-playing. In traditional performances of mbira music there are generally two parts that interlock. The *kushuara* (leading) part plays the higher melodic material while the *kutsinhira* (following) generally underlines the harmonic root notes (Berliner 1978), with hosho (rattles) used to coordinate the parts; and *Mbira* and *Matepe* retain these modes of performance. This is reflected also in the notation used by Volans:

[33] This is very different to the approach of Hendrik Hofmeyr (see chapter 4) or Michael Hankinson (see chapter 5) for example, both of whom have claimed pentatonicism as an 'essentially African' element in their work.

he retains Tracey's use of the 48-pulse cycle as formal reference point for two harpsichord players. In *Cicada* the interlocking is a major feature of the work and is used to create a 'stereophonic' effect between the two instruments (see Figure 8 – showing the first line of *Cicada* with the interlocking patterns between the two pianos).

Figure 8 *Cicada* bar 1 interlocking between the two pianos © Chester Music 1994



Cicada is undoubtedly one of the most important works in Volans's entire oeuvre. In many ways it can be seen as a synthesis of the 'African Paraphrases', New Simplicity and serialism, and also minimalism. The influence of Volans's serial training is evident here in the segmentation and in the return to a conceptualist approach (he has described the work as an experiment in different "shadings of tempo"[34]); but the phasing process already present in some of the Paraphrase works (like *Matepe* for instance) signifies his relationship to the American minimalist tradition – which was indeed an important influence on 'New Simplicity'. Volans has himself described this work as his "first genuinely minimalist piece" (1999, [1]). I focus here on an analysis of those African elements and ideas that I argue came out of his early music.

There are allusions to the Paraphrases throughout the work both on a structural level (irregular phrasing, repetition, and cyclical elements) and also aesthetically (the performative principle of interlocking between instruments). To show some of these relationships I have given examples from *Mbira*, *Matepe*, *Leaping Dance*, *Kneeling Dance*, *White Man Sleeps*, and *Cicada*: Figures 9 to 10 are further examples of the kinds

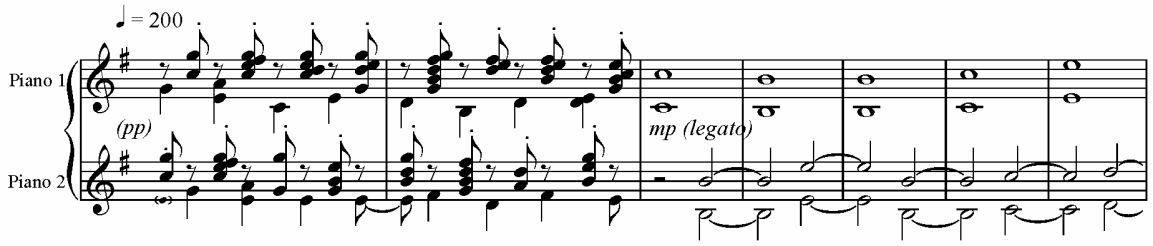
[34] In Lucia 1996.

of African elements found in all these works, both in the Paraphrases and in *Cicada*, including interlocking, the repetition of fixed-length cycles, the mantra-like stillness associated with repeated phrases with resultant melodies etc.

Fig 9 *Leaping Dance* bar 1 interlocking between the two pianos © 1985 Newer Music Edition



Fig 10 *Kneeling Dance* bars 15-20 sudden change to mantra-like stillness © 1985 Newer Music Edition



As Lucia has pointed out, "*Cicada* is a pivotal work: one can see many pieces written before as leading up to it in the way they use interlocking, patterning, texturing, and juxtaposed blocks of sound within a language that is neither wholly tonal nor wholly atonal (2008 forthcoming). The idea of 'patterning' is reflected in the "exploration of textured surface" (Ibid), and this comes in part from Volans's interest in the "balanced asymmetry of Congolese bark textiles" (Ibid). The importance of these asymmetries is reflected in the way the two pianos interlock; the rhythmic and metric asymmetries of the phrases, and their rate of change, are important for the thrust of the work, its impetus.

In the performance notes to the score, Volans calls for a gradual dynamic crescendo from beginning to end and this is to some extent reinforced by an increasing animation texturally, as well as by more pronounced dissonances. Various pauses, some written, some variably improvised, punctuate the repetitious material, since there is no real continuity in phrasing. The work can be interpreted as a slowly shifting object seen in different shades and colours, rather like the installation by James Turell – as Volans describes the experience of it – that inspired the work (Volans 1999, [1]). It is as if this material is being refracted or seen from different perspectives –a different height, a different angle or in a different light.

Volans explores the same pitch throughout: two chords superimposed a semitone apart. Short fragments of material are repeated in episodes which are interspersed with pauses. These episodes are built primarily upon two major triads: A C# E and Bflat D F. Occasionally the minor modes are used with C natural and D flat, such as at bars 68 -79. This reinforces a sense of there being two chords instead of, say, a single 11^{th} or 13^{th} chord. The continuous exploration of the interval of a minor second also serves this point. This becomes more pronounced as the piece goes on, reaching a crescendo of dissonance in the latter parts (see for example bars 162-163). The melodic aspects of the piece are not significant, although some 'resultant melodies' (arising from the interlocking) become apparent upon repeated listening. In certain passages, such as at bar 83, melodies in the upper registers are more prominent; but this may also have to do with the voicing of the chords by the pianists. Certainly the performative aspects of the piece allow for some important interpretive decisions. The phrase structure of the work is asymmetrical and this has led critics such as Christopher Ballantine to find links with some music of Southern Africa (2001/2).

In the early 'African Paraphrases', as I have noted above, Volans deliberately avoided the kind of exoticism found in the works of Stockhausen and his contemporaries in the 1960s (in *Telemusik* and *Hymnen* for example), yet there is still exoticism of a kind: radically 'simple' music that is melodically beautiful and attractively repetitive suddenly thrust

into an alien context. This made an aesthetic point in the 'African Paraphrases': that the beauty and joy of African music were absent within the strictures of serial practice. This point, I argue, is now internalized in *Cicada*. There is a distanciation from various elements; and melody – never the strongest element in the African models anyway – has been annihilated.

As Michael Blake (2005) has noted, since the 1990s Volans has by his own avowal been concerned with: "'getting rid of form' and 'getting rid of content', eschewing 'style'. But obviously all three persist, more so 'content' in the sense of 'sound'. Form may be more instinctive than it was in Volans's post-serial phase in the 1980s, but it is there. However, it is not narrative form, and certainly not highly controlled" (Blake 2005, 140). Yet despite 'getting rid' of these various things (or trying to), Volans's later music still possesses something of the life, the vigour, the communal in-the-moment spirit of the African works that inspired the Paraphrases. This 'African' sensibility may well be of his own making yet it is created out of his own *close* musical experience of Africa as well as his ethical and political commitment to African culture, as I now show.

Part IV: The 'revolutionary'

> One can no longer be a composer in South Africa and model one's work exclusively on Europe. It is time to start creating a specific indigenous form of expression.[35]

In chapter one I described how early cross-cultural works embodied a crisis for the field of art music in South Africa, and here I argue that it was Volans who was the first to strongly enter this new contested aesthetic (and political) space. Yet despite the significant national and international performances[36] of some of the 'African Paraphrases' (1980-1985) and the fact that they were conceived as 'South African' works, most South African commentators significantly ignored their importance. An

[35]Volans quoted in *The Natal Mercury*, Wednesday March 31 1982.
[36] Most premieres took place in Europe: *White Man Sleeps* was premiered in both versions at the ICA in London.

example is Michael Levy's 'African and Western music: Shall the twain ever meet?' (1986; already discussed in chapter 1) – where Volans is not mentioned (yet he held a position at Natal University during this time and was a key player in the 1983 Contemporary Music Festival).

Another example of such marginalisation is the minimal space afforded Volans in Klatzow's *Composers in South Africa Today* (1987; two pages, even though he was by 1987 South Africa's best known composer overseas). Even more recently (and surprisingly), Volans did not figure in Stephanus Muller's PhD Dissertation *Sounding Margins: Musical Representations of White South Africa* (2001), which focused largely on Afrikaans composers. I suggest that this lack of critical commentary amongst certain members of the South African scholarly community is because his works were either abhorrent or insignificant to those sympathetic to the segregationist agenda of apartheid, and continue to be regarded as in some way 'non-Afrikaner' and perhaps thus non-South African. Or perhaps Muller's avoidance is symptomatic of the legacy of earlier scholars' marginalization of Volans. Volans's 'African Paraphrases' were certainly a contestation of the hegemony of Western 'superior' culture, and this makes them uncomfortable works. It was not only that he was using 'African' music, but through the ways in which he used it as 'reverse colonization' Volans threatened a fundamental ideological viewpoint (separate development) that underpinned the 'old' composition field in South Africa (1980-1990) with its characteristic autonomy from social and political comment and content. Volans's challenge went further than mere comment, too: it provided concrete *examples* of the kind of art music that could successfully (musically, politically, and, later, commercially) engage with the 'local'. In doing so he opened up the way for a new paradigm for cross-cultural composition.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, Thomas Kuhn's theory of scientific revolutions (1962) can be adapted for the present study of such a potentially major paradigm shift in the field of cultural production (in this case from a 'Eurocentric' to a 'cross-cultural' paradigm). Kuhn's notion about 'anomalies' that disrupt the established scientific paradigm (of 'normal science') concludes:

> [W]hen [ ] the profession can no longer evade anomalies that subvert the existing tradition of scientific practice – then begin the extraordinary investigations that lead the profession at last to a new set of commitments, a new basis for the practice of science. The extraordinary episodes in which that shift of professional commitments occurs are the ones known in this essay as scientific revolutions. They are the tradition-shattering complements to the tradition-bound activity of normal science (Kuhn 1970:6).

The scientific community or field Kuhn assumes here, in which new investigations lead the *profession*, can however only partly be compared with the South African field of composition that I sketched in chapter one. For although Volans was undoubtedly an 'anomaly', and his new 'theory' presented the possibility that no-one else had done of a change of paradigm, and was well aware that he was doing so (from the evidence of his writings at this time and later, in newspaper interviews made around that he left South Africa for example) it was not the paradigm he had envisaged; or rather, it did not really happen along the lines his music suggested. Volans's 'African Paraphrases' can be regarded as 'anomalies' in Kuhn's sense because they contested the autonomy of art music during the 1980s and brought Western compositional techniques more directly face to face with African compositional techniques than anyone else had done. By subverting existing practice – calling into question the aesthetic and political commitments of composers – the 'African Paraphrases' contributed to a sense of aesthetic crisis in the field. This (as I argued in chapter one) was not simply an aesthetic phenomenon however; it was a product of changes in the field of power more broadly and had important political meaning too. The new aesthetic paradigm put forward by Volans in his writings – and demonstrated in his music – did not succeed in gaining the support of the majority of practitioners in the field (as I will show in chapters three to five), but its impact was at the time still revolutionary. The main reasons for its only partial success were its radicalism. Peter Klatzow described the use of African music as "cultural banditry" (as cited by Rörich 2003), and the effects on Volans were devastating.

> 'In all the time I was there,' he says, 'there was only an hour of my music played. I was practically boycotted for my involvement with black music. I was actually denounced at a national conference on contemporary music [SABC Contemporary Music Festival 1983]. They said,

> 'Black music is for black people, and we have no more desire to hear mbira music on the harpsichord than to hear Mozart played on the mbira.' I never had criticism like that from black people. Black artists are just more open.[37]

Nor, it has to be said, did such works receive such criticism in London or New York – on the contrary they received hugely positive, bordering on 'rave' reviews about their originality and successful integration of African and Western music, or in Durban where they were played to delighted audiences (including Volans's colleagues and students (among them Veit Erlmann, Christopher Ballantine, and Matteo Fargion) and critics (among them David Coleman, Anthea Johnson, and Christine Lucia, who was given six columns in the Natal *Daily News* to write a review of *Mbira, Matepe*, and *White Man Sleeps* with the headline "Master of African sounds" (11 May 1984).

Volans's vision of a practice that reconciled African and Western music into a new style for a 'new' South Africa was in part informed by a personal identity crisis. "Like many white South Africans of my generation I was brought up to think I was European. I went to live in Europe and found this was not true. I returned to Africa and was disappointed to find I could not really regard myself as African" (Volans 1986:79). His personal experiences were channeled through in this music to find that elusive 'middleground'. It was a vision that challenged the field of institutional composition and performance in the 1980s on a number of levels.

> From our privileged position in this country we can and must learn something of the spirit of traditional African culture – the exuberance, extravagance and unexpectedness; the sense of order and pattern, the need to make every part essential to the whole; the assurance, humility and lack of guilt that comes of knowledge of one's place and value in society. And it works both ways. If these qualities are lacking in our society, it's up to artists and musicians to re-invent them and foster them. (Volans 1986:82)

There were a number of reasons why this idea failed to take hold. Volans's was at odds with the then dominant paradigm for composition that regarded art as autonomous from politics and society. This paradigm insulated composers from the social and political

[37] Volans quoted in Gilmore 2006.

ramifications of their art, for as Kuhn notes, "[a] paradigm can, for that matter, even insulate the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to the puzzle form, because they cannot be stated in terms of the conceptual and instrumental tools the paradigm supplies" (1962:37). In these circumstances it was not in the interests of composers to embark on aesthetic strategies that were as at odds as Volans's 'African Paraphrases' were with the establishment's values of segregation and apartheid. To continue to prosper in the field composers played safe and chose to produce works that satisfied its demands, implicit though these were (for the most part).

Volans's 'African Paraphrases' went on, nevertheless, to influence a generation of composers both within South Africa and without. I even suggest that the 'older generation' of Peter Klatzow, Roelof Temmingh, and Stefans Grové – in very different ways – were able to reconsider their own relationship to the 'local' more easily after Volans's anomalies. Grové, for instance, began his 'Africa series' in 1984, just one year after the 1983 festival at which *Mbira* was performed. Volans's *material* impact was perhaps more direct on a younger generation of composers, some of whom were students of his at the University of Natal from 1982-1984 (such as Matteo Fargion and Isak Roux). Other notable figures who were encouraged by what Volans was doing include Michael Blake (whose own *Ground Weave* (1976), *Sub-Saharan Dances* (1980-81), *Taireva (We were talking)* (1978-1983), *Spirit* (1985), and *Self Delectative Songs*, *Kalimba*, and *Let us run out of the rain* (1986) all draw on African material), and Martin Scherzinger.

Volans's initial impetus was generally speaking a decade ahead of a broader social response. In writing about this period this is what Ingrid Byerly has referred to as the 'prophetic element' that some art and popular music had during apartheid; and she gives such music considerable agency.

> One of the most significant achievements of music in the late-apartheid era was the ability to sound a prospect for the future. This music suggested intercultural collaborations that may not have existed socially at that stage, yet in doing so, it brought them into being through their vision. It suggested political developments that may have seemed unimaginable at the time, yet in doing so it signaled their arrival (Byerly 1998:29).

So despite the slow response of some composers in the field, and perhaps of society in general, the shift had already been signaled by Volans and other musicians intent on change and aware of a broader social consciousness, a consciousness that was to shift the paradigm of even the more conservative composers and administrators then positioned within the establishment. Such composers only slowly switched to cross-culturalism when it became clear that this was as an aesthetic strategy that would prove advantageous for their advancement in the field – which was not the case with Volans in the South African field (this argument is further pursued in chapters three and four). During apartheid these figures were too powerful and well-supported, ('blinkered, needy', and 'lacking the ability to engage with context and change', as Mary Rörich put it in 2003) to venture into this new territory without making major sacrifices. Volans's music did not succeed in opening up the new paradigm of thought *he* envisaged – of a 'reconciliation of African and Western aesthetics' to create a new South African culture relevant to the people who made it. Yet he was part of a much larger change that swept South African society in the 1980s and ultimately resulted in the fall of apartheid in 1994. In this way he may be seen as a revolutionary: a visionary whose efforts resulted in a new paradigm of artistic thought and played a significant role in generating the state of crisis that my dissertation attempts to address.

Chapter 3: Expediency in the field: Peter Klatzow's orchestral music

The resistance to the kind of cross-cultural practices engaged in by Kevin Volans during apartheid is perhaps best illustrated in the case of Peter Klatzow, who was reluctant to engage in these practices himself, I argue, until the 1990s when the cultural context for doing so was more accommodating. During the 1970s and '80s he was one of the leading figures in the field of composition in South Africa (if not *the* leading figure), and has enjoyed an increasingly prestigious trajectory in influential positions since then. In this chapter I show how Klatzow's position in the academy has continued to improve despite widespread changes in the field of power.

This chapter is in three parts. Part 1 is titled 'autonomy' and is a brief overview of Klatzow's career trajectory in the field up until the early 1990s. I describe some of Klatzow's works from the 1980s, arguing that they belonged to the 'autonomous' hierarchical paradigm discussed in chapters one and two, and corroborate this evidence with Klatzow's writings from that time. Part 1 also shows how his position within the field changed from what one might call a position of attack to one of defense: in 1983 he was an outspoken critic of Volans's 'African Paraphrases' (see chapter 2) but by the early '90s he was defending his own engagement with 'Africa' and arguing that it had been an important aspect of his work all along.

In part 2, 'transition', I look at his music from the early 1990s and focus on issues raised by a review of his *From the Poets* in 1993. In his response to critique leveled at him in this review – particularly as regards his perceived lack of engagement with the 'local' – Klatzow claims to have had a lasting engagement with African music dating back to his childhood. This position is then contrasted with the narrative set out in part one. In part 3 I engage in what is essentially a postcolonial critique of Klatzow's *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005). Drawing on the work of Edward Said (1978) and subsequent writing in this tradition of scholarship, I argue that Klatzow's most recent 'African' work constructs the 'other' by drawing on a thoroughly Western mode of discourse indebted to

Orientalist music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. I argue further that his portrayal of African music and culture is a representation at 'arm's length' of the reality that it (mis-)represents.

The broader argument being made in this chapter, and the one that relates back to chapter one, is that the field of composition in South Africa has moved from an autonomous mode of production to a heteronomous one since the transition to democracy. This fundamental political shift has aligned the restricted field with very different imperatives in the field of power to those held during apartheid. The restricted field always occupies a dominated position with respect to production, and one that is largely reliant on the accrual of capital from those with economic and political agendas sometimes foreign to the restricted field. Although composers do have a certain amount of agency – and Klatzow in particular has proportionally more than others due to his accumulated prestige in the field – they have mostly nevertheless composed music that can be seen as in some way acquiescent to the dominant ideologies of the day.

Part I: Autonomy

Peter Klatzow was born in Springs (Transvaal) in 1945 and grew up in the greater Johannesburg area, attending St Martin's School. After matriculating he spent a year teaching music and Afrikaans at the then newly established Waterford School in Swaziland. He was awarded the Southern African Music Rights Organization (SAMRO) Scholarship for Composers in 1964 and began studies at the Royal College of Music (RCM) in London that same year. His teachers at the College included Bernard Stevens (composition), Kathleen Long (piano), and Gordon Jacob (orchestration). During his time in London he won a number of composition prizes including the Royal Philharmonic Prize for Composition. After completion of his studies at the RCM he spent time in Italy and then Paris, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger.[38]

[38] www.klatzow.uct.ac.za, accessed 23 January 2007.

Klatzow returned to South Africa in 1966 and worked as a music producer for the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). In 1973 he was appointed to a lectureship in composition at the University of Cape Town where he has remained ever since. In 1986 he was elected to the rank of Fellow, and in 1999 was awarded the DMus for published work in composition. Klatzow has achieved many musical accolades during his career in South Africa. These include the Helgard Steyn prize for composition for *From the Poets* (1992) and the Molteno Gold Medal from the Cape Tercentenary Foundation for lifetime services to music (2002). Klatzow has been commissioned by many important ensembles both locally and internationally including the Chilingirian Quartet and the King's Singers, and his works have been performed in Europe and the Americas.

Klatzow has been an influential figure in the field since the 1970s. His influential role was not only as composer but also as organizer of groups, concerts, music festivals, and societies dedicated to contemporary music, and through broadcasting, teaching, publishing (through 'Musications'), and recording: in all of these he has helped to foster a culture of art music in South Africa. He is now Director of the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town, and a recent issue of the *South African Journal of Musicology* (*SAMUS* 24, 2004) celebrated his sixtieth year. More recently he has been a presenter on Fine Music Radio in Cape Town.

Modernism

Klatzow's studies in Europe were formative and are reflected in his works of the 1970s and '80s, which engage aesthetic movements internationally. In the early works Klatzow was something of an *enfant terrible*, pursuing a predominantly dissonant sound world in works such as the early *Phoenix Symphony* (1972), where according to James May "motivic coherence together with a fine sense of texture and colour was an early stylistic marker" (May 1987). Klatzow was thus committed for quite a long time to the kinds of conceptual approaches that Volans was by the 1980s eschewing (see chapter 2), especially emerging from New Simplicity. Indeed, in works such as *Time Structure I* and

II, for example, Klatzow explores listeners' experience of musical time in abstract, sometimes alienating sound worlds. Later, in works such as *Three Movements for Piano* (1980) "tonal elements are often included in a predominantly atonal framework" (May 1987:155).

During the 1970s (i.e. before the Cultural Boycott had taken full effect) Klatzow was still quite in touch with the avant-garde in Europe – as was Volans of course (who was living in Europe) – and was determined to keep South Africa in contact with developments there. "For a long time it was very important for me to bring the avant-garde to South Africa",[39] as he put it. He was instrumental in bringing out Karlheinz Stockhausen in 1970 and then Morton Feldman (who didn't care much about boycott-breaking) to the SABC Contemporary Music Festival in 1983. His predominant interest in high modernist European music and art continued, paying little attention to cross-cultural approaches adopted by composers such as Hans Roosenschoon, Kevin Volans, and Stefans Grové. Klatzow's strong allegiance to aesthetic modernism is perhaps best illustrated in *Incantations* (1984), which employs an eclectic array of contemporary compositional idioms; but also his wider interest in European art and literature. Indeed, the inspiration for the work is attributed to how, in "many Shakespeare plays, music and magical transformations are very closely associated" (in May 1987:146).

May's analysis of *Incantations* demonstrates that the "wide range of material used in this work covers straightforward use of tonality, multitonal complexes, octatonic harmonic and melodic material as well as passages of limited indeterminacy" (1987:147). Figure 11 shows the chromatic saturation of the texture in the opening bars, as has been remarked on by Hannes Taljaard (2004).

[39] Author's interview, 25 January 2007.

Fig 11 *Incantations* bars 1-3 full score © Musications 1984



Incantations, then – like many other South African works from this period – is rooted in avant-garde procedures. This is also evident in the works of most other 'establishment' composers discussed at length in *Composers in South Africa Today* (1987), edited by Klatzow. The seven composers whose work gets a chapter each (Arnold van Wyk, Hubert du Plessis, Stefans Grové, Graham Newcater, Roelof Temmingh, Carl van Wyk, and Klatzow himself) were all invested in modernism, although some, such as Arnold van Wyk, also looked even further back, to romanticism. There is no mention of African elements in *Composers in South Africa Today* with regard to these figures. Cross-cultural practices are only discussed in the shorter entries on Hans Roosenschoon and Kevin Volans,[40] both of whom are given just two pages.

The most significant change in Klatzow's musical aesthetic occurred after this book, in the late 1980s to early 1990s, and it was a shift that took place most visibly in his orchestral music. Writing for orchestra has been a central concern for Klatzow throughout his career, and continues to be an abiding interest.[41] Many of his pre-1990s orchestral works are scored for large orchestra (as opposed to the scaled-down one that he uses in the later *Tintinyane* and *Three Paintings by Irma Stern*), and have complex textures and procedural elements. Atonal and tonal sections are interspersed in these works but for the most part tonal relations are elements in a larger atonal complex, as May and Taljaard have pointed out (May 1987, Taljaard 2004).

But in the late '80s and especially in the '90s Klatzow moved towards a more tonal palette. Hannes Taljaard's (2004) article 'Interpreting Three Compositions for Orchestra' is the most recent attempt to track this change in his orchestral writing. Taljaard problematizes the notion of tonality in three orchestral works: *Still Life with Moonbeams* (1975), *Incantations* (1984), and *Tintinyane* (1994). His analysis shows how in the first two works there are elements of tonality and atonality, and that the interplay of these sections and their interpretation is somewhat complex. *Tintinyane*, on the other hand, is quite different in that Klatzow "displays a very simple use of diatonic material, and

[40] See Penny Clough's entries in Klatzow 1987.
[41] In my interview with him he described it as "the greatest musical medium that we have" (Author's interview, 25 January 2007).

uncomplicated structures" (Taljaard 2004:55). Similarly, the *Passacaglia on SACM* (2000) "clearly shows a prominence of tonal ideas" (Ibid 31). In many ways these two works – especially *Tintinyane* – display similar tonal characteristics (and orchestration) to *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005) discussed later on in this chapter. The return to classical proportions in these later orchestral works (strings, single winds, a small percussion section and no brass) are indicative of Klatzow's post-1990 shift, and this reduction in scale coincides with a return to a simpler tonal palette.

Taljaard's description of "a progression from atonal to tonal writing" (2007: 31) is referred to by Klatzow himself as a "reversion" rather than a "progression": "[r]ecent stylistic changes [in my work] have seen a reversion to tonality which is particularly clear in *Prayers and Dances of Praise from Africa* (1996)" (www.klatzow.uct.ac.za, accessed 23 January 2007). But *Tintinyane* (1994), a prior work, also shows this 'reversion', accompanied at more or less the same time by another significant aesthetic change: the introduction of (South) African titles, themes, or texts – and quite 'political' ones. These included some re-arranged earlier works such as the *Mass* (1988), reworked as *Mass for Africa* in 1994 to coincide with South Africa's democratic elections,[42] *From the Poets* (1992), and *Prayers and Dances of Praise from Africa*, another choral work (premiered in 1996) that has since become one of his most popular, a popularity that can largely be attributed to Klatzow's use of these tonal resources and 'African' references in an arguably 'accessible' style.

The 'reversion' to tonality is quite dramatic in a way, and my reading of it here is as a return to a more 'accessible' style in line with the changing nature of the field of production; especially in view of the difficulty post-1990 with getting large-scale works performed. The need to appeal to new audiences and new performers, and to write works that are appropriate for particular occasions is clearly important to Klatzow, but what does it constitute in terms of a field less well-disposed to new music? When I asked him about the question of accessibility Klatzow's reply was that "these things always move in waves – they're not clear-cut patterns in any case. Accessible is a word that worries me. I

[42] For a detailed discussion see Barry Smith (2005).

need to have something new in the piece that will make people think. At the same time I wouldn't want it to be in a language that nobody understood. I don't want my music in some kind of contemporary ghetto."[43] This is clearly a very different position to the one he held during the 1970s and '80s, and I will interrogate the extent of the "something new" aspect later in the chapter in my analysis of the *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005). Before I examine that work I look at Klatzow's engagement with Africa more broadly in relation to the field, and I begin with his reaction to (rare) criticism in that field.

Part II: Transition

In a letter to the editor of *SAMUS* (1994:125-126) dated 15 July 1994, Peter Klatzow objected to a review of his piano suite *From the Poets* (1992) in the *South African Journal of Musicology (SAMUS).* The reviewer was Christine Lucia, then Professor of Music at the University of Durban-Westville. In a four-page review Lucia had analyzed various aspects of this suite of four solo piano works. She commented on how effectively Klatzow's works evoked the South African 'landscape poetry' from which they were inspired,[44] describing his "solution to the problem of expressing poetic imagery and form in musical terms" as "ingenious" (1993:116).

For Klatzow, however, these positive statements were offset by her more critical remarks. Lucia criticized virtuosic effects (in a piece commissioned for the Unisa Transnet International Piano Competition) that at points did not do justice to the poetry, and were for her "'sound and fury' signifying mainly that they will make excellent competition pieces"[45] (1993:117). Klatzow took "serious issue" with her review, arguing that he had not intended any such line-by-line interpretation (although he subsequently suggested a 'better' interpretation). But perhaps what really irked him was her attack on his lack of

[43] Interview with the author at the South African College of Music (2007).
[44] D. J. Opperman's 'Prayer for the Bones', A. G. Visser's 'Days Approaching Winter', Phil Du Plessis's 'The Watermaid's Cave', and R. M. Bruce's 'Impundulu'.
[45] The works were subsequently used as the prescribed pieces for the Unisa Transnet International Piano Competition 1994.

engagement with the 'local': "What is also interesting to me," she had said, "is that in this suite a contemporary South African composer of stature who has always had extremely tenuous links with (not to say contempt for) the use of the 'local', especially the African, in compositions of European descent, is beginning to explore them here through the medium of South African 'landscape' poetry" (1993:117).

Klatzow's response was both defensive and aggressive, and in it he claimed to have had a 'real and lasting engagement' with African music, languages, and literature, and suggested that Lucia "used the opportunity of a review for the purpose of airing her own agenda. A review which was to be dignified by publication in our leading musicological organ might have rather focused on such issues as the tonal/modal nature of the musical language, the references to music of other composers and many other aspects which might have been of interest to musicologists" (1994:126). Although Lucia's review does not refer to some of the composers Klatzow suggests his work relates to (such as Stravinsky), her review does provide musical analysis and includes examples of the piano writing that reflect Klatzow's tonal processes.

Stephanus Muller, in a later reading of the exchange (2001), suggests that "there is an assumption that the need exists for art music, comprising as it does 'compositions of European descent', actively to seek credibility in its African setting by initiating some form of transcultural transaction. The most fundamental question posed by this assumption is why it should be seen to be *musically* necessary" (2001:28). Muller's critique of cross-culturalism here as a 'transaction' in which composers are seeking 'credibility', assumes that these aesthetic choices are not musical ones but political. Yet as I have shown in chapter two, the use of African elements in Volans's music has been a vital musical and aesthetic resource rather than mere 'acquiescence' to non-musical discourses. And, furthermore, Volans's engagement with Africa was certainly not affirmative of the status quo then but was rather a contestation of apartheid ideology.

When Klatzow and other composers came to cross-culturalism in the early 1990s theirs was a very different kind of engagement to that of Volans (as I will show), and was

essentially a product of changes in the field of power. Lucia's review is commenting on Klatzow's opportunism. Rather than being prescriptive (that composers should employ African elements in their work), she is drawing attention to the fact that it is a new kind of engagement on Klatzow's part (hence different to his earlier work and that of Volans, for instance), and the product of a particular time. Klatzow's use of Africanisms was part of a broader trend in the field as even a cursory glance at work lists in recent years shows.[46]

These issues are key to my argument in chapter one where I suggested that composers were aligning themselves with new imperatives in the field of power (especially with regards to commissioning). To return to Muller's question: what, actually, are the reasons why art music composers should seek "credibility" in the new South Africa (through the use of African elements)? Or to put it another way, are there any aesthetic reasons why composers should *not* incorporate African elements or principles? In response to Muller's question, one might ask: but is anything ever "musically necessary"? Any composition, or any work of art, for that matter, is a deliberate act, incorporating a process of leaving-out, leaving-in, editing, choosing what material to work with, choosing what to be influenced by (or listen to) and what not to engage with.

I am not, of course, denying the importance of the subconscious or intuitive elements at play. Muller's question assumes however that engaging with African elements is an imposition on composers or an affirmative ideology to which they have chosen to subscribe, and this can itself be seen as invested in a romantic notion of composition as autonomous from social or political concerns. Muller extends this argument to a critique of musicologists who, in his view, are complicit with this acquiescence to new imperatives; partly as a result of a perceived crisis in the field.

> It may be said that the perceived crisis is not to be ascribed to South African art music as such, but rather to the political and social position of South African art music composers, who constitute a racial and class minority elite. As art music is culturally inseparable from white South Africa, it is

[46] See the new works listed every year in the *South African Journal of Musicology* 1983-2005.

> not difficult to transfer a crisis of white identity and legitimacy in Africa (as a result of the collapse of colonialism and Apartheid respectively), to a crisis in 'white culture' and therefore in South African art music. Post-Apartheid musicological discourse has therefore urgently needed to be seen to operate as anti-Apartheid and postcolonial discourse, which privileges the previously decentred and politically disempowered 'African' end of the oppositional model. As the political credibility and survival of its white constituent base has crumbled, aesthetic value and commercial survival of art music has increasingly depended on the political credibility that could be gained by turning from elitist 'Western' or 'European' music to a more 'African' style" (Muller 2001:29).

This leads us to a further point: is the adoption of a cross-cultural paradigm for art music simply a matter of political acquiescence? This does not seem to be the case with those who engaged with African music from an earlier period, such as Stefans Grové, for example. That some composers were to some extent jumping on the bandwagon is reflected in the titles of works such as *Suite Afrique* (1993) by Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph and *Sinfonia Africana* (2004) by Hendrik Hofmeyr – but this does not devalue the genuine attempts by artists of all kinds to seek a new and inclusive approach to an engagement with the culture of their land.

Klatzow's engagement with 'Africa' prior to the 1990s was limited mainly to texts by white poets and painters. Yet in response to Lucia's criticism of him as someone "who had extremely tenuous links with (not to say contempt for) the use of the 'local'" he provided a list of eight points that showed his "indebtedness" to South Africa, including his use of *Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika* in an early orchestral piece; numerous songs with Afrikaans texts – some influenced by his work with choirs in Swaziland; two song cycles with South African texts; the "patterning" in two concerti that "distinguishes the marimba writing as coming from Southern Africa"; the "very African nature of the drumming sections of Hamlet for the duels in the last act" (which he "absorbed quite literally through his feet" at the SACM); my Mass for Africa which "makes a serious attempt to integrate the so-called European and African choral traditions"; and his involvement in the "publication and promotion" of African-inspired works (Klatzow 1994:125-26).

An interesting musical point here, and given my description of the tonal processes evident in Klatzow's music up until the early 1990s, is that all these so-called 'African'

elements are minor aspects of works that have a predominantly Western framework, and into which they are subsumed. This is very different to the foregrounding of African material – as the equal to Western – that Volans accomplished in his 'African Paraphrases'. Even in those works where he claims to have had a more direct musical engagement with Africa, as in the marimba works, this is not borne out by analysis. James May, for one, seems to contradict this claim in his essay on the composer's *Concerto for Marimba and String Orchestra* (1985).

> [Klatzow] was not interested in either the African or the South American origins of the instrument but viewed it as an instrument which, like the guitar, had liberated itself from its nationalist history and was ready to take its place as a solo instrument in its own right. In this respect the work is unlike the handful of other works for the same medium which have strong folk associations of one sort or another (1987:149).

This reading, seemingly written with a confident understanding of Klatzow's intentions, reinforces the point that Klatzow's pre-1990s work did not attempt any direct or structural engagement with African music; and this was Lucia's point too. This changed after South Africa's period of political transition (1990-1994). Suddenly Klatzow produced a whole host of African-inspired works, such as *A Mass for Africa* (1994);[47] *Tintinyane* (1994); *Prayers and Dances of Praise from Africa* (1996); *Haya, Mntwan'Omkhulu* (2000); *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005). As I will show in my analysis, even that still has 'tenuous links to the local' (to paraphrase Lucia). For me it remains on the level of 'inspiration' rather than engagement, one that can far more easily be demonstrated through titles and self-confession in programme notes than through actual musical material.

Klatzow's relationship to the question of cross-culturalism is then, I suggest, quite contradictory and this is borne out in some of his writings, such as his (published) inaugural lecture, originally given at the South African College of Music in 2001[48] and

[47] The re-setting of his 1988 *Mass*; see Barry Smith 2007.
[48] Subsequently published in volume 24 of the South African Journal of Musicology (2005).

subsequently published in *SAMUS* volume 24 (2004:135-142). It is entitled 'The Composers Dilemma: Writing for Time or Place'.

> Living as we do in a society in which cross-cultural influence is probably a necessary antidote to the cultural divides structured by Apartheid, one has to ask what legitimate, respectful methods of engagement could or should be explored. The appropriation of an indigenous music for profit is clearly not acceptable. Fortunately Princess Magogo KaDinizulu, whose music had been thus used, became a member of the Southern Africa Music Rights Organization (SAMRO), so that unbridled commercial exploitation of her music is now no longer possible (2007:138-39).

In this lecture he mentions various other methods by which "music can cross its original boundaries through a different medium to reach a new audience" (2007:139). The first is transcription, a process that he used in his 'arrangements' of the songs of Princess Magogo KaDinuzulu for piano and voice, and later for orchestra and voice (2001).[49] The second he describes is the incorporation of elements of African music through first-hand experience as ethnomusicologist. "Bartok, Vaughan Williams, Kodaly and many others collected their own folksong heritages as an exercise in ethnomusicology, and it left traces in their own musical compositions" (2007:140). He describes how he has practiced this method with regard to the "African choral tradition [that] continues to hold a very strong place in our music. It has many distinguishing features – one of the strongest being the call and response structure – and the other of course that African choirs choreograph the music they are singing" (2007:40).

His experience of listening to African choirs does not amount to the kind of in-depth study carried out by Bartók and Kodaly in my view, and this is reflected in the limitations of his analysis: the description of the "many distinguishing features" of African choral traditions is limited to just two features: "call and response", and choirs "choreograph the music they are singing" – neither of which are unique to African traditions.

How are we to interpret these claims within the context of a changing field of production? One view is given by Klatzow's student (and composer) Robert Fokkens.

[49] In an interview with the author (01/2007) he described how his 'setting' of these works involved the *composition* of accompaniment textures.

> As a product of his time, Klatzow makes his musical judgments according to largely 'Western' considerations. That he didn't on the whole choose to engage with 'African musics' is further explained by a concern that the use of 'indigenous music' from any non-Western culture by Western composers was tantamount to 're-enacting colonialism'.[50] However we may interpret his accusations of 'cultural banditry' directed at Kevin Volans at the 1983 Composers' Forum in Johannesburg, they are concerns that have dogged – and continue to do so – both ethnomusicology and this type of composition. (Fokkens 2007:104).

Fokkens's defense is interesting, although on one level problematic. Since when, for example, has the discipline ethnomusicology been "dogged" by questions relating to 'cultural banditry'? In the late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries ethnomusicologists recorded and collected music without consideration for the rights of the musicians concerned. However, the approach of ethnomusicologists has changed enormously since then, especially with the 'reflexive turn' in cultural studies in the 1980s when these kinds of issues were thoroughly problematized;[51] but they have hardly ever been applied to composition. Fokkens seems ignorant of these developments and hence his dismissal of Volans's work and defense of Klatzow's critique is thus problematic. When Klatzow accused Volans of 'cultural banditry' he was dismissing outright the place of African music in a Western tradition. His about-face in the post-apartheid period is thus quite surprising. Klatzow's engagement has on the whole been a more superficial one than Volans's in 'African Paraphrases'. To further this point, I now consider how Klatzow, in his *Three Paintings by Irma Stern*, can be seen to 're-enact colonialism'.

Part III: Heteronomy

The critique of Western representations of 'the other' (including Africans) as exotic has been a consistent theme of postcolonial scholarship. Edward Said's seminal *Orientalism* (1978) has been seen as opening up the debate on the West's construction of cultural

[50] Fokkens is quoting Timothy Taylor's 'When we think about music and politics: The case of Kevin Volans' in *Perspectives of New Music* (1995:516).
[51] See Barz and Cooley's *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (1997), for example.

otherness,[52] and his later *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) consolidated these insights. Together with the work of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak (amongst others) postcolonial theory became a new field of scholarship influential across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. As Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh noted (2000), this challenge has not been taken up with quite as much vigour by music scholars, except that recently African scholars such as Kofi Agawu and Martin Scherzinger have opened up a debate on the representation of African music (in both scholarship and in the music itself). Agawu in particular (2003) has questioned the portrayal of Africans as essentially 'different' from Westerners on account (for example) of the 'complexity' of their rhythmic practices (see chapter two part two). In this argument, Westerns' somewhat 'fairy-tale' picture of primitive African life is part of a discourse that has sought to remove Africans from a global conversation by marking them not only as backward, but as incapable of conversation. The persistence of representations that portray Africans in this fairy-tale manner is thus, in terms of postcolonial scholarship, almost an anomaly. In art music such representations are explored by musicologists in relation to 19th- and early 20th-century opera and instrumental music, 'representative' composers being Rimsky-Korsakov, Saint-Saëns, Koëchlin, Debussy, Ravel, and so on. It is not insignificant that some of these composers are French, perhaps as a result of the colonial encounters that found their way into the art, literature, and music of the French bourgeoisie during this period (which roughly equates to the 'Scramble for Africa'). In Peter Klatzow's *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005) there are, I suggest, clear references to these early twentieth-century Orientalist musical discourses, and this is the nub of my critique to follow.

Three Paintings by Irma Stern (2005)

Narrative interest is certainly a central concern in Klatzow's music, and this is in part illustrated by the large number of his works that take their inspiration from poetry, 'narrative' painting, and literature. In the orchestral oeuvre those works that are inspired

[52] See Bart Moore-Gilbert's *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics*. London: Verso. 1997.

by these media include the *Phoenix Symphony* (1972), *Still Life with Moonbeams* (1975), *Incantations* (1984), *States of Light* (1987), *Tintinyane* (1994), and *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* (2005). Although Klatzow claims that a 'literal' interpretation in relation to such sources has not been his intention (as we have seen in his response to Lucia's review), many of his musical portraits have parallels with the material from which they were derived. This is testament to his skill as a composer, true – especially his ability to evoke colors and textures through deft orchestration – but it is also reflective of his receptiveness to the musical aspects of these non-musical works. As James May says:

> Klatzow's interest in painting and poetry has had an important, though indirect, influence on his music. This interest is reflected in the large number of works inspired by other art works. In these pieces the music aims to portray the essence of the original source; it is never merely illustrative. The emphasis that the composer places on instrumental colour is clearly related to his interest in painting (May 1987:136).

This ability to re-present non-musical texts in a musical way – by rendering their "essence" as May puts it – has its drawbacks, I suggest. When the 'texts' Klatzow draws from are themselves embedded with socio-political discourses of power and domination, his music is even more susceptible to re-enacting this discourses.

The 'three paintings' Klatzow chose to represent are Irma Stern's *Arab Priest* (1943), *Congo River* (1948), and *Peach Blossoms* (1937) (see Appendix 1 for reproductions of these paintings). Both Stern and Klatzow's work, I argue, can be seen as embodying particular notions of 'the Orient' in which cultural stereotypes are reified through processed caricature and generalization. I draw here on Said's analysis (1978) and subsequent work in music scholarship that has problematized this kind of engagement in earlier repertories (of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), to argue that the modes of representation used by *both* Stern *and* Klatzow evoke African subjects and topics, as Said puts it, that have "a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given [the Orient] reality and presence in and for the West" (1978:5); but which nonetheless have little direct relation to the African cultures they depict. Not only this, but neither Klatzow nor Stern are (were) geographically located in

'the West' – both of them having been born and having lived for most of their lives in South Africa – but their *modes of representation* are nevertheless thoroughly European. Thus their use of African imagery is perhaps even more open to the act of self-reflection John Storey refers to when he says that Said's notion of Orientalism "prevents us from falling into a form of naïve realism; that is, away from a focus on what the stories tell us about Africa or the Africans, to what such representations tell us about Europeans" (2001:79). But first it is important to understand Stern's context in early twentieth-century South Africa in order to make sense of her art.

Irma Stern's Africa

Irma Stern is a South African artist who worked in diverse media, but who is best known for her paintings. She was born in 1894 to German-Jewish parents in Schweizer-Reinecke, a small town in the Transvaal, and died in 1966 in Cape Town. She lived through the period of the 'scramble for Africa' and the rise of the revolutionary movements which brought independence from colonial rule in many of the countries she visited. The disenchantment she experienced in coming to terms with the political and social changes in Africa informed her artistic vision, although her work was always mediated by her struggle with personal identity. Following a childhood in South Africa Stern left for Germany after the Anglo Boer War of 1899-1902. Stern's aesthetic vision was decisively shaped by the modernist movements she experienced and was inducted into while living and studying in Berlin. Her teacher, Max Pechstein, was a leading exponent of German Expressionism and Primitivism and his approach reinforced Stern's own romantic conception and depiction of Africa. When Stern moved to Cape Town in 1920 she shocked the conservative South African art world not only with her boldness but also with her enthusiasm for depicting non-white subjects (Dubow 1974).

Stern was the most traveled South African artist of her time and she published a number of journals from these expeditions, including two with work from the Congo and Zanzibar respectively. These journals consist of paintings, drawings, sketches and

writings on the places and people she visited, and the paintings *Arab Priest* and *Congo River* date from this period. In the opening paragraph of her *Congo* journal, Stern writes: "I am on the road to the interior of the Belgian Congo. The Congo has always been for me the symbol of Africa, the very heart of Africa. The sound 'Congo' makes my blood dance with the thrill of excitement; it sounds to me like distant native drums and a heavy tropical river flowing, its water gurgling in mystic depths" (1943:1). This statement, with its Conradian echoes, conveys Stern's romantic conception of Africa. The significance of her journeys into 'the heart of Africa' cannot be underestimated for the impact they had on her art. The ways in which these experiences – both real and imagined – excited her sensuality became an indispensable artistic resource for her. The African adventures provided diverse places of inspiration, places in which she could immerse herself in the sights, sounds, tastes, and colours of cultures and environments which were utterly foreign and exotic, and far from home.

Although Stern was not an ethnographic artist, on one level she attempted to record those aspects of traditional African life that were untouched by the forces of colonialism. Stern explains her approach when she states: "it is only through personal contact that one can get a few glimpses into the hidden depths of the primitive and childlike yet rich soul of the native, and this soul is what I try to reflect in my pictures of South Africa".[53] This approach tended to 'paint out' the difficulties that Africans experienced under colonial rule. For Marion Arnold, Stern displayed a "total lack of understanding about the forces of colonialism. She was selfishly distressed when reality impinged on her artistic needs and, when the disjunction between imagination and reality proved irreconcilable in South Africa, she cast her gaze north" (1995:73). The inspiration she got from the exoticism and 'purity' of 'traditional' Africa was for her an artistic necessity, although in this way she was very much a product of her times. Klatzow, on the other hand, emerged from a very different socio-political context, as has been noted. His engagement with Africa has been far less hands-on and he has at no pointed conducted research into African music.

[53] www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/stern-20%i.html. Accessed 12 August 2007.

Peter Klatzow's Africa

The *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* draws on the palette of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers such as Charles Koëchlin and other composers of the French school. The three pieces are scored for small orchestra with an accent on a percussion section, which includes marimba and celesta. A synthesizer is used in all three movements as a pragmatic way of incorporating the sounds of a variety of (expensive) instruments, including bass guitar, sitar, harp, and organ. All three works are lush examples of tone-painting in the late-romantic sense of broad washes of orchestration/colour, and are characterized by mellifluous melodic lines shared between woodwind and strings, punctuated by brass and percussion. The music uses tonality as its organizing feature and the harmony is triadic for the most part. This, then, is in stark contrast to his aesthetic in the 1980s where tonal sections were generally subordinate to more complex atonal structures as I discussed earlier in relation to *Incantations* (1984) (see Taljaard 2005).

To take these points further, I focus on the first of the three works in Klatzow's suite, *Arab Priest*. Klatzow's interpretation of Stern's painting is as follows: "[T]he Arab priest is an intense, staring individual, unsmiling and forbidding. He is a mystic, but quite removed from any common experience. In the Christian world he would have probably become a Saint, schooled in one of the more austere orders. We don't know who he is; we only know what he is" (2006). Klatzow interprets the subject here as an oriental 'type' rather than as an individual, and this is in keeping with Stern's representation in which a languorous oriental sheik is portrayed in 'native' garb (see Appendix 1), posing in a proud and self-conscious manner for the viewer.

Stern similarly portrays various 'native types' in her art, and this was one of her main rationales for travel in rural Africa. In an interview with Neville Dubow in the 1960s she even "complained that there was no such thing as a 'South African type' and that she had 'sought always for the most primitive because I don't like the dressed up native for painting'" (2005:54-55). Yet ironically, this was just what she achieved in works like

Arab Priest, where the 'dressed-up' native becomes a symbol of a generalized culture. In terms of Klatzow's interpretation, Stern's distinction between 'primitive' (i.e. un-Westernized) and 'dressed-up native' is blurred by the extent to which he casts this character within a Western (orchestral) frame of reference.

To do this in his music he draws on a number of numerous gestures of the type noted by Derek Scott in his article on 'Orientalism and Musical Style' (1998). The specificity of the Orientalist discourse that becomes the sum of these types (or generates them) is problematic, however, for it stereotypes and simplifies people as 'natives', denying them both their individual identity and their agency. Scott describes, for example, how musical Orientalisms – as also used here by Klatzow – "can be applied indiscriminately as markers of cultural difference" (1998:327). His list of gestures or devices is extraordinary, not only in length but what seems like the sheer novelty of these procedures. Yet most of them, he argues, became part of a late nineteenth-century musical discourse in which Western composers – with little or no experience of the 'orient' (including Africa) – constructed a distinctive musical grammar for it. I give it in full:

> [W]holetones; aeolian, dorian, but especially the Phrygian mode; augmented seconds and fourths (especially with Lydian or Phrygian inflections); arabesques and ornamented lines; elaborate "ah!" melismas for voice; sliding or sinuous chromaticism (for example, snaking down on cor anglais); trills and dissonant grace notes; rapid scale passages (especially of an irregular fit, e.g., eleven notes to be played in the time of two crotchets); a melody that suddenly shifts to notes of shorter value; abrupt juxtapositions of romantic lyrical tunes and busy, energetic passages; repetitive rhythms (Ravel's Bolero is an extreme case of rhythmic insistence) and repetitive small-compass melodies; ostinati; ad libitum sections (colla parte, senza tempo, etc.); use of triplets in duple time; complex or irregular rhythms; parallel movements in fourths, fifths and octaves (especially in the woodwinds); bare fifths; drones and pedal points; 'magic' or 'mystic' chords (possessing an uncertainty of duration and/or harmonic direction); harp arpeggios and glissandi (Rimsky-Korsakov changes the harp's connotation of a mythical past to one of Orientalist exoticism); double reeds (oboe and especially cor anglais); percussion (especially tambourine, triangle, cymbals and gong); and emphatic rhythmic figures on unpitched percussion instruments (such as tom-toms, tambourine and triangle) (Scott 1998: 327).

These devices obviously come from the Western art music canon and have little or nothing to do with Eastern, African, or any other non-Western musical practices. For as Scott argues, "whether or not any of [these] musical devices and processes exist in any Eastern ethnic practice is almost irrelevant, and as Said explains, 'in a system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a topos, a set of references'" (1998:327).

It was perhaps all too easy for Klatzow, given his training and predilection for 'colour', to draw on this musical set of references. And he does so unashamedly in *Arab Priest*. Some of the procedures he uses include (and I am being selective here) augmented seconds and fourths in the melody (Figures 12, 13, 14, 15); the setting of the opening melody in the alto register and its orchestration in the woodwinds; rapid scale passages of an irregular fit (Figures 16 and 17 see bars 99; 106); parallel movements in fourths and fifths (Figure 18 see bars 7-14 in viola and synthesizer; and the bassoon part in bars 102-106 Figure 19); and the pervasive use of dissonant ornamental figurations. The superimposition of two chords a semitone apart is a distinct harmonic feature of the movement and this in itself adds a certain 'exotic' coloring (Figure 20 see bars 101-104).

Fig 12 *Arab Priest* bars 2-9 solo bassoon © Peter Klatzow 2005



Fig 13 *Arab Priest* bars 14-17 solo flute and bassoon © Peter Klatzow 2005

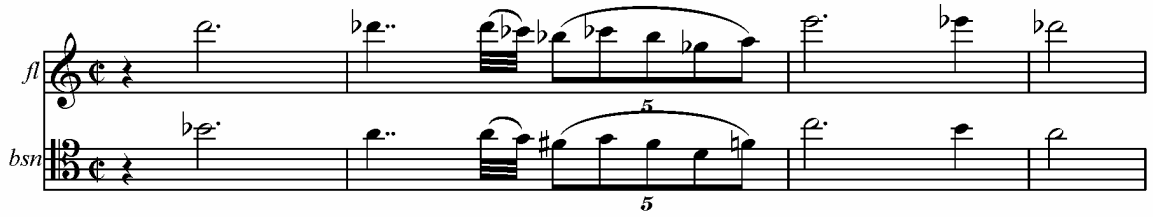


Fig 14 *Arab Priest* bars 29-30 synthesized sitar © Peter Klatzow 2005



Fig 15 *Arab Priest* bars 29-36 full score © Peter Klatzow 2005

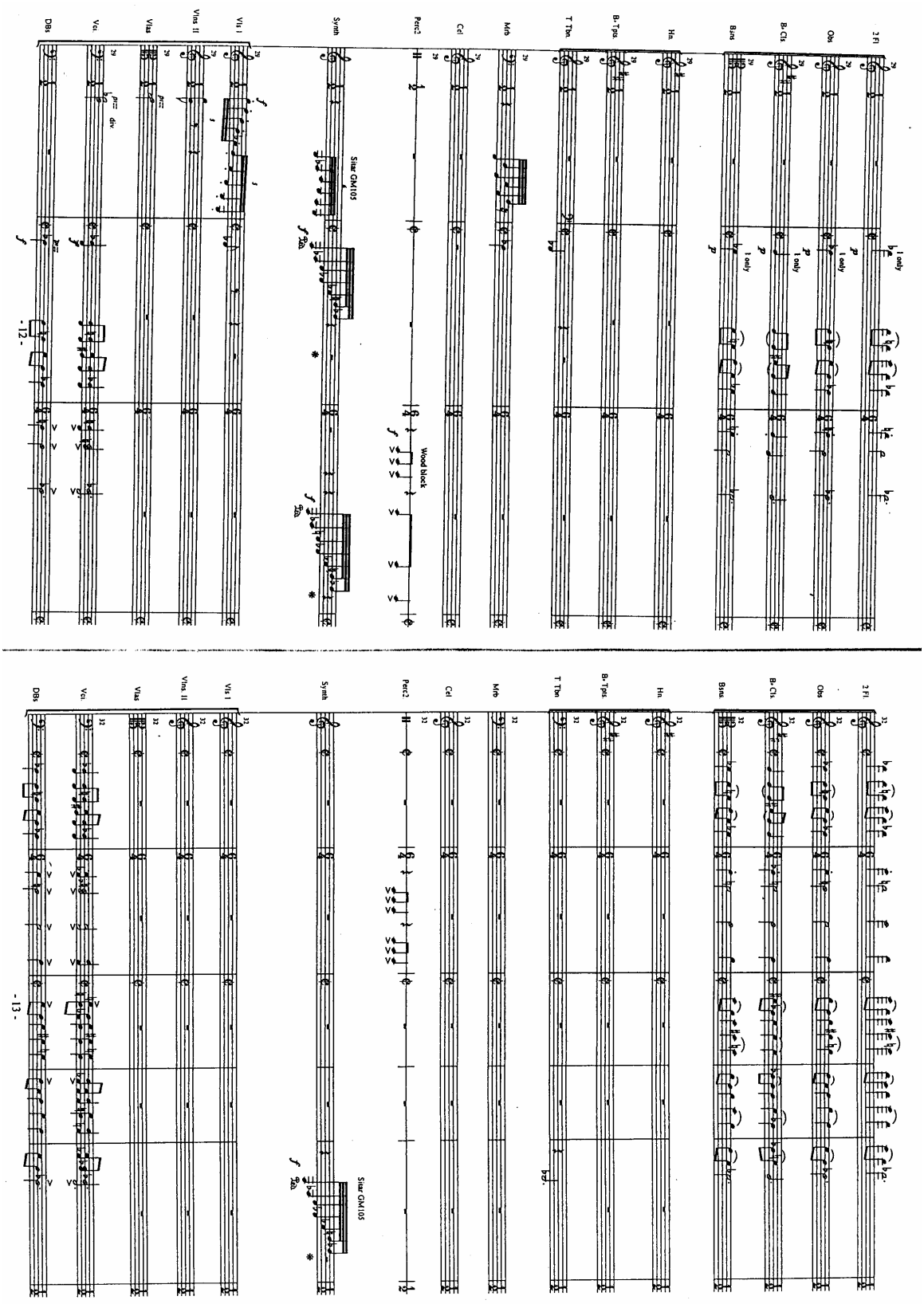


Fig 16 *Arab Priest* bar 99 flute, synth & 1st violin © Peter Klatzow 2005

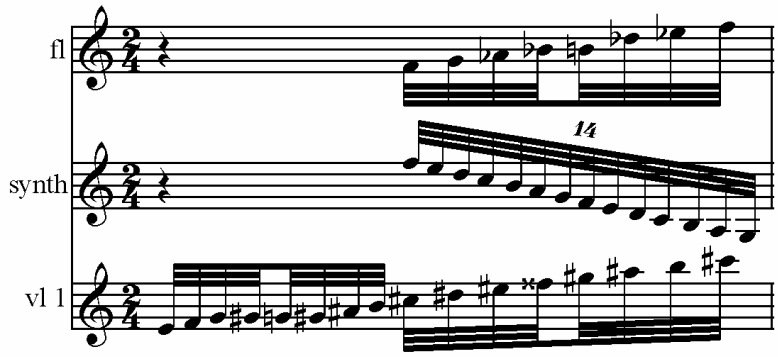


Fig 17 *Arab Priest* bar 106 flute & synth © Peter Klatzow 2005

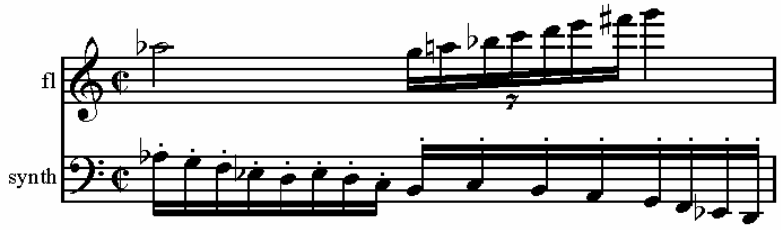


Fig 18 *Arab Priest* bars 7-8 viola & synth © Peter Klatzow 2005



Fig 19 *Arab Priest* bars 102-103 (bassoon) © Peter Klatzow 2005

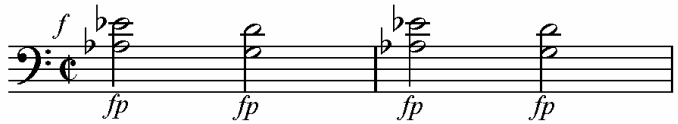
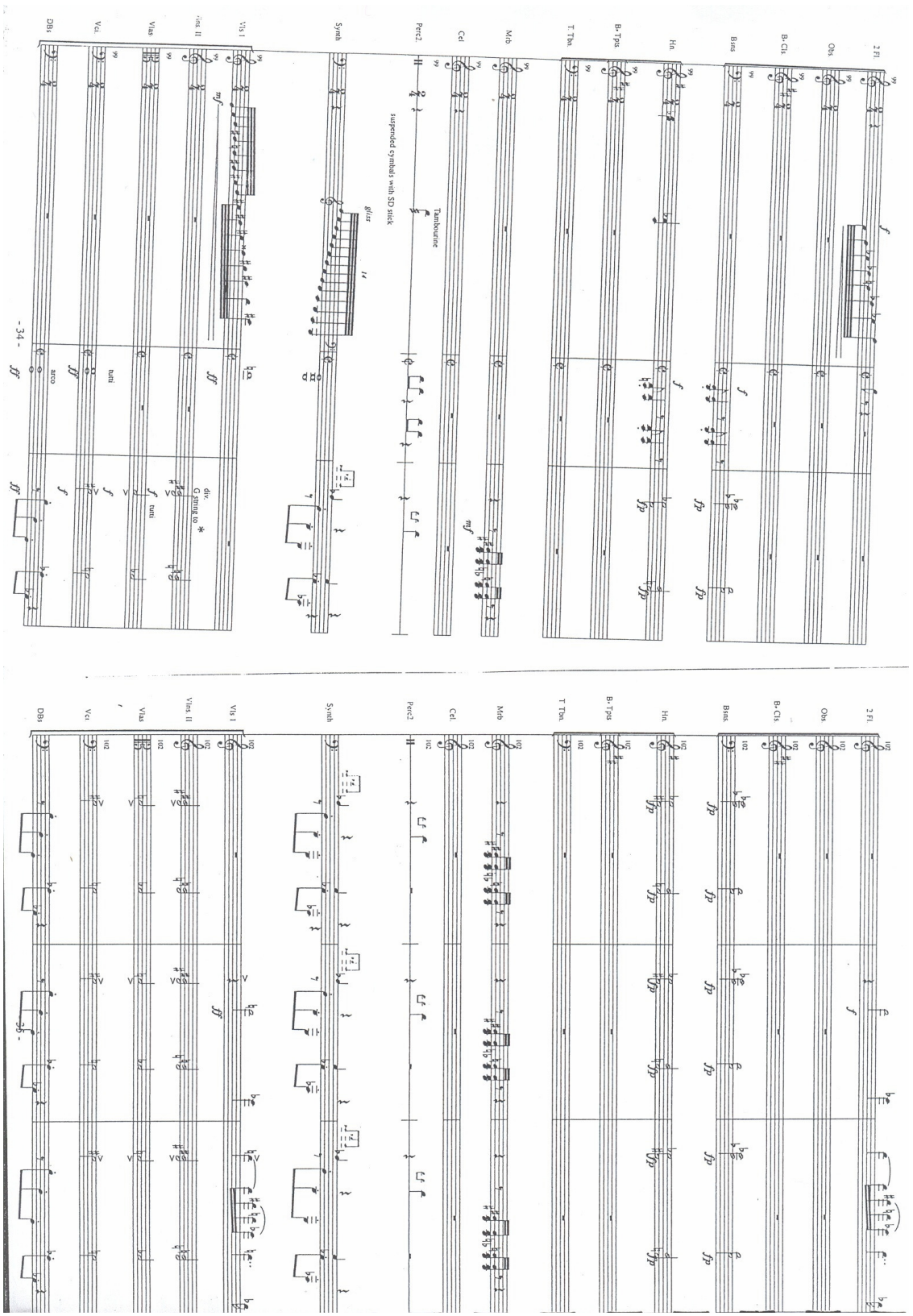


Fig 20 *Arab Priest* bars 99-104 full score © Peter Klatzow 2005



Aside from these devices it is also through the orchestration that the Oriental flavour emerges. The extended use of sitar, gong, tambourine, cymbals, wood block, celesta and marimba – especially in places of structural importance – all contribute to a sound world that is vivid, almost 'filmic', in its inscription of the exotic. Of particular interest is the sitar writing since this is the instrument which references 'the Orient' directly. That it is synthesized almost lends further weight to the argument that Klatzow is creating Africa at arm's length here, with no attempt at engaging directly (as Volans does) with the performance practices of Other cultures. The 'Oriental' instruments are used for coloristic purposes only and, together with the harmonic and melodic devices discussed above, create a distinctly *exotic* sound-world, (far from 'local') resplendent with the sensuality and 'oriental languor' evident in Stern's paintings. In these ways, then, Klatzow's representations of Africa can be seen to re-inscribe late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Orientalist musical discourse unashamedly, without any self-consciousness or attempt at distanciation or reflexivity.

Three Paintings by Irma Stern in a postcolonial context

How do we compare Stern and Klatzow's representations of Africa from their very different contexts, colonial and postcolonial respectively? Stern's disposition, I suggest, was conditioned by the dominant artistic and social discourses of the first half of the twentieth century. As Said argues, "so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism" (1978:3). So there are a number of uncomfortable aspects to Stern's representations of Africa: her attempt to portray 'native types' as generalizations of African cultures, her choice of subjects and topics, her desire for the sensual and the exotic. In her art Stern did not engage with the negative impact that colonialism had on African cultures, and her paintings are indebted to Primitivist conceptions of African subjects as childlike and naïve. As Marion Arnold argues, "in the context of South Africa with its history of ethnic classification and separation, Stern's depiction of groups and types becomes problematic.

Although she paints her perceptions, selecting incidents and forms to suit her pictorial needs, the presence of what is not represented lurks beyond the picture frame" (1995:73).

Klatzow, on the other hand, has not been conditioned by such a colonial sensibility. On the contrary, and as expressed in his critical views, we see someone deeply aware of the ethics of appropriation (as I have shown above). And yet here in the music he does not seem to engage at all with the problematic aspects of Stern's depictions – the presence of "that which lurks beyond the picture frame". Stern's stereotypical representation of 'native types' are interpreted by Klatzow as "statements of fact" (Arnold 1995:102), taken for granted, rather than viewed at a critical distance for the problematic representations they are. His relationship to Stern is sympathetic, as is reflected in his programme note where he describes her as someone "far more 'invested in African, Malaysian, and Arabic culture than the majority of whites at the time'" (Klatzow 2006).[54] He avoids (in his music) the problem of the ethics of representation altogether, by reverting to the older forms of representation that belong to precisely the kind of discourse Said, Scott, and Arnold critique. Said describes the limitations of Orientalism in this form as "the limitations that follow upon disregarding, essentializing, denuding the humanity of another culture, people, or geographical region" (1978:108).

Aesthetics and social change

How do we make sense of Klatzow's representations of Africa, then, in the context of South Africa's transition to a democratic society, and how do they relate to the crisis I articulated in chapter one? The fact that Klatzow's recent work draws on 'Africa' – or at least discourses about Africa – is evidence of the new cross-cultural paradigm that emerged since the early '90s. *Three Paintings by Irma Stern* is an example of the kind of aesthetic strategies adopted by many other composers during this period of change; specifically in the ways in which this music is accessible, exotically Africanist, and

[54] This is a quote from Alan Crump, although in the original Crump continues: "but her fascination for these cultures on the continent was a selective one" (Crump 2005:25).

perceived as the 'politically correct' thing to do. By adopting such measures in their music, Klatzow and other composers are appealing to both commercial and socio-political interests in the larger field, however, thereby strengthening their positions in the limited field of composition. This clearly reflects a shift in the field from an autonomous mode of production to a more heteronomous one.

The nature of this heteronomous mode, however, needs to be considered. A key question here would be: what kinds of political and economic pressures are having an effect on the field? For surely if these kinds of (politically-correct) imperatives in the field of power were aware of the history of Orientalist music and the use of other superficial approaches to the representation of Africa, then composers would not get away so easily with these gestures or devices in their work. But this is not (yet) the case. And perhaps it never will be, because despite the fact that these representations of Africa are quite superficial and *unrepresentative* of any African musical culture, this has not detracted from their success in the musical field in South Africa.[55] I am referring here not only to the reception of these works in and out of academia, but also to how *as symbolic capital* they have served to strengthen (rather than anything else) a composer such as Klatzow's position in the field of production, marking him – to draw on a contemporary colloquialism – as 'Proudly South African'. The term is used deliberately, for in the final chapter (5) I draw connections between the crisis in South African art music and the role of the orchestra, which Klatzow has been so successful in turning to a new use. Another composer, and student of Klatzow's, who has similarly engaged with Africa 'at arm's length' is discussed in the next case study: Hendrik Hofmeyr.

[55] I was present at a special performance of the work by the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra in 2006 at which reproductions of the paintings were given to audience members. Michael Levy reported to me (in August 2007) that he had been at the premiere in Cape Town and that it had been a major success.