

## **The Archiving of Traditional Songs and Dances Among the Gogo Ethnic Group of Central Tanzania for African Indigenous Knowledge**

**Marco A. Magassila**

*Dar Es Salaam Tumaini University, Dar Es Salaam*

### **Abstract**

*The study explored the archiving of traditional songs and dances among the Gogo ethnic group of central Tanzania for African indigenous knowledge. Across the globe and Tanzania in particular, the modes of transformations in traditional songs and dances among communities need to be embedded in understanding through holistic manner of the archival practice that allow for co-existence and recognition of multiple experiences between the past, present and future generations. The study employed descriptive survey research design in collection and compilation of audio–visual materials, in-depth oral interviews with local elders and local traditional group singers from selected five traditional cultural groups case studies of Kongwa District in Dodoma Region and Manyoni District in Singida Region in which a sample of sixty respondents was involved. Surveys were conducted in each site to specifically identify and contact the Gogo traditional practitioners, particularly singers and dancing groups for the purpose of recording and observing live performances. Both audio-visual documentation of musicians and dancers from identified groups as well as oral interviews from Gogo cultural bearers was done to reflect the study objectives. In addition, the researcher used archival data from Tanzania National Archives (TNA). The findings revealed that songs and dances such as Muheme, Nindo, Msunyunto, Chipande and Makumbigawadala among the Gogo community defined broadly their socio-cultural, religious, economic and technological conditions. Music and dances like Makumbigawadala reflected an initiation ritual (rite of passage among the Gogo girls). The Muheme music tradition, which is associated with girls' initiation ceremonies and serves multiple social functions, including entertainment, education, and consolation. The findings further highlight that traditional songs and dances enhances community moral values and dignity. They facilitate cultural continuity and promote social inclusion. However, emerging intra-cultural diversity and transformations related to community set-up, environment, and general global culture influence bound to specific age group-particularly the younger generation who seems to lose interest on traditional music and dances underscores the need for archiving and preservation. The study calls broader community development strategies, emphasizing policy support and sustainable funding for long-term impact. By bridging the archiving of traditional knowledge, particularly in music and dance, this work contributes meaningfully to the broader discourse on cultural heritage preservation and participatory community development.*

**Keywords:** *Archiving, traditional songs and dances, African indigenous knowledge.*

## Introduction

The region of the Wagogo people is centred around Dodoma, Tanzania, about 300 miles inland (west) from the Indian Ocean. This region covers an area of 25,612 square miles, with an altitude of 480ms to 12ms above sea level (Cidosa, 1995). Much of the land is situated on an arid plateau dotted with small bushes and the occasional baobab tree. On average, the region receives rain approximately 7.8 to 23.6 inches per year for only three to four months of the year (Mascarenhas, 2007: 376). The Wagogo are a Bantu ethnic group, one of 120 cultural linguistic groups living within the boundary of the Republic of Tanzania, formerly known as Tanganyika; and they comprise 3% (1,735,000 people) of the population of Tanzania. They live largely in rural villages, and are primarily engaged in agriculture and pastoral activities. Many are farmers on small plots of family land, growing maize, millet and sorghum for food, and peanuts and sunflower for trade. Some herd cows, goats and sheep, traveling to and from their family homes every day to wide open fields where there are low grasses for them to feed upon. Cattle are valuable in Wagogo culture. They are useful in trade, finance, and for 'bride wealth' (i.e., dowry).

The Gogo people came to settle in a large area of the present-day Dodoma Region as well as in a part of Manyoni District in Singida Region. The convergence of different ethnic groups in what became Ugogo attracted more economic activities that depended on the use of naturally occurring resources, including land. In brief, the chapter provides a useful background to the study by sketching the physical and socio-economic and political setting of the people of Ugogo. The name Ugogo refers to both a geographical area and its human occupants. According to Rigby, the term *Gogo*<sup>1</sup> originally referred to people living in Ugogo. It stood for the inhabitants of Ugogo, the Bantu speaking Gogo of mixed ethnic origins, who moved into the area in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and over time adopted *cigogo*, the language of the Gogo. However, the origin of the Gogo

---

<sup>1</sup>This name 'Wagogo' was given probably by the Nyamwezi during the Caravan Trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Nyamwezi Caravans from the western part travelled through Ugogo on their way to the coast. It is certain that on their journey to the Coast they had a stopping place at *Cigwe* in west central Ugogo. A number of large logs (*matindi*) were lying about near the camp. So, the Nyamwezi called the local people "Gogo," because a "log" in Swahili is *gogo* (plural, *magogo*). See P. Rigby (1970), *Cattle and Kingship among the Wagogo: A Semi-Pastoral Society of Central Tanzania*, (London: Cornell University Press), p. 20. And Ugogo as the country of the Gogo people (Wagogo). It refers to a geographical area with no fixed boundaries, See Peter Rigby (1969), p.67, G. Maddox (1990), "Mtunya: Famine in Central Tanzania, 1917-1920" in *Journal of African History*, No. 31: 90-138 and M. Magassila (2022). *Land Use Change and Food Security in Ugogo, Central Tanzania, 1930-2015*. PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam.

ethnic group remains unknown despite the attempts made by historians such as Isaria Kimambo<sup>2</sup> and Gregory Maddox to trace it to the surrounding Bantu communities.<sup>3</sup>

Available literature on the Gogo identifies about seven communities that inhabited the region for a long time before the Gogo arrived in the region. These were the *Nkulimba*, *Ng'omvia*, *Mankala*, *Yanzi*, *Bambali*, *Yenzele* and *Hanila*.<sup>4</sup> The *Nkulimba* are said to have been short and small in size. They depended entirely on hunting and gathering. They had no permanent settlements but spread throughout the region. The remaining six communities had languages which were different but mutually intelligible. These communities had established permanent settlements in different parts of what became Ugogo later on. They engaged in hunting, gathering, livestock keeping and crop cultivation.<sup>5</sup> From around 1300 AD other groups entered the region. These were the *Nyaisi*, *Tumba*, *Maseya*, *Takama*, *Nyambwa* and *Nyankwalo*. The *Nyaisi* occupied the central part of the region. Those who occupied the eastern part came to be known as the *Tumba*, while those who occupied the western part were called the *Nyambwa* and the *Wanyankwalo*.<sup>6</sup> Those who occupied the northern part were known as the *Maseya* and those who occupied the southern areas were called the *Takama*.<sup>7</sup> The *Nkulimba* are believed to have been the remnants of a group of Khoisan speaking people, the *Sandawe*, who are today found in the western part of Kondoia in central Tanzania. The remaining six communities were Cushitic. Examples of the Cushitic people who lived in the region include the *Burungi*, *Iraqw*, *Fyomi* and *Alagwa*. The rest of the communities were classified as *Bantu*. These Bantu speakers came to be known collectively as the *Gogo*.<sup>8</sup> At present, other Bantu speaking groups who live in Ugogo include, the *Hehe*, *Rangi*, *Zigua*, *Kaguru*, *Nyiramba*, *Nyaturu*, *Nyamwezi*, *Chagga*, *Bena* and *Sagara*, to mention just a few. Nilotic people form another large

---

<sup>2</sup> I. N. Kimambo (1969), "Interior Before 1800" in Isaria Kimambo and Arnold Temu (eds), *A History of Tanzania*, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House), pp. 14-33.

<sup>3</sup> Kimambo, *op.cit*; Maddox (eds), (1995), *The Gogo History: Customs and Traditions*, (New York: M.E. Shape), pp. 41-43.

<sup>4</sup> G. Maddox (eds.) (1995), *The Gogo History: Customs and Traditions*, (New York: M.E. Shape), pp.41-43; and B. Halii (2018), *Social Marginalisation among the Gogo: The Roots and Social History of Gogo Street Beggars in Dar es Salaam City, 1890-2000s*, (PhD Thesis: University of Dar es Salaam), p.51.

<sup>5</sup> B. Halii (2018), *Social Marginalisation among the Gogo: The Roots and Social History of Gogo Street Beggars in Dar es Salaam City, 1890-2000s*, (PhD Thesis: University of Dar es Salaam), p.51.

<sup>6</sup> G. Maddox (eds.) (1995), *The Gogo History: Customs and Traditions*, (New York: M.E. Shape), p. 41

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.51.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 52.

group which includes the Maasai and Tatoga. The latter is a large linguistic group that comprises Taturu, Barabaig, Bajuta and Gisamjenga.<sup>9</sup>

Despite their socio-cultural differences, the three linguistic groups of communities who lived in what constitutes Ugogo today, that is Cushites, Nilotes and Bantu, had the following common characteristics of the Gogo community. The first characteristic was communal ownership of the major means of production, especially land, water sources and forests. In other words, the communities had collective rights over these resources. The second characteristic of the ethnic groups is that they were all small communities. According to Halii, if a community became big, it split into smaller groups. The third characteristic was communal production. Production of basic needs was carried out in groups. Group work was common in the making of tools of labour, shelter, hunting, gathering and cultivation. Within the groups, people were organized according to blood ties. Production was organized according to gender and age and was characterized by the use of simple tools such as stones and sticks. Products were used mainly for subsistence exchange. In terms of social organization, some of these early ethnic groups were organised in kinship groups involving themselves in crop cultivation and livestock keeping while others relied on hunting and gathering activities. Kinship was a stronger organization factor in Ugogo compared to the other types of political organization in the region.<sup>10</sup> This was due to the fact that the Gogo were mostly a settled group that practiced agro-pastoralism. The communal life of these early ethnic groups led to their peaceful co-existence for a long time. Songs and dances contributed much to that, hence, there were no major conflicts among them. The principles of self-discipline, humility, modesty, tolerance, patience, understanding and transparency in dealing with others in the society, hence bringing peace and preservation of culture as a human right.<sup>11</sup> This assertion is strongly supported by oral accounts, which emphasize that when local and regional disputes arose concerning the utilization of land and other natural resources, the cause-effect factors were defined and addressed by the responsible indigenous institutions at different levels.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Julias Chaulema, singer *Mtera Cultural Group, Kongwa District-DODOMA*, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

<sup>10</sup>B. Halii (2018), p.52.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p.53

<sup>12</sup> Interviews with elders namely: Lusinde Ngusha, Jacksoni Tito and Denis Lechipwa, 11<sup>st</sup> October, 2021

By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ugogo formed one of the stable chiefdoms' precolonial political organizations of the Central Tanganyika. Though decentralized, they could manage to organize themselves to collect tributes along the central caravan route.<sup>13</sup> Chiefdoms were under *Watemi*. *Watemi* ruled the central part of the area and appointed their relatives as sub-chiefs (*Wapembamoto*) so that they could establish sub-clans. The sub-clans were usually named after the relatives. The *Wapembamoto* were, however, under their respective *Watemi* and provided certain services to the latter in times of peace and war. This expansion continued until the chiefdom came into contact with other chiefdoms. When this happened, the chiefdoms fixed boundaries between them. The meaning of *Mpembamoto* is bearer of the fire. Fire was a symbol of the continuity of the chiefdom. Apart from ruling the sub-clans, *Wapembamoto* protected boundaries of the chiefdom.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of vegetation landscape, baobab trees have remained a typical permanent landscape feature across the study area (See figures (a) and (b) below). One can therefore describe Ugogo as the land of baobab (*Adansonia*) trees. These trees are found in almost all parts of the area, being dominant particularly in the eastern part of Ugogo in Kongwa and Mpwapwa districts. According to Gogo oral accounts, the oldest surviving *Mpela* (baobab tree) in the region is found at Mazae village in Mpwapwa District, which is said to be over three hundred years old.<sup>15</sup> The baobab trees hold immense social-cultural significance among the Gogo ethnic groups, embodying a social gathering spots, providing shade and comfort for social-cultural interaction and community decision making.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Dobson, op.cit., p.2. Interviews with elders in Ugogoni Village namely: Lusinde Ngusha, Jacksoni Tito and Denis Lechipwa, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Hali (2018), p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Peter Elias, Muungano Kitalalo Cultural Group, Manyoni District, Singida Region, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> United Republic of Tanzania (2015), *Dodoma Region Social Economic Profile Report* (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer), p. 4.

**Plate (a):** *Ugogo is a Land of Baobab Trees*



**Source:** *Photo taken by the researcher on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 during Data Collection at Chimlata Village, Kongwa District.*

**Plate (b)** *A Baobab Tree Claimed to be the Oldest at Mazae Village, Mpwapwa District*



**Source:** *Photo taken by the researcher on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 during Data Collection at Mtera Village, Kongwa District.*

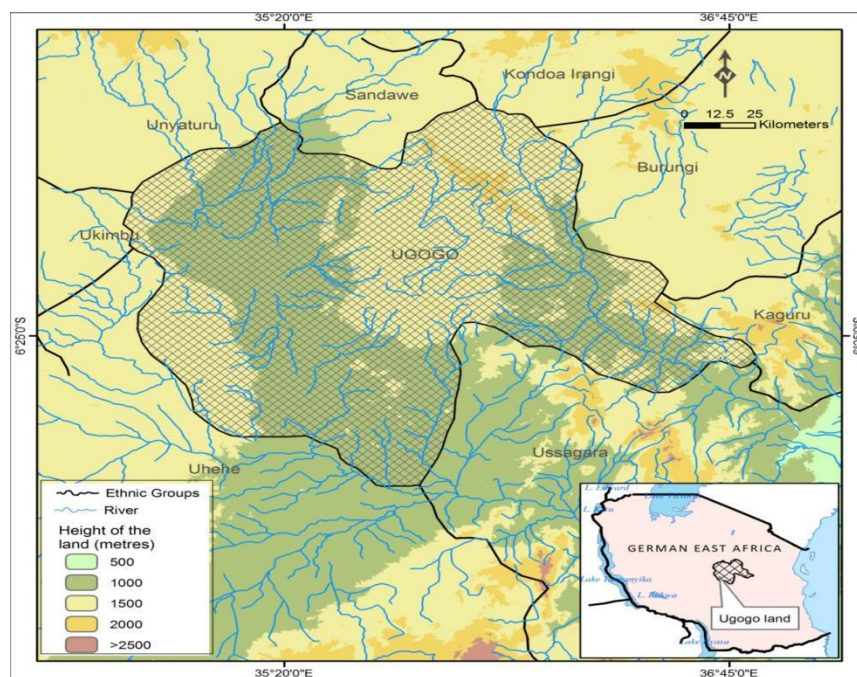
During the period of German colonial administration, the areas now known as Dodoma and Mpwapwa Districts in the Dodoma Region, as well as much of Manyoni District in the Singida Region, were officially recognized as the homeland of the Gogo people. Administratively, the Germans established three substations: Singida, Mpwapwa, and Kilimatinde. In the mid-1920s, Kilimatinde was replaced by Manyoni as an administrative station, which reported directly to the District Office in Dodoma. While district-level reports from Dodoma included information from all areas under its jurisdiction, subdistrict reports focused specifically on Kilimatinde or Mpwapwa.<sup>17</sup> Map 2 (a) below shows the location of the Gogo as an ‘ethnic’ group during the

---

<sup>17</sup>TNA File No. A. 967/828, Tanganyika Territory, *Annual Reports of Dodoma District*, 1932.

German colonial period. Today, Ugogo occupies most parts of what is currently known as Dodoma Urban and Rural, Chamwino, Kongwa and Mpwapwa districts in Dodoma Region as well as parts of eastern Manyoni District of Singida Region in Central Tanzania. Ugogo in general is located south of the equator between latitudes  $4^{\circ}$ – $7^{\circ}$  south and longitudes  $35^{\circ}$ – $37^{\circ}$  east of the Greenwich.<sup>18</sup> The area borders Manyara Region in the north, Morogoro Region in the east, Singida Region in the west and Iringa Region in the south. Dodoma occupies a total land area of 28,102 square kilometres consisting of 14,200 square kilometres of arable land, 11,100 square kilometres of pasture, 1,110 square kilometres of forest, 846 square kilometres of water and 846 square kilometres of rocks and other physical features.<sup>19</sup> Map 1 (b) below shows the location of the study areas.

**Map 1 (a): Geographical Location of Ugogo within German East Africa**



**Source:** EAF, Map Catalogue Section, University of Dar es Salaam

<sup>18</sup> The Planning Commission, Dodoma Region Scio-Economic Profile, in the *National Bureau of Statistics*, 2002/2003. Dar es Salaam: Vice President's Office. See also from <http://www.tanzania.go.tz/regions/dodoma/profile> downloaded on 20th September, 2016

<sup>19</sup>URT (2003), *Regional Social Economic Profile*, (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer), p.5

## Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to document and archive the traditional songs and dances among the Gogo of Central Tanzania for African indigenous knowledge. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Identify the kinds of traditional songs and dances mostly practiced among the Gogo,
2. Pin point the types of messages or teachings conveyed through traditional songs and dances in the Gogo community, and
3. Find out how the songs and dances were preserved and examine the transformations of songs and dances among the Gogo of today.

## Methods

The study used descriptive survey research design in collection and compilation of audio – visual materials, in-depth oral interviews with local elders and local traditional group singers from selected case studies of Kongwa district (Dodoma Region and Manyoni district (Singida Region). Surveys were conducted in each site to specifically identify and contact the Gogo traditional songs and singers and dancing groups for recording of the live performance. Audio and video contents of the songs and dances from all six projects were annotated.

Using observation and audio documentation of the songs and dances from all six traditional cultural groups, researchers were able to gather detailed insights into the distinct musical styles, performance practices, and cultural significance of each group's artistic expressions. Through oral interviews and direct quotations from Gogo cultural bearers, valuable insights were gained into the traditions, values, and meanings embedded in their cultural practices. Elders and performers shared firsthand accounts of rituals, songs, and dances, emphasizing their role in community identity, moral education, and social cohesion. These narratives highlighted the importance of preserving oral heritage and the deep connection between cultural expression and the Gogo people's way of life.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>K. Mapana (2013), Transitions in the Social Functions of the *Muheme* Music Tradition of the Wagogo People of Dodoma, Tanzania; in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol.3 No. 3; February 2013. Accessed on 31/01/2022 from [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_3\\_February\\_2013/15.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_3_February_2013/15.pdf)

In addition, the researcher had an opportunity to conduct a session on *Radio Uzima* (2 hours air time) the major presentation and discussions related to topic at hand. Listeners had an opportunity to clarify about transformations related to traditional songs and dances under emerging modern music.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### ***Traditional songs and dances mostly practiced among the Gogo***

The study identified *Muheme* as one of the kinds of seasonal events such as initiation or circumcision ceremonies and cultural songs included *Nindo*= marriage ceremonies-*sineni iputa*. In these songs, the bride is insisting to the bridegroom that she will show love and dignity in their marriage. Such traditional songs played a big role in reshaping the community in preserving their cultural values and dignity. The oral literature among the Gogo community presents among other things, the principles of self-discipline, humility, modesty, tolerance, patience, understanding and transparency in dealing with others in the society, hence bringing peace and preservation of culture as a human right.

Traditional songs and dances among the Gogo informed the resilience aspect of the Gogo society in meeting their socio-economic livelihoods through agriculture and livestock keeping. Through interview it was said that songs like *msunyuto* (relief), were mostly sung during the harvest celebrating after long period of hunger or famine. *Saigwa* emphasized the importance of cleanliness as an individual, community, and environment in promoting a holistic approach to health, well-being, and sustainability.

Such songs were owned by the whole communities in general as cultural bearers, although some individual authors claim to produce their own songs with little documentation. Most were kept in the 'Kingdom of Memory' and passed from one generation to another orally. Thus, are most likely to be buried because the singers, singing groups and/or narrators are growing older and die while younger generation have no interest in traditional songs. Hence, new digital archiving technology important in preserving such songs and dances.

### ***Messages or Teachings Conveyed Through Traditional Songs and Dances in Gogo Community***

The well-known prominent traditional historians among the Wagogo of Central Tanzania who have documented intensively about *history, customs and traditions* (including songs and dances) is Mathias Mnyampala (1956). His book, which was initially written in Swahili language, was later translated in English by Professor Gregory, H. Maddox (1995). According to Mnyampala, indigenous traditional songs and dances as well as other cultural practices formed an important aspect of life among the Gogo. Like many African societies, the Gogo performed songs and dances at a certain time and purpose. For instance, *Saigwa* is performed during the months of November and February, during evening where men and women bounce up and down to encourage one another to work hard during planting season. *Msunyunho* (first fruit) is performed during March and April to celebrate the first fruit from the land. *Nindo* is performed from May and June through October during and after harvest. During this period, many marriage and circumcision ceremonies are conducted across the land of Ugogo.<sup>21</sup> The Gogo also believed that the spirits of ancestors played a significant role in the lives of the living. They believed that there was a link between physical maladies and the spiritual realm. The Gogo performed *Chisaigweda* dances at a time when the death of *Mtemi* was announced. All people in that particular chiefdom gathered to celebrate the life of the deceased with songs and dances as well as drinking local beer. When a child was born, a particular ritual and dances was performed to celebrate the coming of new life with songs and dances and when a child was two months old, it was necessary to burn a mark on his or her forehead. This mark is called *lunindi* or *lulindi*.<sup>22</sup>

According to Job Lusinde<sup>23</sup>, some of the cultural practices, including songs and dances are still observed among the Gogo. For instance, *Chidwanga* or *Ibeho* is performed when the rain come with high wind or hail and knock down the millet or rain failed to come in expected time, elders gathered to perform a ritual to rescue such situation. The people would gather under the big baobao

---

<sup>21</sup> M. E Mnyampala (1995). *The Gogo: History, Customs, and Traditions*. Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, p.45.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> Who was born in 1931 at Kikuyu Viilage in Dodoma, a child of Pastor, P.L. Malecela of D.C.T (Diocese of Central Tanganyika) before was known as Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.). He went through primary education through the Church Missionary Mission School at Dodoma in 1938, later joined Alliance Secondary School in Dodoma before joining Tabora secondary school and later Makerere University of East Africa for his college education for 4 years, he came back and taught at Alliance Secondary School, Dodoma for five years before resigned and join TANU as Executive Officer in Dodoma in 1958. He helped in establishment of Bihawana Girls Secondary School as well as Adult Education in Dodoma Region, where people learnt how to read and write (Dodoma Literacy Committee, (1965), *Wagogo na Wilaya zake, Dodoma, Mpwapwa na Manyoni*, (East African Literature Bureau: Dar es Salaam), p. 10.

tree in the mountain with their offerings. There they would have one sheep and one cow, both black, and a dark cotton cloth.<sup>24</sup> When arrived at the mountain they would sing this song “*mulungu, mulungu*” and all would answer “*kuli wana wako, mulungu uchunye mvula*” meaning “God God, we are your children, God bring us rain”<sup>25</sup>. When this song was sung, the rain would start on the very day, and sometimes before they had left the offerings. The sheep and the cow were slaughtered in the forest and sacrificed. The black cloth was given to the leader of the ritual. By customs, the *Watemi* in Ugogo could wear only black cloth to signify their role in bringing the rain.<sup>26</sup> However, due to cultural transformations, including Christianity, such rituals are rarely practiced among the Wagogo.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Preservation and Transformations of Songs and Dances among Gogo of Today***

The Gogo’s use of instrumental repertoire illustrates their originality, complexity and musical refinement of the traditional music that has been imbedded in their socio-economic activities such as marriage, funeral, cultivation and livestock keeping. For instance, *Nindo*<sup>28</sup>. During traditional marriage ceremonies, vibrant songs and dances accompanied by instruments like *marimba, mchila, ng’weng’we, ng’oma* and *injuga*, showcased the bride’s commitment, with the phrase “*sineni iputa*” symbolizing her promise to uphold love and dignity in her marriage. Such traditional songs played a big role in reshaping the community in preserving their cultural values and dignity. The oral genre among the Gogo community presents among other things, the principles of self-discipline, humility, resilience, tolerance, patience, and transparency in dealing with others in the society, hence bringing peace and preservation of culture as a human right. For instance, the use of cow tail reflected cattle wealth among the Gogo community.<sup>29</sup> Historically, crop cultivation and livestock keeping formed the basis of the Gogo subsistence economy. However, Mascarenhas has argued that in Ugogo livestock keeping took precedence over crop cultivation.<sup>30</sup> He came to

---

<sup>24</sup>Dodoma Literacy Committee (1965), *Wagogo na Wilaya zake, Dodoma, Mpwapwa na Manyoni*, (Dar es Salaam: East African Literature Bureau), p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Benjamin David Kamoga, Ward Executive Officer, Chikuyu, Manyoni District on 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Richard Lukosi, Michael Paul Machimo and Jesca Mapululu Maloda at Songambe Village, Kongwa District on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>See A. Mascarenhas (1977), Settlement and Population Re-distribution in Dodoma, in *Bureau of*

this conclusion based on the analysis of temporal trends of transhumance among the Gogo which commonly occurred during dry seasons. The Gogo had been mobile in search of pasture and water for their herds. Yet, one informant stressed that crop cultivation and livestock keeping were largely treated as equally important.<sup>31</sup>

Generally, the traditional songs and dances among of the Gogo, formerly associated with specific rituals and other social events, has transformed considerably. *Muheme*, for instance, that reflected seasonal events such as initiation or circumcision ceremonies today is still performed, but with few people<sup>32</sup>. The major reason has been associated with modernization of music and dances. Lucy Mtinda exemplified that due to increasing influence of *Bongo Flava* most youth have lost interest in traditional songs and dances.<sup>33</sup> Some genres such as *izeze* or *chizeze* and *marimba* plays are still performed with changing socio-cultural conditions.

## Conclusions

Music in African context always take into account the particular societal activity to which it is attached. From the research findings, songs and dances are of highly valued among the Gogo community of Central Tanzania. They form integral part of socio-economic functions of the society. In most cases are naturally acquired through acculturation process by which songs and dances are practiced. Songs and dances among the Wagogo people are sung in unison, and are characterized by dance and body movement, use of limbs, head, shoulders and torso. The content of such songs includes themes such as family needs, moral issues, resilient in handling social and economic activities. These songs were owned by the whole communities in general as cultural bearers, although some individual authors claim to produce their own songs with little documentation. Most were kept in the 'Kingdom of Memory' and passed from one generation to

---

*Resource Assessment and Land Use Planning*, (BRALUP- Research Paper No. 47, Feb, 1977: University of Dar es Salaam). Cattle were used as exchange for grain during famine. Thus, used as insurance against famine. Cattle formed a medium of accumulation of surplus. Thus, in good years, when there is a surplus of grain which cannot be stored for more than three years, such grain was sold, and the money was used for acquiring livestock. Cattle were used to enhance social relationships such as marriage and burial services. In addition, it provided meat, milk and manure for agriculture. The retention of relatively large herds to the Gogo was regarded a sign of wealthy and generosity.

<sup>31</sup>Elia Pina, Mlowa Barabarani, Radio Uzima Listener, 12th October, 2021,

<sup>32</sup>Interview with Lucy Mtinda, singer, Ushirikiano Cultural Group, Chikuyu Village, Manyoni District-SINGIDA Region, 10th October, 2021.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

another orally and practically. The researcher recommends for digital archiving of traditional music and dances for African indigenous knowledge repertoire.

## References

Adzinyah, A.K., Maraiew, D., Tucker, J.C. (1986). *Let Your Voice be Heard: Songs from Ghana and Zimbabwe*. Danbury, CT:World Music Press.

Agawa, K. (1995). *African Rhythm: A northern Ewe perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chernoff, J.M. (1979). *African Rhythm and African Sensibility: Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dodoma Literacy Committee (1965), *Wagogo na Wilaya zake, Dodoma, Mpwapwa na Manyoni*, (Dar es Salaam: East African Literature Bureau).

Halii, B. (2018). "Social Marginalization Among the Gogo: The Roots and Social History of the Gogo Street Beggars in Dar es Salaam City, 1890-2000s. PhD Thesis: University of Dar es Salaam.

Herskovits, J.M. (1948). *Man, and his works: The science of cultural anthropology*. New York: Knopf.

Kimambo, I. N. (1969), "Interior Before 1800" in Isaria Kimambo and Arnold Temu (eds), *A History of Tanzania*, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House), pp. 14-33.

Kimambo, I.N, *op.cit*; Maddox (eds), (1995), *The Gogo History: Customs and Traditions*, (New York: M.E. Shape), pp. 41-43

Maddox, G. (1990), "*Mtunya: Famine in Central Tanzania, 1917-1920*" in *Journal of African History*, No. 31: 90-138.

Magassila, M (2022). *Land Use Change and Food Security in Ugogo, Central Tanzania, 1930-2015*. PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam.

Mapana, K (2013), *Transitions in the Social Functions of the Muheme Music Tradition of the Wagogo People of Dodoma, Tanzania*; in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*

Vol.3 No. 3; February 2013. Accessed on 31/01/2022 from <http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol3.No.3>, February, 2013/15.pdf

Mascarenhas, A. (1977), Settlement and Population Re-distribution in Dodoma, in *Bureau of Resource Assessment and Land Use Planning*, (BRALUP- Research Paper No. 47, Feb, 1977: University of Dar es Salaam).

Mnyampala, M. E. (1995). *The Gogo: History, Customs, and Traditions*. Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe.

Rigby, P. (1970), *Cattle and Kingship among the Wagogo: A Semi-Pastoral Society of Central Tanzania*, (London: Cornell University Press.

United Republic of Tanzania (2015), *Dodoma Region Social Economic Profile Report*, Dar es Salaam: Government Printer.