

sheet and receive in return correlation output with other variables in our archives, including quality controls and interdependence controls. The *manual* is clearly the key tool here; from that manual's charts, graphs, tables, and illustrations, we also must prepare wall charts, slides, and film strips for classroom use. We must cultivate a close working relationship with one or more social scientists at each member university who are interested in the classroom use of our files and our computer archive.

We must continue to develop our publications program, and focus more sharply on our two areas of special competence: bibliography and hologeistic studies. HRAF Press thus ought in the future to publish a larger proportion of such studies; a smaller proportion of other kinds. *Behavior Science Notes* must be further developed as a journal of importance; in these times of increasing specialization, we can aspire to make it the world's leading journal of hologeistic theory tests, hologeistic method, and quality-controlled bibliography. If our THINCS project is adequately funded, we can also hope to make *Behavior Science Notes* a leading journal of interdisciplinary review articles surveying the current scientific status of leading problems in social science.

But adequate funding—that is the thing. HRAF today, like many other academic institutions, has money troubles. We are living partly on our savings, paying out more than we take in. As President, my first task is to sustain and nourish our program by bringing in outside funds to balance our budget and pay our way. I pledge my utmost efforts to that end and I ask all my fellow workers for their help and support.

Musical Instruments and Practices of the Tsonga Beer-Drink

Thomas F. Johnston*

This article examines the musical and social functions of various instruments found in the context of the Shangana-Tsonga social beer-drink in Mozambique and the Northern Transvaal. In addition to the usual beaten/blown distinctions (which are primarily etic), important emic distinctions are noted, such as secular/sacred, privately-owned/communally-owned, professionally-played/nonprofessionally-played, and ensemble-oriented/solo-oriented.

The social roles of the players are discussed, including those of the wandering minstrel who carries complaints and news from beer-drink to beer-drink; the group of middle-aged women who generally provide the beer-drink drumming; the competitive intervillage dance-teams, who enhance the prestige (and hence the political support) of the home-village chiefs they represent; and the court's musical retainer-jester, who entertains visiting dignitaries (at chiefly beer-drinks) on the Shangana-Tsonga instrument par excellence, the xizambi, or notched friction-bow.

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Of all the sources on which the Human Relations Area Files depends, perhaps the one most frequently cited within the anthropological literature since 1930 is Henri Junod's ethnography of the Shangana-Tsonga (Tonga,

*Thomas F. Johnston is a graduate of California State University at Hayward (M.A. in Music, 1968) and California State University at Fullerton (M.A. in Anthropology, 1972), and he received a Ph.D. from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1972. He carried out extensive fieldwork during the period 1968-70 in Mozambique and the Northern Transvaal, under grants from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (#2504) and the University of the Witwatersrand. After an earlier career divided between high school teaching and professional musical work, the author is at present Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Western Washington State College, Bellingham.

Thonga, Tsonga—the latter will be used here), *The Life of a South African Tribe* (1927).

I lived among the Tsonga during the period 1968-70, carrying out fieldwork under grants from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (#2504) and the University of the Witwatersrand, and I wish to point out here that, while Junod's work is highly authoritative and reliable, it is time that anthropologists noted the following:

(1) Junod spent the first half of his career among the Ronga of Mozambique and the second half among the Tsonga of the Northern Transvaal. The terminology, customs, and institutions of these two groups do not always coincide, but most anthropological writers have failed to observe any distinction.

(2) Junod published first in French in 1897, then in English in 1913, and then in English again in 1927. The Tsonga of his 1927 ethnography are of immigrant descent, undergoing rapid acculturative change due to contact with Pedi and Venda groups in the Northern Transvaal. This change is still proceeding, but anthropologists utilizing Junod's material have failed to allow for dynamic processes both between and since Junod's publications.

(3) Between his first and second efforts, Junod became heavily influenced by Arnold Van Gennep's *Rites de passage* (1910), and thereafter saw everything as the beginning, middle, or end of something. Nothing stood in its own right. All stood in relation to the rite.

(4) Junod was first and foremost a missionary; from the (correct) observation that no music occurred during propitiation, he was led to state that no music was associated with Tsonga religion, this despite his awareness that spirit exorcism is largely a musical procedure. Given the two questions "What is Tsonga religion?" and "What music accompanies Tsonga religion?" an incorrect and ethnocentric answer to the first ensures an incorrect answer to the second.

The present article, then, is an attempt to correct and amplify what is known of Tsonga musical artifacts and

practices, particularly those associated with the ceremonial beer-drink.

Historical Background of the Tsonga

In the Tsonga language, the name Tsonga means "people of the east," and it must therefore have been first applied to them by peoples of south-central Africa, such as the Zulu, Swazi, and Xhosa, who constitute that primarily pastoral group known as the Nguni. Despite many cultural similarities between the Tsonga and the Nguni, the lack of clicks in the language suggests that the Tsonga did not participate in that phase of Nguni history during which clicks were absorbed from the languages of the aboriginal Bushmen and Hottentots.

In Zambia and Rhodesia live groups known as the Plateau Tonga and the Zambesi Tonga; in the Inhambane area live a group known as the Tonga; these groups are culturally and linguistically distinct from the southern Tsonga.

Prior to the second quarter of the last century, the Tsonga had been resident along the southern Mozambique coast for at least three centuries. An early mention occurs in a work first published at Lisbon in 1605: "In some of these lands other tongues are spoken, especially the botonga, and it is the reason why they call these lands Botonga and their inhabitants Botongas" (Dos Santos 1891: 199-200).

From 1835 on, invading Zulu under the warlords Zwagendaba, Shaka, and Soshangane (whose name is the basis of the term Shangana or Shangaan—an epithet to the Tsonga) caused the westerly-situated Nhlanganu clan to flee from Mozambique into the "hitherto-unpopulated Low Veld . . . in the present Pilgrimsrest district, in which they are mainly congregated today" (Van Warmelo 1935: 91), and the ranks of these first Tsonga immigrants were soon swelled by a steady influx from other areas. The immigrant Tsonga, being located inland and to the north of most Southern African tribes, were one of the last to come under European influence. The first substantial

contact with them was established by immigrant white farmers under Potgieter, who had trekked northward between the Vet and Vaal rivers, crossing the latter where Potchefstroom now stands. The Transvaal trekkers, after first scattering the Ndebele under Mzilikazi, encountered several splintered Tswana tribes in the Western Transvaal. Proceeding to Ohrigstad and Lydenburg in 1845, they met the Pedi there, and eventually the Tsonga and the Venda in the north, the Swazi in the east, the Zulu in the south-east, and the Mapoch Ndebele in the central Transvaal.

In 1853 a volksraad Resolution instructed the Commandants of the Republic of the Transvaal to grant lands to the Bantu "conditional on good behavior," ignoring the fact that the Bantu, of course, already occupied these lands. In 1881 a Native Location Commission appointed by the Pretoria Convention proposed the assignment of "equitable locations, with due regard to actual occupation," but in 1899 the Anglo-Boer War broke out.

Another Native Location Commission was appointed in 1905, three years after the war's end, and its report (submitted in 1907) dealt conclusively with all Transvaal locations except those at Lichtenburg, Rustenburg, and Marico, all of which had been prescribed by the previous Commission.

Today the Transvaal Tsonga occupy a 780,000-morgen homeland (annexed in part from Vendaland), largely concentrated in two major blocks bordering on the Kruger National Park, and the eastern Tsonga occupy practically all of Mozambique south of the Rio Save.

Since the overlordship of Soshangane came to an end, the Tsonga have not constituted a permanent and powerful political unit, but have been loosely subdivided into the same groups that existed prior to the Nguni upheaval. These westward-migrating groups settled in latitudes of the Transvaal corresponding to those of their former homeland, and today a south-to-north traveler on either side of the border would encounter a "spectrum" of Tsonga groups, each genetically related to a similar one residing across the border. Thus while the Transvaal Tsonga com-

over a council of local headmen and meets periodically with neighboring Chiefs to discuss administration problems, boundary disputes, and other matters. Recent political developments (1969) have been the establishment of a Matshangana Territorial Authority at Giyani, the formation of a six-man Executive Committee functioning as a cabinet, and the creation of a separate Matshangana Government Service as an interim step toward the Transkei-type of internal self-rule based on a Legislative Assembly.

Tsonga Village Life and Subsistence Patterns

Between November 1968 and October 1970, I spent approximately six three-month periods in the field, residing with Tsonga musicians, diviners, and headmen in the Louis Trichardt, Sibasa, Shingwidzi, Tzaneen, Letaba, Mapai, Chibuto, and Manjacaze areas, noting musical, social, economic, religious, and political behavior patterns.

Both the southern and northern Tsonga are patrilineal, virilocal people, a considerable proportion of whom propitiate their ancestor-spirits (*swikwembu*) and engage in polygyny. Many of the chiefs, herbalists, and diviners who served as informants and in certain instances hosts to the writer possess up to ten wives, and less powerful individuals possess two or three. A decline in polygyny has been noted around the immediate vicinity of missions, but Christianity has gained no widespread support among the Tsonga in the rural areas; many informants refer derisively to the attempts of missionaries to set texts in the Tsonga language to hymn tunes from Europe, thus making nonsense of the words (which lose their speech-tone).

The shifting of Tsonga groups by the government from the Venda-occupied Zoutpansberg Hills has slightly increased the density of the Northern Transvaal Tsonga population who inhabit the high veld south of the Limpopo River, west of the Kruger National Park, north of Pietersburg, and east of Tswanaland. Village size has tended to "condense," due to land shortage.

The Tsonga build round mud huts with conical roofs of thatch, three or four in a circular formation, enclosed with-

in a low perimetral wall. These huts are inhabited by a man, his wives, and his wives' children—one hut to each wife. A village consists of from ten to fifty such kraals (depending upon the available water supply), with many, but not all, of the inhabitants belonging to the patrilineage of the headman.

The distance between villages ranges from one to ten miles, depending upon the ruggedness of the intervening hills. An estimated eight out of every ten marriages take place between individuals inhabiting adjacent villages, many of whom the writer has observed to make each other's acquaintance at the beer-drink dances of the competitive visiting dance-teams, *rhambela phikezano* (Johnston 1972: 240).

The village of Shingwidzi, in the Northern Transvaal, for instance, consists of about forty-five circles of huts, spread out over the surrounding low hills, and spaced so that there is approximately one to three hundred feet between each perimetral wall. This arrangement allows sufficient space for the gardens, where maize is planted every October after the first rains.

In addition to maize, the Tsonga plant squash, pumpkins, sugarcane, and groundnuts (peanuts). The first two are planted between the rows of maize and the last two in separate gardens—the groundnuts being particularly set apart because of their special fertility symbolism (i.e. their resemblance to testicles).

Goats and fowl are kept, and the more prominent families keep twenty to forty head of cattle, which the herdboys with their flutes lead to graze on neighboring hills. After the harvest, however, they graze freely on the maize-patches. Men whose fathers own no cattle must find local work as unskilled laborers or sign on for the urban mine compounds if they wish to obtain wives, for at the time of betrothal about twelve head of cattle change hands.

The Tsonga Horticultural Year

The frequency and duration of Tsonga musical performances are related to the changing seasons of the year, for

periods of minimum horticultural activity lend themselves naturally to periods of maximum recreational and musical activity. Women who must be up at dawn to hoe or to weed are unlikely to spend long evening hours at musical beer-drinks, thus there is a decline in the occurrence of the latter between the months of October and April. A year of severe drought, too, will reduce the number of occasions when musical performances such as ceremonial beer-drinks are held. One of the bicultural problems in the area today—one in which the anthropologist can perhaps play a role—is the question of how seriously government food-aid programs in the Bantustan locations should consider maize needs in relation to the social function of what appear at first glance to be nonsurvival-oriented institutions like the ceremonial beer-drink. The tendency hitherto has been to consider only nutritional needs and to ignore the essential functional nature of this institution as a setting for the redefinition of statuses.

The holding of musical performances within earshot of a large-scale beer-brew is taboo, for communal vocal music and drumming “would sour the beer”—this is a subsidiary factor that also affects the frequency of music. The allotted maize must be soaked, crushed, winnowed in a basket, pounded, and then boiled; this takes several days from the commencement of the process to the final product, and musical performances are not held during this period.

The names of the Tsonga months of the year give some indication of the seasonal fluctuations that affect the various patterns of subsistence. For instance, Hukuri (November) means “month of the baby chickens,” and N’wedzamaha (December) means “month of the baby antelopes.” February is known as the “month of the small grain-destroying birds,” while March is known as the “month of the big grain-destroying birds.” Formerly, without a written language or calendar, the Tsonga relied upon the changing seasons and their related fauna and flora fluctuations for their time perspective, or, rather, the former shaped and molded the particular direction taken by the latter.

Tsonga music mirrors the occupational roles, social al-

legiances, and rivalries of the participants. The manifestation and balancing of these rivalries within the context of Tsonga musical performances contribute toward the equilibrium of the Tsonga social system.

Tsonga music also restores harmony in Tsonga society by providing an audible and visible release from the tensions and conflicts of everyday life in the crowded Bantustan locations. This is not to deny the specific, ceremonial function of musical rites, but to point out the overarching, *integrative* function of this important social activity.

The Tsonga Ceremonial Beer-drink: A Brief Description

The adult population of a Tsonga village ranges from a minimum of thirty individuals to over two hundred, thus at any one time a high probability exists for the occurrence of a special event in the life cycle of at least one individual. It is to mark these various events that Tsonga ceremonial beer-drinks are generally held.

Examples include giving birth, detachment of the umbilical cord (after three days), closure of the triangular posterior fontanelle (after six months), closure of the diamond-shaped anterior fontanelle (after two years), betrothal (at about eighteen years), and bereavement. The occurrence of the first menses is not immediately celebrated, but, like circumcision, is the subject of secret rites and music when a large number of novices are initiated together. Here, the ceremonial beer-drink occurs back in the village after the coming-out.

Word of a special event is passed through the village by the host (usually an elder) and, if warranted by affinal ties, through neighboring villages, often by means of the wandering minstrel, *xilombe*. Some rural Tsonga own bicycles, which are often used to carry an invitation concerning a ceremonial beer-drink. The writer, who at one period drove a small pick-up truck, was frequently called upon to deliver such messages to neighboring villages or to transport groups of individuals delegated for the purpose.

In brief acknowledgment of the economic aspects of a Tsonga ceremonial beer-drink, it should be noted that beer,

brewed in bulk from maize and from the *marula* fruit of the *nkanyi* tree (*Sclerocarya caffra* Sond.), is an important negotiable commodity among the Tsonga, and that a considerable proportion of the economy is founded upon its transfer. It serves as remuneration for labor, tributary token to a ruler, and, because of its high percentage of sediment and low alcoholic content, a nourishing "food" with which to entertain guests during the various ceremonies marking the life cycle.

The communal consumption of beer, and consequently the performance of its attendant musical activities, is governed, as we have seen, by the changing seasons of the horticultural year. Beer is brewed mainly in the period from May to September, when the maize crop has been newly harvested. This season is called *ritlhavula*—"first fruit," and beer brewed from the first maize is called *xikandzamalembé*—"it sharpens hoes."

Considerable formality is observed at a Tsonga beer-drink, and since the principal actors are likely to feature prominently in the performance of the music, a brief description of their roles seems in order. After the arrival of the invited guests (*ku widza*, "to invite formally"), the host, known as the *n'wengi*, pours beer into several vessels. This ceremony is known as *ku tsangulela*. He drinks the first draught of beer (*xiungu*) himself, to show that it is not poisoned. This act is known as *ku susa vuloyi*, "to dispel witchcraft." The second draught of beer (*xiwidzo*) is taken by the wife of the host to the village headman as a sign of respect. The third draught (*xihlutwa*) is offered to the senior elder present. If it should be a woman, there may at first be some dispute over the question of seniority, and it is usually settled by referring to the year of her *khomba* initiation.

Relative Seating Positions at the Beer-drink

The relative seating positions on the *xitsendzele* (village plaza) of the old men, the young men, the old women, and the young women affect the emergence of certain musical forms. The old men sit in the shade, on the raised mud plat-

form surrounding a Tsonga hut, and tend to join in the response, all singing the lower part. The young men stand in the sun near the old men, shouting derisive remarks at the young women (who are potential mates) and occasionally dancing vigorously. The old women spread goatskins and sit on the ground along a low mud wall, swaying and clapping. The young women with infants tied to their backs do not sit, but jog to-and-fro around the yard, taking turns as cantor, singing the upper parts of the response, and ululating by flapping their lips with their fingers.

Incipient Stress In The Age/Sex Divisions

From the above description of the formal arrangement of participants at a Tsonga beer-drink, it is apparent that there are visible and audible manifestations of a vertical division between young and old (reflecting authority structure) and of a parallel or horizontal division between the sexes (reflecting in part the division of labor in such horticultural activities as the raising and processing of the maize necessary for beer-production, both of which are done by women).

In the struggle between young and old men for the control of tribal affairs (today particularly in economic matters) there is, of course, an inherent stress situation, as there is also between men and women concerning the production and supply of beer—the women are held responsible when there is a deficiency as well as when there is plenty.

While these various forms of social stress (some of which are related to the age/sex division of labor and of power) appear to represent a dichotomization of specific levels of Tsonga society into the "haves" and the "have-nots," the Tsonga ceremonial beer-drink so regularizes and validates statuses, ranks, and roles (new and old) that optimum harmony is encouraged between competing or rival groups. Knowing one's precise rung on the social ladder is conducive to a feeling of mutual respect for those above and below—the privilege of one is the "non-right" of another, and a system of duties and obligations links Tsonga society into a harmonious network of formal relationships.

Specific Dyadic Relationships in Beer-song Performance

Tsonga beer-songs are usually performed antiphonally in ensemble, with a leader providing the call (which may contain improvisation) and a chorus providing the fixed response. The formal structure of each song is "circular" (metrically constant and repetitive), there being no mandatory beginning or ending point. The caller may commence with the call or he may elect to commence with the portion of the song that is tonally most definitive, i.e. the response or the last part of the response.

The caller, who is always a dominant individual within the community (and who is sanctioned by the host at a beer-drink) usually decides which songs will be performed, but the decision may be disputed by groups of wrangling old women. The matter is sometimes settled by reference to the disputants' year of initiation—the senior ideally prevails.

The overall Tsonga musical repertoire probably consists of about five hundred traditional songs, a few of which fall into disuse each year and are replaced by others. Of this large body of music, about two hundred are universally known throughout Tsongaland, and about two-thirds of these latter are songs of the Tsonga social beer-drink. It should be noted, then, that there is at the same time a body of Tsonga beer-songs *entering* the repertoire and a body of Tsonga beer-songs *leaving* the repertoire; the controlling, dominant group of elders tends to be familiar with and insistent upon performance of the latter, while the challenging, emergent generation tends to be familiar with and insistent upon performance of the former.

The applicability of a particular beer-song—its use as a dance accompaniment—depends in part upon certain built-in numerical factors, such as possible iambic-trochaic stress, metrical length in terms of the total of mixed duple- and triple-grouped units (i.e. the span of absolute time occupied by one complete cycle), and dance-specific needs. The dances of each of the Tsonga social institutions demand a given set of symmetrical/asymmetrical melodic and rhythmic characteristics.

In the vocal music occurring at beer-drinks, it has been noted that the use of personal names and other evidence of improvisation seem to occur frequently. Actually, the use of personal names shows a dyadic relationship between the singer and some member of his or her audience, so that the element of improvisation is minimal. The personal name has merely been substituted for some other name within the beer-song, which is almost invariably a traditional song.

It is interesting to note a variation of the dyadic functioning of Tsonga music (meaning the way in which caller and chorus, performers and audience, etc. interact) in legalistic situations. In such situations, which often assume the nature of an intervillage beer-drink, judicial problems are solved by the juxtaposition of rival singing ensembles. A junior headman contending for higher office may win or lose the constituency by virtue of the margin of volume with which his singers overwhelm the music of his opponent. At the Shingwidzi annual fair, I saw a dispute over the use of trucks for homeward rides settled in this fashion.

Tsonga Musical Styles

In addition to music of the ceremonial beer-drink, there are five other major Tsonga musical styles: children's music, drumming school music, circumcision school music, girls' puberty school music, and exorcism music. Each of these styles, like that of the beer-drink music, possesses considerable homogeneity, both with regard to functional and tonal characteristics.

To readers accustomed to the independent grouping of work songs, funeral songs, praise songs, and epics in many other preliterate societies, it should be pointed out that the Tsonga regard the occasions that necessitate performance of these songs as opportunities for a beer-drink, and classify the songs under the general rubric of *tinsimu nta le byalweni*, songs for beer-drinking.

Musical Instruments Used at Beer-drinks

Ngoma Drum

The *ngoma* is the main instrument of the Tsonga beer-drink, and it is obtained by purchase or barter from the neighboring Venda, who still boast craftsmen who manu-

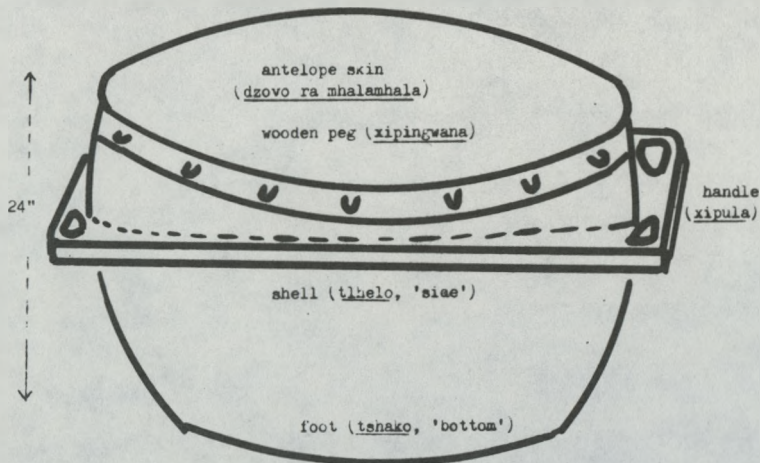


Figure 2.—Venda Ngoma Drum with Tsonga Names of Parts

facture it. With carved handles which frame the shell, these drums come in a family of large, medium, and small sizes (*xingomana*). The three sizes may be used simultaneously to provide rhythmic accompaniment for the various beer-drink dances.

Xigubu Drum

The Tsonga *xigubu* drum is a double-membraned, cylindrical drum, made from discarded canisters of all sizes. It is the primary instrument of the drumming school and is also used at beer-drinks when there are no *ngoma* drums.

Ndzumba Drum

The Tsonga *ndzumba* drum is a fairly large, goblet-shaped drum used primarily in the girls' puberty school, but some-

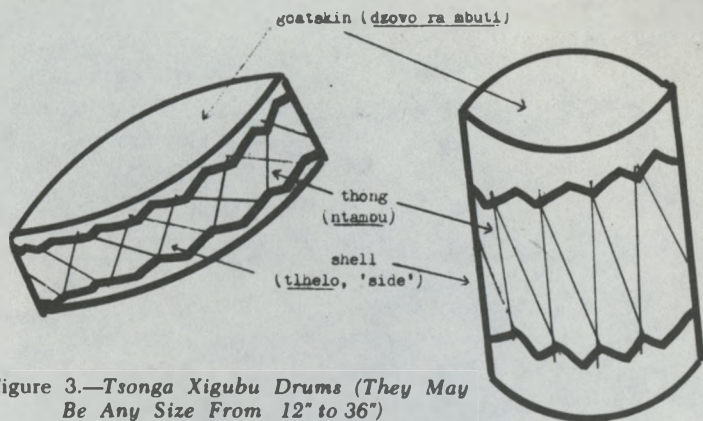


Figure 3.—Tsonga Xigubu Drums (They May Be Any Size From 12" to 36")

times found at beer-drinks. It is often paired with a smaller version called a *ndzumbana*. Women may not peer into the hole at its base.

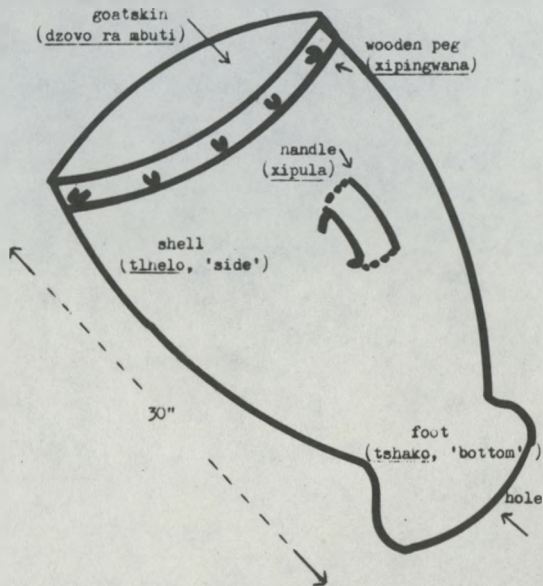


Figure 4.—Tsonga Ndzumba Drum

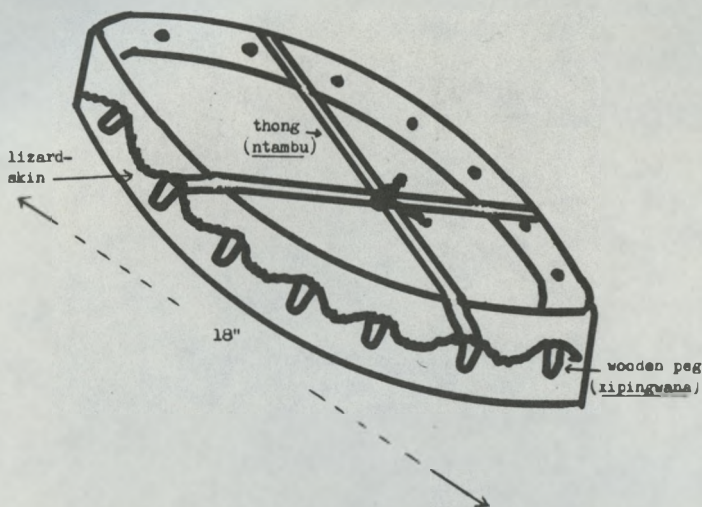


Figure 5.—Tsonga Ncomane Drum (Rear View)

Ncomane Drum

This drum belongs exclusively to the exorcism rites, and only appears at beer-drinks when its owner—the *dzuavi*, diviner—"intrudes" with his vocation into the latter. It is a hand-held, stick-played tambourine.

Fruitshell Leg-rattles (Marhonge)

Tsonga women- and girl-dancers attach rattles to their calves, producing the characteristic *chaka-chaka* sound that serves for step-emphasis during intricate movements. Twelve or sixteen small fruitshells (*masala*) containing seeds are threaded in rows onto a square framework (*rihlangi*), to which tie-cords are attached. The rattles are considered to be repositories of ancestor-spirits, and the sound to be the "voice of the gods."

Side-blown Antelope Horn (Mhthalmhala)

This instrument belongs primarily to the girls' puberty rites, but is also seen and heard at the beer-drink that follows coming-out. It is the long, twisted horn of the

kudu antelope, hollowed and with a square embouchure bored in the narrow (closed) end. The 2nd and 3rd partials (8ve and 5th) are yielded with ease, the 4th partial (second 8ve) with some difficulty.

Hand-piana (Timbila) ?

Now widely known to Africanists as the *mbira*, the African hand-piano generally consists of a hollow, cowbell-shaped soundboard made of wood, equipped with one or more banks of springy metal keys, which are plucked with the thumbs. The Tsonga of Mozambique play a 26-key version, which they say comes from the Ndau. The keys of a specimen obtained from Daniel Mupahlo of Maboti

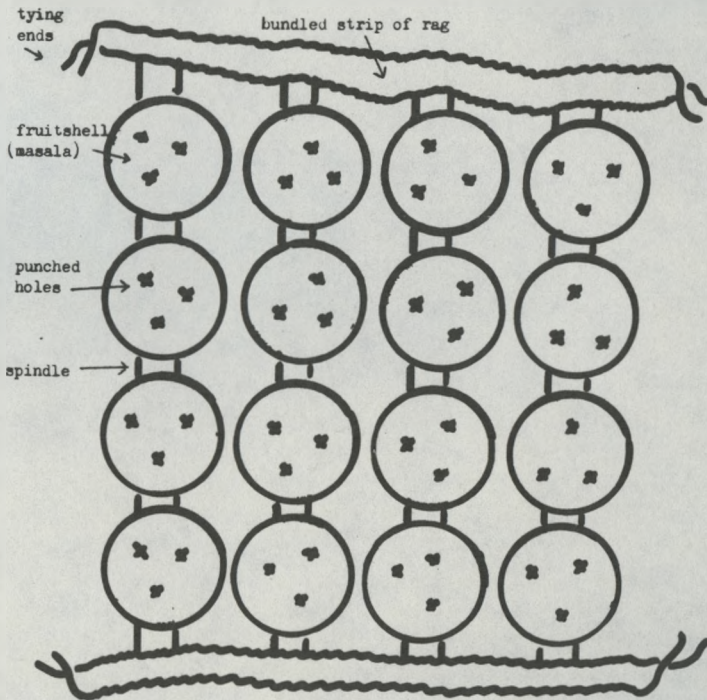


Figure 6.—Tsonga Marhonge Leg-rattle

in March 1970 were made from hammered-out umbrella spokes and arranged in three banks (see Figure 7).

The Tsonga of the Northern Transvaal play a 17-key version of the hand-piano, which they say comes from the Pedi and the Lovedu. Huskisson (1958: Pl. 23) photographically reproduces a 17-key Lovedu instrument, which in appearance exactly resembles the Tsonga instrument. The Tsonga 17-key hand-piano is said by the Tsonga to have been passed on to the Venda, where it is called a *mbila tshipai*. I obtained many 17-key specimens, and in most of them the tuning layout (carefully verified

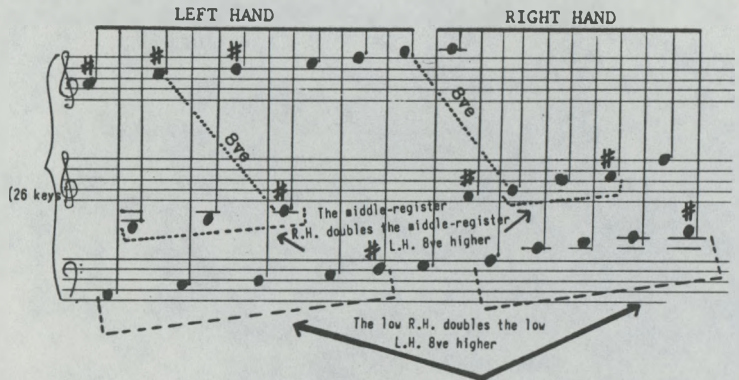


Figure 7.—Tuning Layout of a Hand-piano from the Mozambique Tsonga

in the field before transportation) shows a consistency sufficient to warrant naming it a standard Tsonga tuning. Four examples are given in Figure 8.

In all four tunings, the nine or ten left-hand keys form a gradually descending pentatonic scale, terminating on low DC (in No. 4 these two tones are reversed). After this descent, the pitch of the keys rises again in the right hand, a factor which gives the Transvaal version its characteristic V-shape. Note, however, that the ascent is not a gradual one, but consists first of sharply rising adjacent (or almost adjacent) octaves, followed by a group of 4ths or 5ths.

Hand-pianos are played by soloists for amusement at beer-drinks and elsewhere; the music is polyrhythmic, with each thumb independently following a separate pattern. The player's sung melody is a composite, whose constituent tones emerge from the two thumbed melodies (fingers may also be employed). Although Tsonga hand-piano tunes are governed somewhat by the tuning layout, players often rearrange individual keys to suit desired tunes, meanwhile retaining the same motor pattern.

1
(17 keys)
Elias Faseka.
Navaabe's location.
Transpos.:maj 2nd up.
leap
8ve
4ths/5ths
LEFT THUMB
RIGHT THUMB

2
(17 keys)
Thomas Maxava.
Langutani.
maj 2nd up.
leap
8ve
4ths/5ths
LEFT THUMB
RIGHT THUMB

3
(17 keys)
Samuel Mhluani.
Machekacheka.
4th down.
leap
8ve
4ths/5ths
LEFT THUMB
RIGHT THUMB

4
(16 keys)
Willie Xikaluke.
River Platz.
maj 2nd down.
leap
8ve
4ths/5ths
LEFT THUMB
RIGHT THUMB

Figure 8.—Four Transvaal Tsonga Hand-piano Tunings

Ten- or Twelve-slat Xylophone (Mohambi)

Mohambi is the name applied by the Tsonga to Chopi and Ndau calabash-resonated xylophones, traded northward and used by soloists at beer-drinks and elsewhere. In the Transvaal, Samuel Mudanisi and Klass Maluleke of River Platz play 10-slat Chopi xylophones in duet; these have rectangular slats. In July of 1969, Joseph Maphophe of Langutani gave an excellent performance at the annual Shingwidzi fair, using an oval-slat Ndau instrument.

Wooden separators divide adjacent pairs of slats—the Tsonga regard the pairs as *swa tirhisana*, or “little spouses.” The xylophone may be supported off the ground by a curved wooden frame (*xipula*), which rests against the stomach, with a leather sling passing behind the neck.

Three-hole Transverse Flute (Xitiringo)

Played for amusement at beer-drinks and elsewhere, the flute is generally made from a length of river-reed or from scrap metal piping. The position of the three holes (*machayele*) is determined solely by the maker's placing his first three right-hand fingers across the pipe at a comfortable distance and angle. Either the lower or the upper end is plugged with a maize-cob, and in the case of the former the player additionally opens and closes the upper end with his cupped left palm, humming and grunting loudly while playing (*ku xipfumisa*). Chief Chavani of Chavani's location (near Mt. Ribola) is an excellent player, and his spirited performances, replete with rhythmic grunts and humming, induce his council of old men to dance, laugh, and clap. *Xitiringo* tunings have been the subject of a study by Kirby, himself a flautist (1934: 124). The same study includes brief descriptions of some of the instruments we are describing here.

Notched Friction-bow (Xizambi)

Little has been written of the notched, mouth-resonated friction-bow, yet it is the musical bow at which the

Tsonga, of all the Bantu-speaking peoples, excel the most. The Tsonga *xizambi* is a 14" to 19" bow, activated not by plucking or striking but by rubbing its notched arc with a 14" notched rattlestick bearing seed-filled fruitshells. Mouth-resonation isolates and amplifies selected partials from the natural series, which are heard together with the rasping of the notched sticks and the rattle of the seeds. The instrument, played by the court's musical retainer-jester, is frequently heard accompanying praise-singing for chiefs at chiefly beer-drinks.

A full account of the music and function of the Tsonga



Plate 1. *Friction-bow player Joel Ngovent of Chavani*

notched friction-bow (*xizambi*) has recently been published in *African Music* (Johnston 1970: 81-95).

Braced Gourd-bow (Xitende)

This rather large instrument (5' to 6' long) is played by wandering minstrels (*xilombe*) as an accompaniment to their own singing of news, complaints, etc., as they travel from one beer-drink to another soliciting refreshment and hospitality. Of all the musical bows, this one appears to have the widest distribution. A "kaffir" braced gourd-bow was described by a Jesuit priest in 1723 (Bonanni 1723: 175); this may have belonged to the Tsonga rather than to the Zulu, Swazi, or other Southern African coastal tribe, for Rycroft (1967: 96) states that the *umakhweyana* braced gourd-bow of the Zulu and Swazi "was repeatedly borrowed from the Tsonga of Mozambique in the nineteenth century."

The Venda *ndende*, the Pedi *sekgapa*, and the Chopi *tshitendole* have been described by Kirby (1934: 205). Going north from Southern Africa, we note that the Zambian Tonga call it *kalumbu* (Rycroft 1954: 16), the Kenya Mtembe call it *ntono* (Hyslop 1959: 24), and that it appears in the Congo under the names of *dumba*, *gedo*, *wangoloko*, and *andobu* (Laurenty 1960: 14). Wachsmann and Trowell (1953) describe several versions from Uganda, and there are undoubtedly many other areas where it is found, such as West Africa (Nketia 1962).

The Tsonga *xitende* is cut from the *maloha* tree, and its copper wire (*ritsaninga*, "string") is divided by a movable wire-loop to which is attached a calabash (*xiphaphani*). The string sections are tuned a minor 3rd apart and struck with a maize stalk (*rihlangi*), with the player additionally opening and closing the calabash against his preferably-bare chest. The tuning is accomplished by twisting the knotted ends of the wire-loop within the interior of the calabash, and by sliding the wire loop and calabash up or down the bow as required, these two actions being known as *ku gwimba*.

Whereas the Tsonga, the Venda, and the Zambian Tonga

generally employ a minor 3rd tuning between the string-sections, the Pedi use a major 2nd, and the Mtende use a 4th. The two open tones of the braced gourd-bow are everywhere supplemented by an additional fingered tone, but whereas some Southern African groups finger the longer string-section, thus filling in the open tones, the Tsonga and certain other groups finger the shorter string-section, thus placing the additional tone outside and above the open tones.

This type of musical bow, requiring no mouth-resonation, leaves the player free to sing. The physical manipulation of the instrument is simple, which also leaves the player free to dance—gourd-bow players are generally extroverts who owe their positions as much to personality traits as to musical ability.

The arrival of the minstrel at the beer-drink attracts a group of boys, some of whom come carrying reduced-sized *xitende*, with which to practice the learning rhythms (see Figures 9 and 10).

Finger-plucked Hollow Cane-bow (Mqangala)

The Tsonga cane-bow is a mouth-resonated, finger-plucked instrument made from hollow river-reed and

nti-ndi nti-ndi nti-ndi

nte-nte-nde nte-nte-nde nte-nte-nde nte-nte-nde

nte-nte nti-nti nte-nte nti-nti

nde-nte-nte ndi-nti-nti nde-nte-nte

Figure 9.—Gourd-bow Learning Rhythms

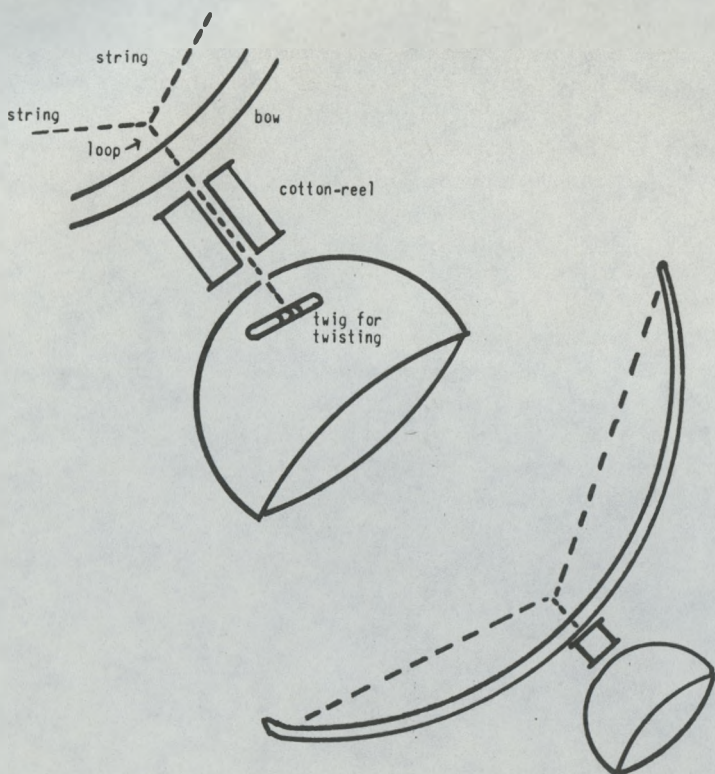


Figure 10.—Tsonga Braced Gourd-bow (*Xitende*)

strung with a tendon or with discarded fishing-cord; it is played for amusement at beer-drinks and elsewhere. The name *mqangala* is a click word, and it may have been borrowed from the neighboring Zulu or Swazi, both of whom use clicks, use a similar instrument, and use the same name for that instrument.

Among the Tsonga it is generally played by old men, who alternately sing and play during performance. Among the Venda it is called *lugube* and is played mainly by girls and young married women (Blacking 1969). The Pondo and the Khosa call it *inkinge*, and the Sotho call it *lekope* (Kirby 1934: 220). The fingering consists of three

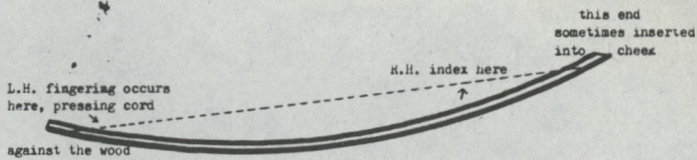


Figure 11.—Tsonga Hollow Cane-bow (*Mqangala*)

positions, in which the cord is depressed against the side of the bow, the *mqangala* thus being the only bow whose lateral plane serves as a fingerboard. The three positions—*sasankambana*, *mapokonyole*, and *matiring-isi*—are named after the first, second, and third fingers respectively.



Plate 2. Cane-bow player Risimati Maluleke of Madonse

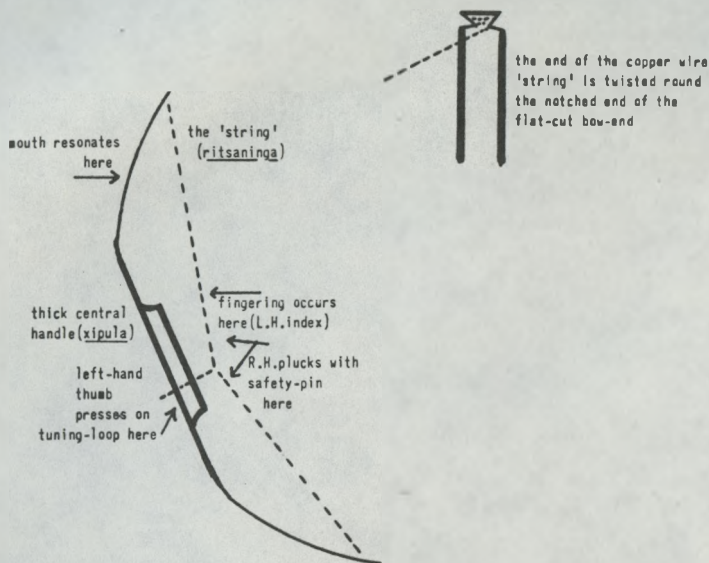


Figure 12.—Tsonga Braced Thick-handled Bow (*Xipendana*)

Braced Thick-handled Musical Bow (Xipendana)

This instrument is identified by its peculiar thick center handle, and thin flat ends. Note that the Tsonga name is *xipendana* (the same as the Karanga name for it), and not *sekgapa*, as stated by Kirby (1934: 228). The latter name is used by the Pedi for their 5' or 6' long, braced gourd-bow (a different instrument, called *xitende* by the Tsonga), but not at all by the Tsonga.

While the Tsonga instrument is played (often in tuned pairs—see Plate 3), mainly by girls, the Venda equivalent, which is called *tshihwana*, is played mainly by men and boys (Blacking 1969). The Pedi call it *lekope* (a term applied by the Sotho to their finger-plucked hollow cane-bow) and play it in bands of up to six men (Huskiison 1958: Pl. 22). The Chopi call it *penda*, the Swazi *isitontolo*, the Zulu *isiqomqomana*, the Kwebo *kedondolo*, the Lovedu *kashane*, and the Sotho of Lesotho *setolotolo* (Kirby 1934: 228).

Conclusion

The Tsonga ceremonial beer-drink, by virtue of its generalized function as a setting for all kinds of major and minor celebrations, may be viewed as the "meeting-place" of the various distinct Tsonga musical styles. The drumming school (*xigubu*) has a competitive dance-team which performs within the beer-drink arena; circumcision school coming-out and puberty school coming-out are celebrated at the beer-drink; exorcists "invade" the beer-drink with their peculiar tambourine music; and instrumentalists perform specialized adaptations of beer-songs upon their solo instruments. Furthermore, we have seen how even the



Plate 3. *Girls of Samarie playing a Xipendana duet*

musical instruments of other institutions (the puberty school *ndzumba* drum, the drumming school *xigubu* drum etc.) "intrude" into the beer-drink scene when necessity demands and latitude exists. These various "intrusions," while not so much part of the core beer-drink music as the beer-songs, the national dance *muchongolo*, the beer-drink dances (*xichayachaya*, men's dance, and *xilala*, women's dance), and other beer-drink associated music such as work-songs, nevertheless appear to arrange themselves around the periphery of the ceremonial beer-drink, thus making of the latter the nucleus of Tsonga music. This is represented diagrammatically in Figure 13.

In Figure 13, *area A* represents the circumcision school coming-out music performed at the final day beer-party with the relatives; *area B* represents the puberty school coming-out music performed at the final day coming-out beer-party with the relatives; *area C* represents the beer-drink musical rhythms taught within the precincts of the drumming school; *area D* represents both the exorcism music performed within the context of a beer-drink and the *muchongolo* and other beer-drink dances performed within the context of exorcism rites (which actually does happen); *area E*, which is included for the sake of completeness, does not impinge upon the beer-drink musical complex, but is an instance of one kind of institutional music overlapping with another, in this case the teaching of exorcism rhythms within the precincts of the *xigubu* drumming school.

All this "intrusion" or overlap among what are recognized by the Tsonga to be distinct musical styles serves to blur the boundaries of what would otherwise be neat anthropological compartments, and the process is seen again and again in other spheres of Tsonga life—in the girls' puberty school, for instance, where the accouterments and paraphernalia of possession cults have gained a strong foothold.

Social change is not limited to acculturation nor to a tendency to become assimilated within the dominant European culture. Social change is seen in the highly dy-

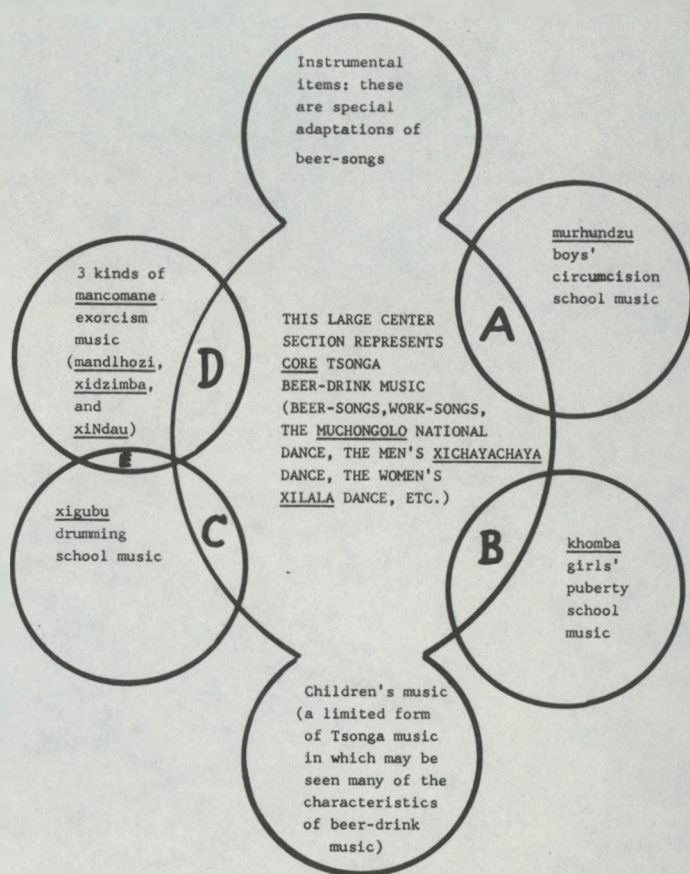


Figure 13.

dynamic interchange of ideas and behavior patterns *within* Tsonga life, and not necessarily associated with any "progressive" requisite. The resultant social kaleidoscope may at first appear frustrating, but it is the ambiguity and complexity of human social behavior that provides its main interest and serves to distinguish it from the more tangible, more easily manipulated subject matter of many other sciences.

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A Macrohistoric Trend Toward World Government¹

Louis A. Marano*

From the days of the Mesopotamian Empire to the present, Julian Steward's cyclical empires have tended to grow larger, millennium by millennium. Here the areas of twenty-eight large Old World empires are measured. The results suggest that, if the trend continues, a peaceful world order is probable within three thousand years: 2,600 years later than Naroll's prediction.

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An interdisciplinary communications gap has inhibited the process of theory formulation in the evolution of culture. "Historians on the whole are more interested in the fate of particular societies than in culture and its development, and anthropologists have made comparatively little use of the data of written history" (Steward 1949: 16). These words are only slightly less true today than when Julian Steward used them to introduce his theory of cyclical empires, twenty-two years ago. At the same time he reminded anthropologists of the necessity of formulating evolutionary theory, no matter how tentative. Based upon a recurrent pattern in the history of culture, a tentative formulation is offered below.

Sheer bulk is sometimes a good index of cultural evolution. Advanced cultures are, if nothing else, larger than

* Louis A. Marano (B.S., 1966, Canisius College) is currently a graduate student in anthropology at the State University of New York at Buffalo and is teaching two physical anthropology laboratories there. He is also serving as program chairman of the Graduate Anthropology Association. His principal academic interests are cultural ecology and biological anthropology. He has been a teaching associate and a research assistant and has done fieldwork among the Cree of northern Ontario, which is his main research area.