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I Play Wassoulou, Jeli, Songhay and Tuareg Music: Adama Drame in Postcolonial Mali, Bimusical or Multimusical?

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Abstract

Adama is an accomplished guitarist in diverse Malian styles. The Malian guitarist is able to analyse the forms and contexts of the national musical styles he performs in regards to: the musical interaction with other musicians, timbre, rhythm and melody. In this article, I examine how Adama performs a wide range of Malian musical styles in Bamako; and how he represents and participates in different postcolonial musical cultures in Mali. In this article, Adama's capability of understanding different national musical styles as part of the social contexts in a variety of musical cultures in Mali is defined as multimusical. Multimusicality debates the concept of bimusicality (Hood 1960) defined as the capacity of performing both, a western and non-western musical style; therefore separating musically the Self [western music] and the Other [non-western]. For Adama, the concept of multimusicality does not only extend the possibility of learning more than two musical styles, but examines the national styles he is able to play as a Malian citizen (insider) and not as the Other. This paper is based on my musical contact with Adama Drame during November-December 2006 in Mali and in the last eight years.

Keywords: Multimusicality, bimusicality, musical cosmopolitanism, Malian music, postcolonial Mali

Toco música wassoulou, jeli, songhay y tuareg: Adama Drame en Mali postcolonial, ¿bimusicalidad o multimusicalidad?

Resumen

Adama es un guitarrista competente en diversos estilos musicales de Malí. El guitarrista maliense es capaz de analizar las formas y contextos de los estilos musicales nacionales que interpreta en lo que respecta a: la interacción musical con otros músicos, el timbre, el ritmo y la melodía. En este artículo, examino cómo Adama toca una amplia gama de estilos musicales de Malí en Bamako y la forma en que él representa a y participa en diferentes culturas musicales en



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Mali. La capacidad de comprensión de los diferentes estilos musicales nacionales de Adama se define como multimusical. La multimusicalidad critica el concepto de bimusicalidad (Hood 1960), definido como la capacidad de conocer dos estilos musicales, occidental y no-occidental; por lo tanto, conceptualiza musicalmente al “Yo (occidental) y al Otro (no-occidental)”. Para Adama, el concepto de multimusicalidad no solo ofrece la posibilidad de aprender más de dos estilos musicales, sino que examina los estilos musicales que es capaz de interpretar desde una perspectiva nacional como ciudadano de Mali. La reflexión se basa en mi trabajo de campo con Adama Drame durante noviembre y diciembre de 2006 en Malí que incluye un acercamiento personal en los últimos ocho años.

Palabras clave: multimusicalidad, bimusicalidad, cosmopolitismo musical, música de Mali, Mali postcolonial

Eu toco música Wassoulou, Jeli, Songhay e Tuareg: Adama Drame no Mali poscolonial, bimusical ou multimusical?

Resumo

Adama é um guitarrista que toca diversos estilos musicais do Mali. O guitarrista do Mali é capaz de analisar as formas e contextos dos estilos musicais nacionais que executa no que diz respeito: à interação musical com os outros músicos, ao timbre, ao ritmo e à melodia. Neste artigo vou discutir como Adama toca uma ampla gama de estilos musicais do Mali em Bamako; e a forma como representa e participa em diferentes culturas musicais no Mali. A capacidade de compreensão dos diferentes estilos musicais nacionais de Adama é definida como multimusical. A multimusicalidade critica o conceito de bimusicalidade (Hood 1960) definido como a capacidade de conhecer os estilos musicais ocidentais e não ocidentais; para tal distingue musicalmente o “eu” (música ocidental) e o “outro” (música não ocidental). Para Adama, o conceito de multimusicalidade amplia a possibilidade de aprender mais do que dois estilos musicais e questiona os estilos musicais que é capaz de tocar como cidadão do Mali (insider) e não como o “outro”. Este artigo está fundamentado no meu contato musical com Adama Drame durante os meses de Novembro e Dezembro de 2006 e nos últimos oito anos.

Palavras-chave: multimusicalidade, bimusicalidade, cosmopolitanismo musical, música no Mali, Mali poscolonial

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Introduction

In what follows, this article examines the difference between three ethnomusicological concepts: bimusicality, multimusicality and musical cosmopolitanism. I have defined Adama's musical knowledge as "multimusical" in order to broaden the ethnomusicological concept of "bimusicality" which narrows the capability of understanding more than two musical styles. Further, in ethnomusicology, bi-musicality mostly refers to a pupil that is able to perform a western and non-western musical style (Ivey 2009, Sadoh 2004, Titon 1995, Silverman 1995, Baily 2001, Hood 1960). Bimusicality addresses the difference between the learning of a western and non-western musical style. In my view, non-western alludes to an abstract categorisation of most of the music in the globe. From this view, bimusicality has a problematic ethic connotation about the music of the "Other" and tends to be compared with the music of the West. Therefore, the concept of bimusicality is not only about the talent to perform two different musical styles; but tends to separate and compare the music of the "Other", producing a dichotomy between two musical cultures.

On the other hand, in this article, the concept of multimusicality attempts to examine the melodic and harmonic relationship between the different musical styles from Mali played by Adama. Further, I propose that multimusicality as a theoretical concept is based on how a western or non-western musician relativizes different musical styles while improvising or composing music. In other words, multimusicality refers to a musician that can learn two or more musical styles and is able to synthesise all the musical knowledge gathered during his/her career. As a result, such musician produces a new personal multimusical language based on how he/she is able to move along his/her instrument in similar ways in a variety of musical styles.

Equally important, a multimusical musician as Adama not only represents different musical cultures when he plays with Wassoulou, *jeli* or Songhay ensembles; but he/she contributes to innovate such musical styles through his multimusical knowledge. Thus, multimusicality defines how Adama is able to use his guitar as an instrument that allows him to perform different national musical styles. Nonetheless, the use of multimusicality can be transposed into any instrument as long as the musician's will to understand a musical culture and its music relates to his/her previous musical knowledge.

In western musical terms, Adama's multimusicality refers to the performance of different national styles such as: Wassoulou, in mostly major and Dorian pentatonic and 6/8 rhythm on the *karynyan*¹; *Jeli* music (griots) characterized by the use of Lydian, Mixolydian and major scales; Songhay and Tamashek music, with both using pentatonic scales with an ostinato bass line. In appearance these styles do not relate to one other; but Adama is able to synthesize all his musical knowledge and, thus, producing a multimusical and personal style of playing guitar in Wassoulou, Songhay and *jeli*'s music. In this article, the musical analysis of Adama's multimusicality is based on his ability to play different national musical styles; and his individual capability of representing diverse musical regions of Mali through his knowledge of

¹ Karinyan is an idiophone percussive instrument from the Wassoulou region in Mali.

music. In other words, the concept of multimusicality serves to avoid the sense of the “Others music”, insider/outsider or emic/etic differentiation between two or more musical styles; but to integrate the musician’s knowledge in a social and musical space.

In addition, there is an examination of how the Malian guitarist is also influenced by cosmopolitan styles such as Cuban and American blues music. Thus, the capability of performing different types of national music is multimusical; and the skill to play and to represent other globalized styles such as reggae, jazz, blues or Latin is defined as cosmopolitan (Turino 2003: 52). In reference to ethnomusicological studies based on cosmopolitanism, Turino defines the representation of Zimbabwean jazz as a social form of cosmopolitanism (2003); and Steven Feld addresses how the Ghanaian musician Nii Noi composes musical arrangements for Coltrane’s songs in Noi’s album *A love supreme* as an exercise of musical cosmopolitanism (2012: 24). Both ethnomusicologists examine cosmopolitanism as a form of representing or composing jazz. Thus, the difference between musical cosmopolitanism and multimusicality is that: musical cosmopolitanism is when a musical style obtains a global recognition and consequently such style is enriched and performed in different ways by musicians around the world. On the other hand, multimusicality embodies the knowledge of different musical styles either in local, national or an international context.

Social contextualisation of post- colonial Mali

The recent civil war in Mali was provoked by the jihadist national groups represented by NMLA (National Movement of Liberation Azawad). The NMLA created a country named Azawad which occupied 60% of the Malian nation. However, during 2013, the Malian nation recovered their occupied territories with the support of the French Government (Nathan 2013: 1). Nevertheless, according to Nathan, another social problem in Mali during the civil war was the general social discontent of the Malian population. That was in regards to their democratic state being ruled by the president Amadou Toumani Toure in which national citizens claim that democratic discourses has been used for no-democratic purposes such as the emergence and support of the elite society (Nathan 2013: 1). Therefore, the social and political issue in Mali is not only based in creating a multi-party democratic state; but on the majority of Malian citizens who find postcolonial Mali a challenge. Such challenges can be traced back to the first Malian experience in “the late colonial era, and the manner in which democratic political discourse was abused by Mali’s first postcolonial government” (Nathan 2013: 1).

Within this national social context, the country has evolved musically in different forms since 1960: outside in the so-called *World Music* industry; and in Mali during the postcolonial period. In this section, I draw on how Adama’s musical heritage is shaped by the forms of evolving Malian music during postcolonial times. According to Ryan Thomas Skinner, the representation of the national musical culture in the first two Malian republics (1960-68 & 1968-1979) after independence marks the course of the musical evolution in Mali. The author divides the politics of musical culture in both republics in two different concepts: nationalism and statism (Skinner 2012: 511). Skinner relates the concept of nationalism in Malian music to the first Republic as popular, and as one with close cultural relationship with Cuba.

In 1964, ten Malian students were sent to Cuba for conservatory training. The goal was to establish a professional corps of musical educators for Mali's cultural institutions, such as the National Arts Institute and a proposed National Conservatory. By 1965, these students had formed a band and in 1967 they recorded their first album at Havana's legendary Egrem Studios under the name "Las Maravillas de Mali" (The Mali Marvels). On vacation in Mali later that year, Las Maravillas members affirmed their commitment to their country with a performance for President Modibo Keita at the presidential palace in Bamako. For these artists, the Malian "nation" was no empty concept; it was a homeland to which they hoped to return and an ideal they were called on to represent as cultural ambassadors (Skinner 2012).

The reason for sending Malian students to Cuba was to modernize the national music by introducing guitars, bass, drum kits, wind sections and keyboards in Malian music. Later, the Malian government wanted to adopt new forms of harmonizing their traditional music with the band "Las Maravillas de Mali". Later, at the end of the 1960s [second Republic], the Malian band trained in Cuba was told by the government not to play songs with Cuban influences but to arrange traditional Malian songs as "Soubalé", the story of Sunjata Keita² (Skinner 2012: 519). At this point, statism appeared in Malian society with the re-enactment of the traditional history of the Mande Empire; and as a form of state based on the favoritism of the elite society rather than on implanting better public policies. Statism lasted from the presidency of Modibo Keita in November (1968-1978) and the continuation of this regime led by Moussa Traore's *coup d'état* (1979-1991) (Skinner 2012). In Malian music, statism emerged with the disappearance of national representative bands such as "Las Maravillas de Mali". Further, some of the band's members from "Las Maravillas de Mali" went into exile to Cote de Ivoire during the 1970s (Skinner 2012: 522). During Keita's regime, the music provided a service for the elite "with tickets for national concerts prohibited to the common citizens" (Skinner 2012: 525). Thus, bands such as "Rail Band" continued playing in the "Motel de Gare" until the mid-1990s. During the musical statism period in Mali, one has to include *Les Ambassadeurs du Motel* led by Salif Keita as the representation of the musical culture during the 1970s (Skinner 2012: 526). In sum, Malian music was nurtured by popular forms of playing Cuban music and western forms of musical arrangements in the first Republic. Later, in the second Republic, the emergence of modern bands who used electric guitars, drum kits, wind sections and bass guitar converted traditional songs into the state's definition of a musical culture.

Adama, as a Malian citizen born in 1973 was influenced by both musical postcolonial cultures: nationalism and statism. Adama is able to perform a wide range of national musical styles popularised during Keita's dictatorship and he is also able to perform Cuban music popularised after Mali's independence in 1960. Thus, Malian musicians in the 1990s and the beginning of 2000 mixed their repertoires with national songs, regional songs (depending on the artist's local heritage) and a few Cuban songs. Malian music obtained a musical diversity acknowledged by Malian musicians such as Zani Diabate, or Ommou Sangare, who were able to

² Sunjata Keita is the founder of the Mande Empire which embodied Mali, Senegal, Guinee, Gambia and Burkina Faso.

play *jeli*'s music, their regional music heritage and Cuban songs in their concerts during my research in 2006. Further, the acknowledgment by the Malian society of their diverse regional musical traditions in the country contributed to promoting the cultural plurality in the nation. For instance, *jelis* (griot) as Toumani Diabate maintains the tradition of playing *jeli*'s songs with the kora, Ommou Sangare bases her music on Wassoulou *kamalengoni* and *karinyan*, and Vieux Farka Toure has inherited his father's guitar technique by fusing Songhay and Tamashek styles (although including his incursion into American blues or *jeli* music)³.

In other words, Cuban musical influences from the First Republic and the musical arrangements of traditional *jeli*'s songs promoted in the Second Republic; were the preference and symbolic representation of Malian music during the first two republics (1960-1978). Nonetheless, during the 1980s and 1990s, other musical styles were gradually becoming popular such as the music from the Wassoulou region performed by Ommou Sangare, from the Songhay region by Ali Farrka Toure, and later the Tamashek band Tinariwen who became popular in Gao (Adama Drame's interview, 10-11-2006).

Therefore, the concept of multimusicality applies to Adama Drame in reference to his musical knowledge in Malian musical cultures which are not strictly related to his Dogon origins. In addition Adama's multimusicality refers to both: the symmetrical and asymmetrical musical and social relationships of his musical knowledge in regards to his national culture. There is a dichotomy between Adama's agency (asymmetrical) in relation to his accessibility and capability of learning different, national musical styles; and Adama's representation of some of postcolonial Mali's musical cultures (symmetrical in terms of national identity). Further, beyond the symmetric and asymmetric parallels, Adama's views about his musical and social knowledge of Mali is an intertextual discourse that comes together in an individual; and his sense of national identity as an insider in Mali.

Silverman's concept of bimusicality approaches Adama's view of multimusicality in as far as he believes that "learning of music and bi-musicality tells you not only about your informant's culture but also about your own culture and about your own subjectivity" (1995: 313). However, Silverman examines bimusicality from a participant-observation view of a western ethnomusicologist learning another non-western musical culture; in a western musical context. On the other hand, Titon though approximates to Silverman's concept of bimusicality and cosmopolitanism by saying that:

The kind of consciousness brought out by bi-musicality would bring what I call musical-being-in-the-world, and this kind of consciousness produces a musical way of knowing. This musical way of knowing is not limited to insights concerning musical structure or performance (as Lomax did), but it operates in the world as a whole, and particularly in the social world (Titon 1995: 295).

In the case of Adama, there is not a cosmopolitan context of an ethnomusicologist or musician attempting to learn from another musical culture; but a national context within diverse,

³ The artists mentioned above has innovated their traditional repertoires and not only perform traditional music based on their regional musical cultures in Mali.

ancient musical cultures able to modernize through electrified music instruments in postcolonial Mali. In this process of urbanization during the present postcolonial period one can place Adama's capability of performing different national musical styles. Equally important, the accessibility and promotion of different musical cultures in Mali is being successful and has not only promoted a type of musical style. For instance, in Mauritania, the elite has decided to promote *igagwen's* (griots) music as the symbol of national musical culture; and other musical styles are not promoted, therefore, do not show the cultural realities of the country (Shoups 2007: 95).

Adama Drame and his first encounters with Malian music

Adama Drame comes from the Dogon country (in southeastern Mali), a village called Bangas near Bandiagara. The first time Adama was attracted by the sound of the guitar was when Zani Diabate [leader of the Superdjata band] went to perform in his village in the 1980s. At the same time, he was familiar with the sound of the *kéléngoni* trans: "one stringed instrument". Adama claims Zani Diabate as his guitar teacher because Zani was able to play different Malian musical styles, mainly *jeli* and Wassoulou music. Nonetheless, Adama was able to learn different national guitar styles not only as a result of Diabate's influence; but by attempting to imitate the songs he heard on the national radio. According to Drame, the music he heard on the radio during the 1980s was songs from different parts of Mali.

During Adama's time in the Dogon country (1973-1998), his popularity as a local musician led him to Bamako in 1998. Adama found in the Malian capital an urban space in which he could perform with national artists from different regions. Thus, Adama was able to play different musical styles and started performing with different popular singers from Mali such as: Zani Diabate, Ommou Sangare or Sanata Diarra.

Equally noteworthy, Adama never performed any music from the Dogon country in Bamako. Thus, the Malian guitarist became popular by his multimusicality within the frame of his national musical plural culture; but he never performed any music from the Dogon country in the Malian capital. Therefore, as mentioned earlier, there is an asymmetrical response between Adama's musical heritage and to what extent he belongs to the national, musical plurality of Mali. In this case, the importance is not necessarily Adama's origins in Bangas and its musical culture; but the musical styles he is able to perform and to represent in Bamako as a Malian citizen. Therefore, Drame is the subject of this article and the context in which his multimusicality develops in Bamako. In this article, I focus on Drame's capability of performing different national musical styles; however, other Malian musicians living in Bamako are multimusical with other national musical styles.

Bamako and the multimusical encounter with Malian musical styles

In this section, I will explain how I discovered Adama's multimusicality by playing guitar with him in Bamako during November 2006. I will show three different songs from diverse regions of Mali in order to show the multimusicality of the Malian guitarist. There is an analysis of Mandjou from Rail Band and the influence of Cuban and *jeli* music in this song. Second,

Adama taught me how to play the *jeli* song “Sunjata” and the different forms of moving along the guitar within the mentioned song. Later, there will be an analysis of how Adama showed me “Asco” by Ali Farka Toure and how it can be related to Tamashek guitar style. The fourth song analysed in this section will be Sanata Diarra’s “Sababou Djoungou” based on a Wassoulou scale played in the *kamalengoni*. And finally, there will be an analysis of how Adama improvised an American 12 bar blues with me and the different musical resources he used in reference to his national musical heritage.

With regard to the dichotomy between the concept of bi-musicality and multimusicality; the ethnomusicologist Bill Ivey relates the advantage of being bimusical or multimusical as a tool of social transformation.

Bi-musical offers the same benefits as being bilingual, and that by learning music of difference we can generate positive social and political change, this leg of the stool provides ethnomusicology with something that every discipline must possess, a moral centre (Ivey 2009: 22).

In this case, the advantage of being multimusical is both: it contributes to a better understanding of postcolonial Malian musical culture as a whole; and there is a possibility of creating new forms of musical interaction. One example of innovative ways of national musical interaction is in Ali Farka Toure and Toumani Diabate’s album *In the Heart of the Moon* in 2005.

In my first encounter with Adama in November 2006, the Malian guitarist taught me how to play Rail Band’s song “Mandjou”. This song is dedicated to the Guinean president, Sekou Toure. This song transcends history and is still performed by national bands in Mali and by Salif Keita internationally. As Skinner observes, “to the surprise of all in attendance at the Conakry festival, Keita walked straight up to Touré, knelt down before him, and offered his vocal tribute” (2012: 528). The author concludes by saying that:

Though not nearly as dramatic or contentious as Keita’s ‘Mandjou’ performance, the 1975 Quinzaine Artistique in Guinea marked a similar ‘individualist’ turn in the declining career of Las Maravillas (the representative band from the first Republic); ironically, perhaps, this cultural political shift manifested in a titular invocation of ‘African’ solidarity and conviviality, of the *faso*. Following their performance, and in the wake of the ‘Mandjou’ controversy, President Sékou Touré congratulated the Malian ON, Las Maravillas de Mali. He suggested that the group give more space to vocal *jeliya*, an “authentically” African genre and the birthright of the group’s new singer Kassé Mady Diabaté (Skinner 2012: 529).

In reference to the multimusicality in this song, Adama was able to explain to me the different parts and how they were influenced by Cuban (nationalism during the first Malian republic from (1960-68) or *jeli*’s (statism) musical tradition. In the Cuban influences of this song, Adama emphasized the syncopated form in which the rhythmic guitar line of this song is played (see transcription 1 below)⁴. On the other hand, the *jeli*’s guitar style is mostly shown in the second part of this song in which the solo guitar uses Lydian and Mixolydian modes as a

⁴ The musical transcriptions in this article are an approximation of the sound and rhythm of the songs examined.

characteristic of *jeli*'s songs. In addition, in the second part of "Mandjou" (after the guitar solo part) the rhythm guitar plays a continuous staccato part related to the polyrhythmic form in which the *balaphon* or the *ngoni* is played in traditional *jeli*'s songs (see transcription 2). Therefore, in musical terms, "Mandjou" is a song based on the knowledge of the musical culture during the first two Republics in Mali: Cuban music and traditional *jeli*'s music. Equally important, Adama tended to show me how to move around the guitar within this song in order to be able to improvise in "Mandjou". In my view, Adama emphasized to me the way in which one can improvise in a song by addressing the main chords of "Mandjou" and how they can be transposed along the guitar. Thus, Drame explained how he improvised along "Mandjou" in a personal form using his multimusical and personal form of using musical resources on his guitar. Further, how his multimusicality in "Mandjou" can be differentiated from the original solo recording played by Djelimady Tounkara (see discography).



Transcription 1. *Mandjou* part 1



Transcription 2. *Mandjou* part 2

In reference to the song "Sundjata", it is a historical song that explains the foundation of the Mande Empire. The epic of "Sundjata" celebrates the social and political principles of the Manden since 750 years ago. Another important historical information in this song is the embrace of Islam in the region after the previous Islamic empire by Kankan Musa who ruled Mali from 1312-1327 (Sisoko 1992: 1).

With the song "Sunjata", Adama was able to teach me how to play a *kora* song on the guitar. Firstly, the accents and muted sounds were as important to Adama as the knowledge of the chords. The Malian guitarist was able to show me the different ornaments in which he moves around when he plays a traditional *jeli* song on the guitar. Adama emphasised the predominant use of trills, hammers on and pulling off on the left-hand guitar (see transcription 4 and 5 below). In addition, Adama show me two different guitar patterns to play in "Sundjata" in which each of these parts was symbolizing the *jeli*'s three instruments (*kora*, *balaphon* and *ngoni*)⁵. Thus, Adama was able to teach me the *jeli* musical tradition without being a *jeli* but by his

⁵ The *kora* and the *ngoni* are two traditional Malian instruments played by the *jelis*.

interest and by his work in Bamako. Further, Adama was able to show me how the *jeli*'s musical tradition can be played on the guitar. This event also marks the concept of modernisation in postcolonial Mali in which the traditional instruments are transposed into the electric guitar and other instruments such as the drum kit, wind instruments, keyboards and the electric bass. Adama's knowledge in this song was contrasted in my previous learning by the Banning Eyre's book on "African guitar" which dedicates a chapter to *jeli*'s music (Eyre 2002). Eyre is able to put in tablature the basics of *jeli*'s guitar style and includes the song "Sundjata" in this book.



Transcription 3. "Sunjata" rhythmic part 1



Transcription 4. "Sunjata" rhythmic part 2

However, by learning "Sundjata" with Adama, I realized that the traditional *jeli* repertoire is played differently by each musician. This point relates to the form in which a standard jazz song is played in different ways by each jazz player and the originality of arrangements is appreciated by the local audience. Therefore, the song "Sundjata" contributed to realize that the *jeli*'s repertoire is based on the invocation of a musical soundscape in order to narrate and sing the epic story of the Mande Empire; however, for the musician, any *jeli*'s song is a challenge for innovation. In fact, according to Adama, this is the way in which the *jeli*'s repertoire is not static and keeps evolving. This points out that *jeli*'s music as traditional music are syncretic and, thus, have not obtained untouchable sense of authenticity in the form this repertoire continues innovating. Thus, *jeli* music is syncretic in terms of non-static musical tradition that emerges differently in new generations of griots, especially during the postcolonial Malian era. According to Susan Assai, musical syncretism is a product of investigating different types of musical styles and adopt them in a musical tradition (1997: 51). Thus, Assai and his concept of syncretism approximates to the definition of multimusicality. However, in syncretism refers to the use of new influences in a musical style; however, multimusicality does not attend to a musical style but to the musician's musical knowledge and how he/she applies it to different musical cultures.

With regard to the learning process of Ali Farka Toure's song "Asco", Adama emphasized that Toure's music is influenced by Tamashek and Songhay's musical cultures. That is due to the

long relationship between the Songhay Empire with the Tuaregs in Niafunke. Further, Toure did not come from a musician's family, therefore, the Songhay do not limit its musical culture to the concept of griot. The song "Asco" is an instrumental song that became very popular in Mali. However, Toure's music was more known by his blend of Songhay and Tamasek music; including his lyrics about the construction and effort to have a prosperous Malian future (Sanz 2006: 136). In this song, Adama taught me how to improvise over a pentatonic scale, although emphasizing the "passing notes" based on semi-tones intervals. The one who is familiar with pentatonic scales in American blues is aware that a pentatonic scale lacks semitones. In the case of Adama's way of looking at the pentatonic scale, there was not a rigid form of looking at it but the pentatonic scale was more related to the possibilities of going "in and out" in order to construct melodic motifs.



Transcription 5. "Asco" from Ali Farka Toure played by Adama Drame in A instead of G

The next example of multimusicality is a Dorian pentatonic song by Sanata Diarra entitled "Sababou Djoungou". The chords in this song are: I (C) and II (D). Adama plays this song with a plectrum moving along two different guitar frets: the third and the fifth. However, the counter-rhythm in the right hand is rapid and well defined. According to Adama, in order to play Diarra's music one has to control and be precise with the right hand rhythm. In other words, Diarra's music requires a good sense of time structure and able to play in ternary beats (6/8). Equally important, the time structure is of 8 beats or 12/8 in the guitar and *karinyan* (see footnote 1). Once the guitar riff is played, the next challenge is to improvise and get back to the main melodic motif. Therefore, the musical attitude, in terms of melody and rhythm varied from previous songs. In this case there is a ternary rhythm and a pentatonic Dorian scale: further, the music is either in Bambara or Wassoulou language.



Transcription 6. "Sababou Djoungou" from Sanata Diarra played by Adama Drame

The final example is a 10 bar blues improvisation with Adama Drame where he shows all

his multimusical resources. The last example of multimusicality rather refers to the use of a cosmopolitan musical style as blues; and the use of musical guitar resources from Songhay, Wassoulou and *jeli* styles. The 12 bar blues we played consists of a tonic (I), dominant (V) and subdominant (IV) chord structure: C/C/F/F/C/C/G/C/G. Adama's improvisation in this song is summarised in the figures x, x, x. The most surprising realization in this 10 bar blues improvisation was that Adama was not aware of the structure of the blues song. He commented that while I was playing the rhythmic guitar, Adama tended to use all his musical resources. Moreover, given my musical analysis of Adama's multimusicality, I was made aware of his different musical resources while improvising in a 10 bar blues.

Thus, by multimusicality, I refer to the use of *jeli* (Mixolydian, Lydian and major scales), Songhay (pentatonic major) and Wassoulou (Dorian pentatonic) in a blues song. In this case, all the scales performed by Adama are tonal and do not sound wrong from either perspective: western harmony and Adama's sense of harmony. For Adama, his multimusical language is based on the skill to improvise a melodic motif by using different national musical cultures. In other words, Adama attempts to find a new musical language from a harmonic cycle, innovating a cosmopolitan style as blues. However, the sense of musical cosmopolitanism lays on knowing where the blues was originated (which is a long debate) and how has evolved and played differently in other parts of the world. For instance, if Adama released a blues album, that would be innovative for the blues style as for his multimusical resources used in such album. Therefore, cosmopolitanism and multimusicality are linked together when one is able to perform different types of national guitar styles and can adapt them in a cosmopolitan style.

In sum, the multimusicality is a form of defining the musical knowledge of Adama in regards to the Malian musical styles he plays. Multimusicality also makes reference to a national, postcolonial geographical space such as Mali whereas there are different musical cultures coexisting. More precisely, Bamako is the town in which Adama was able to learn different national musical cultures; thus, being able to perform with different national artists. The sense of cosmopolitanism in Adama's guitar style comes from being able to improvise through his multimusical knowledge in a blues song, not only pentatonic scales but heptatonic resources (Lydian, Mixolydian or major scale).

The social representation of Adama's multimusicality

In this section, there is an analysis of some of the social contexts in which Adama's multimusicality is important such as: a Bambara wedding, a national tour with Sanata Diarra, and his return to his home town, Bangas⁶. This section makes reference to the postcolonial context in Mali by way of Adama performing in different urban and rural spaces. Further, the study of musical representation is also important in order to understand the cultural aspects involved in the different music performances analysed in this section. Further, the concept of musical representation will be based on Charles Pierce's views in how the interpreter within the musical context and the music itself analyses the representation of a music performance (1955:

⁶ These social contexts are part of my musical research with Adama in November 2006.

99). In other words, there is an examination of Adama's representation in different types of national music contexts.

For instance, the Bambara wedding took place in a neighborhood in Bamako called Kalaban-Coura. During the preparation for the wedding, the groom prepares a tent with chairs and a public address system for music. The local performers for the wedding were a drummer, guitarist, bass player and a dancer. During the ceremony, most of the audience sitting in chairs are women; including the bride. The groom is the singer of his own wedding and will sing praises to the families attending the wedding. This type of praise-song recounts the history of the Mande Empire founded by Sunjata Keita in the thirteenth century (Sisoko 1992: 1). In this way, the groom will collect money from the audience until he asks his future bride's mother for her daughter. This social context re-enact the rural areas and the traditional form in which the marriage took place during the Mande Empire. For this event, Adama played a range of musical styles ranging from reggae, *jeli* music and Wassoulou music. Adama is told by the singer what he wants to sing; therefore the role of the musicians is to follow the singer's repertoire for around four hours until the groom finally ask for marriage to his future wife's mother.

According to Adama, the groom contracted him because of his talent to perform different types of Malian music. This point insists on the representation of the Malian musical culture embodied by different styles and recognized in this form by the national citizens. Thus, Adama has more possibilities to play in wedding in Bamako than regional musicians specialised in one or two national musical styles. In this case, the semiotics of Adama's performance in this wedding would be based on the importance of being multimusical; moreover, his social reputation of being capable to play different musical styles.

In reference to Sanata Diarra's national tour, the context was based on the Malian musical circuit of a popular musician. This week-long tour served to analyse the Malian audience towards Sanata Diarra and specifically about Adama's representation as a multimusical guitarist. Further, Sanata's musical tour serves to contrast Adama's multimusicality with Diarra's musicians who are also multimusical. Such personal realization to know that multimusicality was common among many Malian musicians helped me to investigate the concept of postcolonial Malian musical culture for Adama and Diarra's musicians.

In this article, there is an analysis of Diarra's concert in Bugoni, a small town in northern Mali. Firstly, Diarra's musicians started the concert by performing some reggae songs and "Mandjou", a song previously commented on in this article. Diarra's musicians attempted to warm up the concert with popular songs appealing to the local audience. In these songs, the musicians tended to improvise and to give a distinctive sound to the songs performed. Later, Diarra came on stage and then part of the audience would sing the artist's songs while dancing. In this concert, Sanata presented her album *Donkari*, a combination of Bambara and Takamba originating in northern Mali. Diarra is appreciated by local audiences by the way in which she fuses both national musical styles. Diarra herself is a singer of contemporary Mali residing in Bamako where different musical national styles are increasingly mixed. Therefore, Diarra's music demonstrates the interest of Malian audiences to embody the combination of different types of national musical heritages. For this reason, Adama's multimusicality was well-received

by Sanata Diarra. As mentioned earlier, the musical representation of Adama in Sanata's music is based on the use of the guitarist's multimusicality; therefore, the use of different national musical styles is valid and promoted by Diarra providing. In addition, multimusicality provides a new type of syncretism based on the use of different musical culture.

Adama was the lead-guitarist in Diarra's band. During the rehearsal, I observed how Diarra's musicians tended to talk about the different national musical styles for the musical arrangements, more specifically about *jeli*, Bambara and *soukous* music. In my view, the concept of multimusicality was predominant during Diarra's band rehearsals. In addition, I realized that during break rehearsals, Diarra's band tended to perform classic *jeli*'s songs such as Sundjata or Keme Burema in order to bring a certain musical attitude to Diarra's music. In other words, Diarra's band musical understanding could not be possible unless there was a notion of the plurality of musical styles in her national musical heritage. When I asked Adama about the multimusicality of Diarra's musicians, the Malian guitarist affirmed that because the musicians reside in Bamako, they have to learn to play different national musical styles. Therefore, Adama referred to the social context of the Malian musicians in the capital were gradually able to perform a large array of national musical styles. However, Adama insists that apart from Bamako, one hardly encounters musicians who are able to perform different national musical styles. In sum, Adama affirmed that Diarra's musical project is another national, hybrid project in which many musicians in Bamako are immersed.

Finally, there is a description of when Adama and I went to his hometown Bangas; and how his family observes Adama's multimusicality in contrast to Bangas's local music played with the *kelengoni* (fretless one stringed instrument). Adama's welcome was by playing during more than four hours while some of his family members played djembe and others sung. The lyrics were improvised in Bambara by receiving and remembering Adama's heritage as a local musician from Bangas, and especially by his surname's history, Drame. Most of the songs played by Adama during that afternoon were simple chord progressions to invite songs rather than demonstrating his multimusical virtuosity. In this local context, Adama's interest was based on the familiar social context. Later, there was a *krikri* musician (similar to healer or sangoma in southern Africa) that played local music with Adama. In this last musical session of the afternoon, Adama and the *krikri* musician performed praise songs to welcome Adama and I in Bangas. During the days with Adama's family, the Malian guitarist did not show any proof of his multimusicality. Moreover, Adama emphasized Zani Diabate's concert when he was six years old, as his awakening towards music and about the possibility of performing different types of music not-related to his local musical culture. In this sense, Adama has captured the scent of postcolonial Malian musical culture. For this reason, the Malian guitarist decided to go to reside in Bamako, a common phenomenon in other multimusical musicians in other regions of Mali.

In conclusion, the three national social contexts examined in this section shows how Adama contributed to not only different musical cultures in Mali; but how he is able to have a concept of postcolonial Mali that links the first two Republics and the consequent time of hybrid mixtures mostly happening in Bamako. As a case in point, there are other albums recorded in

Mali in which two national styles are fused such as “Toumani and Ali Farka Toure: The moon” or more cosmopolitan as “Amaduet Mariem: Dimanche a Bamako”. The concept of “national hybridity” in Malian music started in the first republic with the advent of Cuban musical influences. Secondly, the specialisation on *jeli*'s music with bands as the Rail Band or *Les ambassadeours*. Finally, during the 1980s and 1990s, and before the advent of the *World Music* industry, Malian music started to be interested in combining different national musical styles. According to Adama, the postcolonial frontiers are mostly artificial and does not represent the cultural borders of the African continent, in the case of Mali, the Mande empire embodied the entire country; therefore the social interconnectedness between the different regions of Mali already existed during precolonial times (Adama Drame's interview, 10-11-2006). For the Malian citizens, the final independence of Mali symbolized the re-enactment of precolonial Mali; including the exchange of traditional instruments transposed by electric instruments in contemporary Mali (Charry 2012: 1). In addition, Adama's multimusicality shows how the semiotics or representation of musical performances not only validates the collaboration of a non-member of certain national music style; but it also incorporates new types of musical syncretism as in the case of Diarra's music.

Conclusion

Adama's multimusicality has served to discuss the capability of a Malian musician to understand and perform different national musical styles. According to the Malian guitarist, such musical phenomenon is caused by the encounter of different national musicians in Bamako. Further, the different social contexts in which Adama performs in Mali demonstrate that the concept of postcolonial Mali is based on a plural society in which the musical cultures are not only promoted but encourage to fuse with other national styles.

In reference to the use of bimusicality as an ethnomusicological term, this article attempts to show that while bimusicality mostly refers to western musicians who are able to perform a non-western style or vice versa, this article focus on the learning of national musical styles by Adama Drame. In addition, the concept of cosmopolitanism in the use of Cuban music by Malian artists during the first republic echoes with Turino's studies of mbira music and jazz in Zimbabwe (1998). In this case, Mali was more connected with the so-called non-aligned countries, more specifically with the Soviet Union and Cuba. Therefore, cosmopolitanism is used in this article to address the use of foreign musical influences in postcolonial Mali, more specifically in electric bands. On the other hand, one should not forget that nowadays Bamako is influenced by diverse international musical styles such as hip hop or electronic music (Charry 2012).

The reason for the concept of multimusicality in Malian musicians can be due to the fact that much of the music found in Mali is based on stringed instruments (kora, ngoni, kamalengoni, bolon, etc.), therefore, the music is melodic and offers a high contrast between the different musical cultures. Another reason can be because there has been a harmonious coexistence between most of the cultures in Mali leading to the mutual knowledge of the music performed in each region. In any case, this article contributes to explore the reasons of the

multimusicality as to expose a new concept in ethnomusicology in which national artists are able to play styles from diverse regions from their own country.

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**Biography / Biografía / Biografia**

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