SYMBOISOS OR INTEGRATION: A STUDY OF THE TONAL ELEMENTS IN THE CHORAL WORKS OF MZILIKAZI KHUMALO AND PHELELANI MNOMIYA

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ABSTRACT

The bicultural nature and dimension of South African choral genre is rooted in the 1850s activities of composers, including Tiyo Soga, Reverend John Knox Bokwe and Enoch Sontonga, who amalgamated traditional African and Western musical elements in their creative output. From the 1950s, when black South African nationalism flourished, composers such as Polumo Joshua Mohapeloa and Tholakele Reuben Caluza consciously pursued a stronger agenda to Africanize their choral works. Mziilikazi Khumalo and Phelelani Mnomiyi, products of the 1950s black nationalist school of South African choral music, are exponents of the contemporary choral compositional industry in which the attendant bicultural elements exist to varying creative degrees. This study
probes these composers, through critical analysis, to unravel the nature of how the employed bicultural tonal elements in their choral works co-exist. Is it a scenario of musical symbiosis or integration?

Key words: symbiosis, integration, bicultural, Nguni, Zulu, modality

INTRODUCTION

While the 1850s founding fathers of the South African choral music genre, including Tiyo Soga, Reverend John Knox Bokwe and Enoch Sontonga, embraced the use of African folk elements in their choral compositions, which was mainly based on Western-style hymnology, it could be argued that they had no collective goal to create works that were identifiably African. These composers were perhaps only being true to their circumstances based on their history, culture and musical exposure in making use of the creative tools at their disposal within an intercultural framework. However, from the 1950s, the South African nationalist school of black choral music composers emerged, arguably influenced by the societal surge for nationalism. According to Mngoma (1988: 61), “There was a conscious effort among those who wrote music to include features in their music that were identifiably African.’ Composers like Polumo Joshua Mohapeloa and Tholakele Reuben Caluza pursued their cultural identity by rediscovering lost Sotho and Zulu musical traditions through their works” (Mugovhani 1998: 14). Mzilikazi Khumalo and Phelelani Mnemiya, who are contemporary South African choral music writers and whose works are presented in this study, are products of this nationalist school of choral music.

Today, the South African choral tradition has stabilized as a genre that primarily employs a theoretical framework in which African and Western musical elements co-exist to varying creative degrees. This study, with a focus on pitch organization (vertical and horizontal culminating into tonality and texture), probes the nature of this co-existence. Is it a scenario of musical symbiosis or integration? Do the pitch and tonal elements, in concert with other musical parameters, yield a choral genre that uniquely identifies South Africa or does the creative end-result only exists within a bicultural language that is primarily Western in which African elements are employed? This article seeks to answer these questions through the analytical study of two representative works, Izibongo Zikashaka (1981) composed by Mzilikazi Khumalo and Ziyabuya KwaNgwaga (1984) by Phelelani Mnemiya. Khumalo’s piece is first analyzed and then discussed, followed by Mnemiya’s.

ANALYSIS: IZIBONGO ZIKASHAKA

In terms of overall structure, Izibongo Zikashaka is in two major parts based on text setting and musical material. However, there is an underlying binary harmonic structure that governs pitch organization in the piece: pitches, occurring in successive
sections, are either organized within a non-functional harmonic system or according to the principles of functional harmony. For the purpose of pitch analysis, the piece is stratified into X (based on non-functional harmony) and Y (based on functional harmony) sections as established in Table 1 below.

### Table 1: Structure based on Pitch Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>HARMONIC SECTION</th>
<th>TONAL SYSTEM</th>
<th>HARMONIC SUBSECTION</th>
<th>TONALITY</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Aeolian/ Ionian/Dorian Pentatonic</td>
<td>1 – 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 – 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Y1</td>
<td>G major</td>
<td>21 – 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y2</td>
<td>D major</td>
<td>29 – 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transition I</td>
<td>G major</td>
<td>41 – 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y3</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 – 52</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y4</td>
<td>C major</td>
<td>53 – 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A harmonic minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transition II</td>
<td>E major/minor</td>
<td>69 – 72</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>G major/minor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
<td>X2 (Ndlamu Dance)</td>
<td>Aeolian Pentatonic</td>
<td>73 – 100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Y5</td>
<td>C major</td>
<td>101 – 113</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Non-Functional</td>
<td>X3 (Ndlamu Dance)</td>
<td>Aeolian Pentatonic Dorian Pentatonic</td>
<td>114 – 125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following are the analyses of the X and the Y sections with a focus on pitch collection, tonal organization, melodic contour and texture. A reduced score (without text) of *Izibongo Zikashaka* is provided in Appendix I to facilitate analysis and reference.

**X Sections – Pitch collection**

The melodic and harmonic pitch materials of the X sections are based on the pentatonic set, which can be expressed in the major and minor modes:
**Example 1:** Major (Anhemitonic) Pentatonic Set

It is, however, noted that three pitches, F♯, G♯ and C♯, “foreign” to the pentatonic pitch set above (example 1) occur briefly in subsections X1 (mm.1-4) and X2 (m.16). These “ornamental” pitches, adorning the main pentatonic pitches (and slurred to them), provide textual inflection within the context of the Zulu language (see examples 3 and 4 below). These pitches do not diminish the pentatonic pitch essence of the X1 and X2 subsections.²

**Example 2:** Minor (Anhemitonic) Pentatonic Set

**Example 3:** Ornamental Pitches

Example 4: Ornamental Pitches

The first X section (Introduction and subsection X1) is a case of tonal ambiguity. The first three measures suggest a G major tonality (perhaps influenced by the key signature). But the arrival of the four-measure introductory phrase on A (beat 3 of m.4) provides the first hint at a modal structure based on A Aeolian or A Dorian. The following four measures (mm.5-8) further strengthen the possibility of a minor pentatonic set as a subset of an Aeolian mode. However, the cadence at m.12 and the approach to it imply a major pentatonic set based on the C Ionian mode. Furthermore, the sudden appearance and prominence of D coupled with the “ornamental” C# and A suggest a tonal shift (to D major key area) at mm.15-16. The allusion to a new tonal centre immediately subsides from mm.17-20 with the return to a modal system that can be situated within the context of C Ionian (mm.17-18), A Aeolian (mm.18-19) or D Dorian (mm.19-20).

Subsection X2, the second X section (mm.73-100), is relatively stable in terms of tonality. The two-phrase bass ostinato pattern that forms the structural basis of the section employs the minor pentatonic set (example 2 above). The closure on pitch A of the two phrases (mm.74-76) establishes the A Aeolian mode. Furthermore the harmonization of the ostinato in the upper parts (mm.77-84) and the melodic materials that ensues (mm.85-100) all seat within the Aeolian pentatonic pitch set collection.

Subsection X3, the third X section (m.114-125), that concludes the piece is similar to subsection X1 in terms of tonal stability. The whole passage may be understood within the context of A Aeolian pentatonic with the opening emphasis on pitch A and the diad it forms with pitch E at the beginning and opening of the phrases from mm.133 to 117. At the same time, the music could be said to give way to D Dorian pentatonicism from m.118, albeit the tenor and bass contrapuntal entry on pitch A (m.118 and m.120) continue to reference the A tonality of the previous sections.

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Symbiosis or integration
X Sections – Melodic Contour

The musical phrases in the X sections are characterized by falling melodic contours that mirror the Zulu language (phrase and sentence) structure, which cut a “rip-saw teeth” pattern. Zulu phrases typically start on a high pitch and drop to a lower one at the end of the phrase. See examples from the three X subsection sections below:

**Example 5:** Falling melodic contour (subsection X1)

![Example 5: Falling melodic contour (subsection X1)](image1)

**Example 6:** Falling melodic contour (subsection X2)

![Example 6: Falling melodic contour (subsection X2)](image2)

**Example 7:** Falling melodic contour (subsection X3)

![Example 7: Falling melodic contour (subsection X3)](image3)

X Sections – Texture

The X sections essentially display a polyphonic character. Section X1 opens with a call and answer antiphonal structure (m.5). Although this melts into monophony (m.8) and then a two-part harmony that is duplicated in the upper (SA) and lower (TB) voices evolves. A short canon occurs at m.15.

The ostinato-based section X2 employs homophonic parallelism (mm.77-84), eventually attaining a two-part polyphony between the upper and lower voices (mm.85-100). Similarly, section X3 starts with homophonic parallelism (m.114) that yields to two-part polyphony between soprano and the three lower parts (m.118).
Y Sections – Pitch Collection

Diatonic and chromatic materials occur within the context of functional tonality in subsections Y1 and Y2 but Khumalo avoids the leading note (7) in the melody (soprano line). He, however, employs the leading note in the following sections (Transition I, subsections Y3, Y4 and Y5).

Y Sections – Tonal Organization

The Y subsections, based on the principles of functional harmony, are set in clearly defined and related key areas of G major, D major, C major and A minor (table 1 refers). The four key areas bear reference to four (C, D, G & A) of the five pitches that form the pentatonic set (examples 1 and 2 above) used in the X sections.

Y Sections – Melodic Contour

Melodically, Khumalo sustains the falling melodic pattern, established in the preceding X section in subsection Y1. He restricts this to soprano to accommodate the vertical and horizontal pitch organization within the limits of functional harmony. On the contrary, the following Y2 subsection is characterized by arc shape melodic contours. The starting, the highest and the last pitches (soprano line) of the six phrases that constitute the subsection are given in example 8 below:

**Example 8:** Arc melodic contour (subsection Y2)

![Example 8](image)

It is a mixture of falling and arc melodic contours that dominates in the Y3 and Y4 subsections uniquely devoted to male solos (tenor and baritone) accompanied by upper voices (soprano and alto chorus):

**Example 9:** Falling and Arc melodic contours (subsection Y3)

![Example 9](image)
For the last Y section (subsection Y5.), Khumalo yields to creativity in crafting his melodies to be independent of the tonal and structural demands of the Zulu text. For instance the text, “Uyakuhlaselaphi na?”, which was earlier expressed as part of the falling melodic pattern in the Ndlamu dance section of the work (mm.74 to 100), is expressed with a different melodic contour in subsection Y5. See examples 10 and 11 below:

**Example 10:** Falling melodic contour (Ndlamu dance section)

![Example 10: Falling melodic contour (Ndlamu dance section)](image)

**Example 11:** Rising melodic contour (subsection Y5)

![Example 11: Rising melodic contour (subsection Y5)](image)

**Y Sections – Texture**

Apart from the solo sections Y3 and Y4, the Y sections are homophonic. The piece briefly approaches homophonic polyphony in section Y2 (m.29). A call-and-answer antiphonal structure is called to play in sections Y3 and Y4 with the calls in solo voices (tenor and baritone, respectively) and the answers in the upper voice chorus.

**DISCUSSION I: IZIBONGO ZIKASHAKA**

The binary components in Izibongo Zikashaka are rooted in the way pitch is organized. As observed in the previous section, the X sections are contrasted from the Y sections in terms of harmonic organization. The analysis above further reveals the following dual components between the X and Y sections:

- tonal ambiguity (e.g. subsection X1) versus tonal stability (e.g. subsection Y1)
- pentatonic pitch collection (e.g. subsection X2) versus diatonic/chromatic pitch collection (e.g. subsection Y2)
- polyphonic/call and answer antiphonal structures (e.g. subsection X3) versus homophony (e.g. subsection Y5)
- rip-saw teeth melodic contour (e.g. subsection X1) versus free melodic contour (e.g. subsections Y3, Y4 and Y5)

The contrasting X and Y sections, with the ensuing binary oppositions, actually reference African and Western musical resources, respectively:

i. For the X section there is consistent use of modality, which Tracey (1953:59) says is an important characteristic of African music. The modal system is further based on pentatonism as melodic and harmonic pitch organization strictly employs pentatonic pitch collection in the X sections. Lo-Bamijoko (1985: 57–8) says the use of the pentatonic scale is quite common among the different language groups of Africa as she identifies four scales, tetratonic, pentatonic, hexatonic and heptatonic, as progressions that create different modes in African music.

ii. Subsection X1, previously analyzed as tonally ambiguous, also incorporates African musical tendency for songs to cadence on any note of the pentatonic mode in use. Nketia (1974: 154), with reference to African vocal melody and polyphony, says an examination of phrases and their endings shows that nearly every note of the scale may occur as an ending. This makes it difficult to establish the tonality of the passage from m.17 to the cadence on D in m.20. Pitch D can be 4, 2 or 1 within the contexts of A Aeolian, C Ionian of D Dorian, respectively. Similarly, the cadence on D (m.125) will appropriately imply cadence on 4 if the passage is deemed to be in A Aeolian or on 1 if the tonality is D Dorian.

iii. The shift to D tonality (m.15) and subsequent immediate return to C tonality (m.17) references what Nketia (1974: 150) says is transposition whereby the melody is shifted from one position of a trichord to another. This he describes as an important feature of melodic organization associated with pentatonic structures in the music of Africa. See the example below.

Example 12: Transposition

iv. Texturally, African traditional music is predominantly monophonic, with occasional homophony in the form of parallel fourths, fifths and sometimes thirds (Mugovhani, 1998: 29). Nketia (1974: 163) further opines that, in general,
the use of parallelism in fourths and fifths is more characteristic of pentatonic traditions. Khumalo employs these African stylistic elements (monophony and homophonic parallelism within pentatonicism) in the X sections.

v. With regards to Nguni vocal polyphony, Rycroft (1967:88) says, “Multi-part organization of voices is common in the traditional music of all the Nguni peoples. In any choral song there are at least two voice-parts, singing non-identical texts. The temporal relationship between these parts observes the principle of non-simultaneous entry. In a few songs this is realized through simple ‘call and (then) response’ antiphony.” Similar to Rycroft’s observation, polyphony occurs in the X sections through the attendant call-and-answer antiphonal structures, which Lo-Bamijoko (1985: 58) reckons is the most prevalent style in African vocal music. See measures 5, 13, 17 and 118 (appendix I).

vi. In his study of Nguni vocal polyphony, Rycroft (1967:90) further notes that “an initiatory or ‘call’ phrase, generally by solo voice and in a relatively higher pitch range, is balanced by a choral ‘response,’ in a lower pitch range”. Khumalo mirrors this style at m.5 where he reduces the soprano to a solo voice to which the lower voices respond as chorus in a lower pitch range. Similarly, this also occurs at m.17 where tenor and bass respond to the upper voice call (as solo voice) in a lower pitch range.

vii. Further on, Khumalo’s use of polyphony in the X sections is the overlaying of the independent upper voices over an ostinato line in the lower voices from m.85. This references African traditions in which “the parts may be arranged in such a way that an ostinato sung by a group provides a ground part above which the solo and chorus parts are sung” (Nketia 1974: 166).

viii. Khumalo’s consistent use of falling contour melodic pattern to capture the spoken speech nature of Zulu language in the X sections conforms to Lo-Bamijoko’s views on the relationship between melody and African language tonality. She opines (1985: 57) that “Melody in African music is based on the choice and arrangement of tones derived from the sound of the spoken word … the African sound is strictly tied to the various African languages.”

The Y sections on the other hand, reference Western-style hymnology, which serves as a point of historical and musical departure within the context of the evolution of the South African choral style:

i. As observed, the Y sections operate within the context of functional harmony. Khumalo frees himself up from the restrictions that characterize the X sections as a result of the references and usage of African traditional elements and resources. For instance, the bass line is constructed to provide foundation and stability for the harmonic chord formation and progression within the principles of voice leading as found in examples 13 and 14 (below). This contrasts the sce-
nario in examples 15, 16 and 17 (below) where Khumalo was more concerned with preserving the tonality of his texts, resulting in parallelism/polarity in the X sections.

**Example 13: Bass Line (subsection Y2)**

![Example image 13](image)

**Example 14: Bass Line (subsection Y2)**

![Example image 14](image)

**Example 15: Bass Line (subsection X2)**

![Example image 15](image)
ii. The rip-saw melodic pattern of the X sections pervades all voices (SATB) whereas it is restricted to soprano as the other parts yield to functional tonality “demands” of pitch organization in the Y sections. And as previously observed different melodic contours occur in the Y section. The relative freedom in contour patterns indicates a tension between Khumalo honoring the tonal and structural integrity of the Zulu texts, and his creative instinct that is fed by his exposure to the conventions of Western music, especially hymn tune writing.

iii. Other aspects of the Y section that reference Western tonal practice include the use of modulations and the use of harmonic sequence (the first transition at m.41).

Structurally, the X sections (referencing African musical elements) and the Y sections (referencing Western musical elements) alternate following the pattern, X Y X Y X, within the overarching two-part structure (see table 1 above). Thus the harmonic components stand side by side, implying a symbiosis at the harmonic structural level.

One element that unifies the piece, however, is its syllabic nature. Avoiding melismas, Khumalo follows the speech tone and the length of the sentence of the text in Izibongo zikaShaka. The inflections of authentic Zulu speech are imitated as
closely as possible. The rhythm of the music is also evidently influenced by Zulu speech rhythm as Khumalo follows the actual speech rhythm of the text of the poem, hence, the nature of the rhythmic patterns in the song (Mugovhani 1998: 29). For instance, the division of the beat into two, three and four parts within close proximity is a rhythmic device that enables an approximation of spoken Zulu text:

**Example 18:** Speech rhythm approximation

![Example 18](image)

**Example 19:** Speech rhythm approximation

![Example 19](image)

**Example 20:** Speech rhythm approximation

![Example 20](image)

Thus, across the X sections and the Y sections, Khumalo attempts the preservation of the musicality and speech attributes of the Zulu language.

To summarize this discussion, it suffices to say that the African and Western elements presented in this analysis occur and are heard as individual components without any form of integration occurring between them. The high point of the piece is perhaps the emergence of the Ndlamu Zulu dance, at m.73 (X section), from the preceding section (Y section) in which components of Western tonal harmony are unmistaken. This is followed by a hymn-like passage (Y section) from m.101 that completely changes the mood of the music. The closing section from m.114 finally presents another contrasting African section that is heard as a different entity from the preceding section.
ANALYSIS II: ZIYABUYA KWANGWAGA

Structurally, Mnomiya’s Ziyabuya kwaNgwaqa is a three-part choral piece based on material and musical content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>SUBSECTION</th>
<th>TONALITY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>LENGTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Centricity around Ab major harmony with modal inflections</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 – 20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21 – 30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31 – 37</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B (Ihubo style)</td>
<td>12/8</td>
<td></td>
<td>38 – 49</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 – 52</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53 – 63</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ziyabuya is essentially molded on a call-and-answer antiphonal structure, which serves as its source of polyphony. However, the details of the structure differ between sections A, B and C. In section A, the “call” and “answer” can occur in two parts (or voices) and then another voice, carrying a different text, evolves while thickening the polyphonic texture. For instance, the upper voices (soprano and alto) initiate the “call” to which the lower voices (tenor and bass) “answer” in example 21 (below). Nevertheless, the antiphonal structure continues with bass responding to the upper voice “calls”. The tenor voice, carrying another text (different from bass) evolves as another polyphonic voice, although, in terms of textual correlation, the tenor line can also be considered an (extra) “answer” to the upper voice calls.

Example 21: Call & Answer Structure (Section A)
In example 22 below, the tenor voice initially starts as part of the “call” with the upper voices to which bass “answers”. But tenor eventually evolves into an independent voice (m.21).

**Example 22: Call & Answer Structure (Section A)**

Section B is primarily based on tenor antiphonal “calls” to which the other SAB parts respond. There are no additional contrapuntal entries as in section A. Likewise, in section C the antiphonal structure operates strictly between the upper and lower vocal parts (see appendix II).

The pitch aspect (collection, organization, melody and texture) of *Ziyabuya KwaNgwaga* are analyzed in the following sections. A reduced score (without text) is provided in appendix II for analysis and reference.

**Pitch collection & unstable pitches**

Generally, the piece employs both diatonic and chromatic pitch materials relative to Ab major tonality. The occurrence and resolution of “unstable” pitches follow a dual system of fulfilled and unfulfilled expectations within the context of common-practice harmony. Leading notes, which ordinarily have the melodic tendency to resolve step-wise to the tonic, are resolved by downward movements at m.11 (beat 2, all parts), m.31 (beat 2, soprano), m.32 (beat 3, soprano), m.32 (beat 2, tenor), mm. 53-54 (tenor), mm.57-58 (soprano). The sub-dominant at m.14 (soprano) unexpectedly resolves to the sub-median instead of the median. Similarly, chromatically altered notes that have the tendency to resolve in the direction of the alteration, resolve otherwise. For instance, the D at m.11 resolves downward to Bb instead of going up to Eb. Other examples occur at m.33 (tenor) and m.35 (soprano). The contrapuntal lines of the *ihubo* section mostly feature the resolution of chromatically altered notes in the direction opposite to the alteration. See example 24 (below) and appendix II. This system, which constitutes a pattern of unfulfilled expectation, is contrasted with fulfilled expectation at some other points in the music. For instance, unstable pitches in the introductory section (mm. 1 to 6) resolve as expected. At the “major” cadence
at m.19, the leading does not resolve to the tonic in the soprano line. The C\textsubscript{b} resolve to B\textsubscript{b} at mm.50 and 61 (at the two occurrences of the diminished seventh chords).

**Tonal organization**

Whereas thirds (major and minor) and triadic formations abound, the piece hardly conforms to the principles of functional harmony, adhering more to a modal template based on an interchange between I and ii/II harmonies (see appendix II). While there are no ostinato patterns, the element of harmonic repetition occurs at a structural level with the I – ii/II (i.e. A\textsubscript{b} major – B\textsubscript{b} minor/major) progressions that run throughout the work. Other “coloristic” harmonies occur, serving a structural function by appearing either at the cadences or at the transitions between the three major sections A, B or C. See mm. 12, 19, 36, 50 and 51 (appendix II). Mnomiya’s last structural use of harmonies other than I, ii or II occurs at m.61 with the F minor, D diminished seventh and E\textsubscript{b} major harmonies employed for climactic effects just before the emergence of the final (ii – I) cadence. Apart from this opposition type (between the “coloristic” harmonies on one hand and the I, ii and II harmonies on the other hand) there are others, constituting a large scale binary system within Mnomiya’s harmonic scheme:

i. There is the opposition between harmonies based on the tonic (A\textsubscript{b} major - I) versus the supertonic (B\textsubscript{b} minor - ii and B\textsubscript{b} major II). These harmonies are marked in the score (appendix II).

ii. At another level there is the opposition between the ii and II harmonies on B\textsubscript{b}. This opposition type is most intense when the harmonies occur in close proximity within a bar (see mm.28, 48 and 55).

iii. There are two types of cadential formations. The cadences marked as CDN1 at mm.12, 36 and 51 (appendix II) make use of common-practice harmonic structures although the voice-leading do not conform. For instance the idiomatic VI\textsuperscript{7} – II – V progression at m.51 involves parallelism, which is not idiomatic within the context of common-practice harmony. On the other hand, the formations marked CDN2 at mm. 29 and 48 (appendix II) completely negate functional harmony standards with the ii – I modal progressions.

**Melodic contour**

*Ziyabuya* is essentially made up of motifs and phrases that follow a “falling” contour in all the four voices (SATB). The example below is a reduction of the first twelve measures of the work showing the falling contour patterns especially in the SAT lines:
Example 23: Falling melodic contours (Section A)

Example 24 (below) is the first four measures of the B section (in *Ihubo* style) with the call and answer antiphonal structure between tenor and the other parts (SAB). All phrases essentially show a falling contour. Likewise, the closing section C (mm. 53 to 63) features falling melodic contours (see appendix II).

Example 24: Falling melodic contours (Section B)

Texture

Mnomiya’s polyphonal intentions are established right from the beginning of the piece. However, the polyphony dissolves at some points for strategic reasons:

- Homophony occurs to facilitate cadences mm. 12, 19, 26, 36, 48, 51 and 62. Homophony also occurs at the transitions (mm. 33 and 50).
- Monophony occurs as cadential preparatory figure at mm. 11 and 17 as well as a closing figure at m. 43.
With respect to voice leading, Mnomiya is more concerned with horizontal motion in the voices than how the voices line up vertically within the polyphonic structure. For instance, the tight spacing and voice crossing between tenor and bass at section A2 (m.14) is a result of attention paid to text and horizontal (melodic) motion. See examples 25 and 26 below:

**Example 25: Spacing & Voice Crossing**

**Example 26: Spacing & voice crossing (reduction)**

**DISCUSSION II: ZIYABUYA KWA NgWAGA**

The tonal elements in *Ziyabuya kwaNgwaqa* occur in both African and Western musical traditions. However, Mnomiya’s contextual usage of these elements reveals a conscious departure from the influence of hymn tune writing to create a strong African identity:

i. As previously observed, homophonic parallelism in thirds, fourths and fifths occur stylistically in African music. Whereas these same pitch intervals occur in Western hymnody, they are approached and left within the principles of tonal harmony to avoid parallel motions. Mnomiya’s preference is for the former usage within the African context.

ii. Apart from some cadences, homophony (from hymn structure) is forfeited for a structure that is primarily polyphony. Albeit the polyphony incorporates homophonic parallelism (referencing vocal organization in some African traditional musics) at some points.

iii. Voice leading within Mnomiya’s polyphonic scheme is mainly dependent on the melodic development of lines horizontally as noted above. This is an attribute of African polyphony. As a result of this strategy, chord formations are void of thirds (major and minor) and parallelisms abound, thus weakening the reference to functional harmony and contrapuntal writing relative to the common-practice era.
iv. The harmonic template is basically built on I – II and I – ii progressions, giving the work a strong modal character despite a pitch collection that vertically and horizontally combines diatonic and chromatic materials. This strategy stalls the linear movement type that characterizes functional harmonic schemes in driving towards the tonal goal(s). Mnomiya’s creativity with his rhythmic scheme serves as the source of linearity that drives the piece. Rhythmic emphasis of pitch configuration is a strong feature of African music.

v. The “unfulfilled” expectations in terms of the resolution of “unstable” pitches (tendency and chromatic notes) which occur in all sections of the piece give it a distinct melodic character that is traceable to African musical resources. The impact of the melodic construct is most felt in the ihubo section of the piece.

Nevertheless, Mnomiya’s cadential formations and four-part vocal organization, playing major structural and stylistic roles, respectively, are rooted in hymn-tune writing. While the tonal elements that reference African traditional resources are strong, the effect of the cadential formations and the vocal organization are, however, only strong enough to bring about a degree of integration between the African and Western tonal components in the piece.

While Ziyabuya kwaNgwaqa represents an integration of African and Western elements, musical coherence is achieved through Mnomiya’s consistency with i.) the use of call-and-response structure, yielding polyphony, and ii.) the use of a modal harmonic system, which evokes the principle of ostinato, with the repeated occurrence of I – ii/II progressions. These defining structural and stylistic elements ultimately give the piece a strong African character.

CONCLUSION

The South African choral music genre primarily exists as a bicultural concept. Evolving from Western hymnody, and based on the principles of functional harmony, the genre employs a compositional framework that amalgamates African and Western musical resources. This automatically gives rise to the operation of binary systems within the creative language of the industry’s exponents, that is, the composers. Furthermore, there is the issue of how the binary (African and Western) elements interact within the compositional idiom. The degree(s) to which these elements interact or do not interact impact the overall compositional outcome, which can potentially speak to the issue of identity. Using the works of two major exponents of the South African choral genre, Mzilikazi Khumalo and Phelelani Mnomiya, this article examined the tonal aspects of their creativity. The result of analyses shows the following:

- Khumalo presents the African and Western tonal materials in Izibongo Zikashaka in sections, occurring in succession, thus achieving a symbiosis.
In Ziyabuya KwaNgwaga, Mnomiya achieves an integration of the dual musical elements.

The growth of the South African choral style is rooted in nationalism as black choral music composers sought ways to reflect their African identity in their creative works. Khumalo and Mnomiya are representative of a contemporary school of composers in pursuit of African traditional approaches to choral composition. Thus, it is appropriate to evaluate the compositional outcome of the pieces analytically presented in this article in the light of the pursuit of an African identity in choral music composition. As pitch and tonality are among the indicators of national or cultural identity in music (Adedeji 2005: 2), it is thus clear why the analyses presented focus on the tonal aspects of the pieces examined.

While the tonal elements of African traditional music abound in Izibongo Zikashaka, the work falls short in portraying a convincing African identity as the hymnal influence and other elements of common-practice era are strong as revealed through analysis. At best, it suffices to say both African and Western styles have been fully utilized to such an extent that the music itself defies easy categorization (Mugovhani 1998: 30). The structure of the piece, which reveals, with clarity, symbiosis between the attendant cultural elements emphasizes the intercultural nature of the piece. It is important to place Izibongo within the context of Khumalo’s creative output. The work was composed in 1981 when he began to move away from the early hymnal influences of formal Western music tuition and Western church music (Mugovhani 1998: 28). Nonetheless, his pursuit of an African identity is almost palpable in Izibongo. Without the Y sections of the piece, Khumalo would have achieved a creativity type that is thoroughly African with the X sections of the piece.

As revealed through analysis, there is the component of integration between the bicultural elements in Ziyabuya kwaNgwaga. Within this integration, Mnomiya achieves a strong African identity in the piece with the manipulation of his tonal resources drifting, in organization, more towards the African end of his bicultural compositional continuum. He weakens the stylistic and structural essence of the tonal resources that belong to the Western end of the spectrum. The underlying call-and-response structure, the (African) polyphony and the “ostinato with variation” style implied through the modal harmonic system strengthen the Africanness of Mnomiya’s work.

South African black choral music composers have sustained a culture of writing music that combines both traditional African and Western idioms from the 1850s. This unique combination of the two idioms produced music that became popular not only in South Africa, but equally so in the West and the rest of Africa (Huskinsson 1994: 37). The degree of creativity possible in combining these idioms within an intercultural framework is endless. And with contemporary composers pushing stylistic and structural boundaries to achieve a strong African identity, the South
African choral genre is bound to evolve as a unique and perhaps independent choral product in the global market.

NOTES
1. The discussion herein limits the referential Western-style hymnology to the principles of functional harmony, whose roots are traced to Bach chorale tradition.
2. See appendix 1 to place the occurrence of the “foreign” pitches in the appropriate context within the prevalent pentatonic pitch environment.
3. See Mugovhani (1998) for a full discussion on the “rip-saw” pattern tendency of the Nguni languages.
4. The Zulus are part of the Nguni people of South Africa. Izibongo ZikaShaka is a Zulu piece.

REFERENCES