The struggle for ‘real’ Tanzanian music
An anthropological analysis of the construction of national identity in Singeli

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INTRODUCTION

After decolonization, Africa was thrown into the process of nation building, whereby each nation pursued different strategies, including negotiating, pursuing and rejecting modernism while sustaining tradition (Hess 2006: 1). President Nyerere, the first president of independent Tanzania, placed the restoration of culture at the top of his list. He portrayed culture as the essence of the nation. Thereby he aimed to combat the cultural consequences of colonialism and restore Tanzanian’s culture in its original shape. The revitalization of the past is exemplified in the rhetoric of ujamaa, African socialism. Ujamaa is based on four ideas: “the elimination of exploitation, the control of major means of production by peasants and workers, and the philosophies of democracy and socialism” (Hess 2006: 120). According to Nyerere, these ideas upon which ujamaa is built, were features of the precolonial African family (jamaa), which were corrupted by the advent of colonialism. Therefore, he pursued several strategies to eliminate the remnants of colonialism in order to emancipate the nation from its colonial past. In 1962, he established the Ministry of National Culture and Youth, which was held responsible for the construction of a national culture. Music received a prominent place in the construction of national identity. In the efforts to create a national culture, he moulded the present music-genres into two different poles: colonial and precolonial music. Ngoma, a bantu derived term for drum/song/dance, was framed in the last category, in opposition to dansi and taarab, which he repudiated for its foreign influences. Consequently, ngoma received a privileged position in the construction of an official national culture. His policy instigated the emergence of commercial cultural troupes in the 1980s in Dar es Salaam, which popularized hip-movements from the south in their ngoma performances. These commercial groups countered the policy of the state, who rejected sexually explicit dance-movements. Hence, the construction of an official national culture was abandoned by the state, in the wake of the counter-proposals of the civil society.

When Nyerere resigned from presidency, socialist rhetoric was abandoned, and neoliberal reforms entered the country in the 1990s. Economic liberalisation and the privatisation of the media paved the way for the penetration of foreign music into the musical repertoire of the country. That’s how the new music-genre, Bongo Flava, emerged which initially imitated American hip-hop but later tainted it with Tanzanian flavour. Increasing commercialisation and the replacement of hip-hop with R&B as dominant subgenre in Bongo Flava, caused a rupture
between hip-hop and Bongo Flava artists, in which the former claims to be a better representation of national identity.

Currently, Tanzanian musicians are still struggling to establish a music-genre, which will be accepted by everyone as ‘real’ Tanzanian music. This research explores the efforts of the new-music-genre Singeli, which claims to be a better representation of Tanzania, in opposition to Bongo Flava. Singeli indicates a very recent phenomenon, which started off in 2000 but only acquired its current shape around 2010. Singeli is framed in the conflation of ngoma with hip-movements, which are becoming increasingly popular. Hence, the responsibility in the construction of national culture is again taken over by the informal, civil society, which proposes an alternative national music than the state but still inherits the state’s previous national cultural policy, which favoured ngoma and repudiated foreign influences. Whereas hip-hop artists already urged for an increasing localization of the musical content, Singeli emphasizes the localization of sound and content in order to establish themselves as better representatives of ‘real’ Tanzanian music, in opposition to Bongo Flava.

This thesis is thus concerned with the role of musical performance in the construction of (national) identity. Unlike classic literature, music often evokes identities of people which is associated with a certain type of music (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 197). Music can be used as an instrument for the “…reflexive process of remembering/constructing who one is…” (DeNora in Bennett eds. 2005: 141). Music is a temporal medium, which makes it a powerful device in the construction of the self (Bennett eds. 2005: 144). The construction of (national) identity is a never-ending process, whereby music doesn’t only reflect but produces identities (Frith 1996: 109). Singeli provides the people with templates for the construction/reflection of (national) identity (Bennett eds. 2005: 145). In this thesis I will focus on the musical aspects of Singeli, however, dance and music are inseparable in the performance of Singeli. Therefore, Singeli dance will regularly recur in the analysis of this thesis to support my arguments of Singeli in the construction of (national) identity. The performance of Singeli is lived and representational at the same time, which facilitates the construction of (national) identity (Hughes-Freeland 2008: 11).

More specific, this thesis investigates why and how Singeli simultaneously remains local and global in the struggle to become ‘real’ Tanzanian music, by evoking tradition and authenticity, in reaction to globalization and internal forces. This is framed in the paradox of universalism and particularism in the construction of national identity (Turino 2000: 215-217). It explores which internal and global forces gave rise to Singeli, which answered the cry for a distinct
national music-genre in opposition to Bongo Flava and other (inter)national music-genres. This thesis pays attention to all the different actors – audience, performers and music-industry – that contribute to the construction of national identity. In this process they all propose different strategies to achieve (inter)national recognition. Hence, this thesis investigates the ongoing construction of Singeli as ‘national’ music, whereby it assumes the objections and proposals of the different actors in order to be accepted as ‘real’ Tanzanian music and extend national boundaries. I will answer these questions based on the information that I’ve collected during ethnographic research. This research took place in the summer of 2018 in Dar es Salaam and lasted 7 weeks.

No one has ever conducted research about Singeli before. This marks the relevance of this thesis, which aims to fill in the gaps of existing research. The work of Edmondson (2007) and Askew (2002) indicate important contributions to this research. They both focused on the role of performance in the construction of national identity. They pay attention to the active engagement of the civil society in this process, whereby they construct, maintain and challenge the national rhetoric of the state. However, they didn’t address the role of the global music-industry in the creation of national culture. Hence, my research expands the involvement of different actors in the ongoing process of nation-building. Whereas Edmondson provided a general outline of national performance, Askew payed special attention to the performance of taarab, which operates as a useful device in the reconfiguring of personal social relations. Both studies emphasize that the nation, which is brought into being through performance, is necessarily ‘fragmented, disjunctive and internally contradictory’. This thesis will expose the same complexity in the creation of a new music-genre which presents itself as ‘real’ Tanzanian music.

This thesis is divided in five chapters, whereby each one of them contributes to the disentanglement of the research question. The next chapter will discuss the methods I’ve used to conduct the ethnographic research. It will display the problems I’ve faced during my research and confront my positionality as a female European researcher. The third chapter provides an explanation about the theoretical concepts that I’ve used to understand the claims Singeli evoked in the construction of a national identity, in reaction to globalization. The first section scrutinizes the role of identity in the increasing interconnectedness of the world. It exposes the processes of the global and the local, which is very important for the analysis of Singeli. The second section unravels the different theoretical interpretations about tradition, which is used as a claim by Singeli to portray itself as a distinct national music-genre. At the end of the
section, the meaning of tradition is re-evaluated, which will be used to interpret Singeli’s claim on tradition. The third section investigates the aspects that gave rise to nationalism and unravels the complex meaning of nationalism, that is paired with contradictions and is produced in different ways. The last section tackles the concept of authenticity, which is also used as a claim by Singeli in the construction of a national music-genre. The section starts off with the history of the concept and ends by a detailed analysis of authenticity in relation to music. The fourth chapter offers a historical background literature and is subdivided in three sections. The first section addresses the cultural systems that contributed to the rise of nationalism before independence. The second section pays attention to the conscious construction of nationalism by Nyerere, who pursued several strategies to create an official national culture. However, it also addresses the counter-efforts of the commercial cultural troupes who popularized the hip-movements from the south. The third section discusses the advent of neoliberalism, which introduces the global into the local. Hence, that section clarifies the impact of neoliberal reforms on the music-genres of Tanzania.

The fifth chapter represents the data analysis of Singeli, in which I combine the contributions of academical literature with the results that I’ve collected on the field. This chapter is subdivided in six sections. The first section tackles the history of Singeli: what, where and how it emerged. The second section addresses why Singeli emerged by analysing the different motors that gave rise to it. This section aims to comprehend the urge to create a new distinct national music-genre. The third section analyses the different criteria that my informants proposed for the claim on traditional and/or Tanzanian music. In this section the claims for tradition and authenticity are disentangled in their bare complexity. The fourth section provides an extensive analysis of how the claims of tradition and authenticity are used in Singeli in opposition to Bongo Flava and other (inter)national music-genres. Through this analysis, I address the specific musical characteristics of Singeli, based on origin, style and content. This section explores how difference/localization is exploited in the authenticity-battle of Singeli performers against Bongo Flava artists. The fifth section pays attention to a different actor in the construction of national performance: the audience. It explores how the audience counters the image of Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian music. The last section brings the last actor of Singeli performance into the foreground: the music-industry. This section explores how similarities with the global music-industry are exploited to achieve (inter)national recognition. It investigates Singeli’s recent developments to achieve the largest audience possible. This section
serves as an umbrella for the opinions of all the different actors, which are equated for Singeli to become accepted as ‘real’ Tanzanian music on an (inter)national scale.

2  METHODOLOGY

My choice to do ethnographic research on Singeli, is informed by my previous ethnographic research on Bongo Flava versus hip-hop which I have conducted for my bachelor thesis. In my bachelor thesis, I discussed the authenticity battle between Bongo Flava and Tanzanian hip-hop, in which the latter alienated itself from the former to earn the ‘rightful’ claim on ‘real’ Tanzanian music. From January 2017 until February 2018, I had conducted interviews with listeners, (underground) hip-hop artists, a video producer and a music producer. That ethnographic research mainly took place in Morogoro since I studied there in the Mzumbe University, as part of the educational exchange program of the UGent. While conducting that research, I discovered that a new genre, Singeli, was developing in which some hip-hop artists, like the famous professor Jay, were involved. I realized that this new genre could be the direct result of the authenticity battle hip-hop artists were performing against Bongo Flava artists. In other words, Singeli signifies a new competitor in the struggle for ‘real’ Tanzanian music. Now, a new battle arose between Bongo Flava and Singeli artists whereby Singeli claims to be the ‘real’ Tanzanian music in opposition to Bongo Flava. This new development spurred my curiosity and represented itself as the perfect topic for my master thesis since no one has conducted research about this topic before. Hence, I decided to return to Tanzania in the summer of 2018, in order to conduct ethnographic research about Singeli. I managed to collect a considerable amount of information. In total, I have conducted in depth-interviews with 5 Singeli producers, 10 Singeli artists, 1 radio presenter, 1 DJ, 1 manager, 4 Singeli dancers and 10 listeners in Dar es Salaam. Additionally, my previous knowledge on authenticity definitely contributed towards a greater apprehension of my master-research. When I travelled back to Tanzania, I noticed that Singeli had become very popular in a short amount of time. This reflected the intensified battle between Bongo Flava and Singeli artists whereby Singeli equally tries to earn a place on the (inter)national stage. Whereas I didn’t remark the presence of Singeli considerably in 2017, one year later Singeli was played on the street, clubs, beach and so on. This development reflected the growing importance of Singeli and thus the need for research.

When I was studying at the Mzumbe University, I developed a very good friendship with Hezron. He studied law there in the past and he currently studies in Dar es Salaam for his
master’s degree. However, he comes from Mwanza originally. He helped me to conduct my
first ethnographical research about Bongo Flava and hip-hop. He promised me to help me again
with this master-research. Before my arrival, he already reached out towards a Singeli radio
presenter who was willing to connect us to several other artists and producers once I arrived.
This search for connections was crucial since I only had 7 weeks to conduct all the interviews
and observation. Likewise, because no academic literature on Singeli exists I was constrained
to collect as much data as possible on the field. After my arrival, however, the busy schedule
of the radio presenter prevented the further continuation of my research. Consequently, we
opted to find Singeli artists ourselves. We crossed the path of several artists, however, we didn’t
manage to obtain the cooperation of many because they didn’t quite understand the goal of my
research. As a young woman, I can imagine that I didn’t represent their image of a ‘real’
researcher. This is linked to the small number of female artists in the Tanzanian music-industry,
which is partly reinforced through the prevailing stereotypes about them. In the popular
imagination, producing/playing instruments is confined to men and female performers on stage
are associated with obscene behaviour (Perullo 2011: 128-140). Therefore, it is possible that
they didn’t take my interest in Singeli seriously through my position as a woman. I concluded
that I needed someone who had some authority over the informants while serving as a dome of
connections which would facilitate our search. Hence, we contacted manager Kandoro through
instagram who, thereafter, accepted to help us. Manager Kandoro is the manager of Msaga
Sumu, who is one of the first Singeli artists. Hence, the manager knows a lot of important people
that are engaged with Singeli, which was crucial for my research. Without him, I would have
never been able to collect as much data as I have now. Together, we planned out how much
informants I would need while taking into account all the important spheres of Singeli:
audience, dancers, artists, producers and radio presenter. Every day he made appointments with
several actors in these different spheres, which resulted in an optimal data collection. We
conducted the interviews at the house of the manager or we travelled to the homeplace of the
informants to conduct the interviews there. However, I realize that many artists maybe saw this
as an opportunity to promote Singeli on an international scale which in turn may have
influenced the results. The manager didn’t make appointments with listeners of Singeli because
this would result in a biased data collection. Hence, I have conducted interviews with audience
members by walking down the streets of Dar es Salaam and starting informal conversations
with passengers. In this way, the informants were not determined by the preferences of the
manager, whose endeavours are oriented towards the promotion of Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian
music.
Even though most interviews didn’t take place in a ‘natural’ setting since the manager made fixed appointments with the informants for us, I also conducted participant observation in which I occurred as a member of the study population (Finnegan 1992: 76). Firstly, I witnessed a radio session of the sole Singeli radio station Efm in Dar es Salaam. This gave me extra insight on the importance of the fast tempo of Singeli whereby the radio presenter speeded up his speaking tempo during the session. The radio presenter also interviewed me during the session on air. Thereafter, because the electronic operation and origination of Singeli was very hard to understand without any knowledge on digital software, the manager also set-up a session in which some producers explained me step by step how Singeli originated and how they make it. At that moment I was not a member of the study population, but it was still a very important observation since the session clarified how Singeli could have originated from taarab, which sounds very different from Singeli.

Thenceforth, I also visited a concert in Dar es Salaam which was organized by the government who used artists to persuade the audience to test themselves on HIV. This concert proved the popularity of Singeli artists who were used to attract a large audience. Subsequently, the manager informed me about an important festival which would take place at the same time of my research. This festival, muziki mnene, was organised by Efm and operated as a talent search for new Singeli artists. The festival would take place in different regions in which artists battled against each other. In turn, each winner in the various regions would battle against each other in Dar es Salaam. There, the winner would receive radio promotion and the recording of a song. This festival was thus the perfect opportunity to investigate the commercial aspects and preferences of the audience on Singeli. However, I have only visited the battle in Tabora since the remaining battles were located far away from Dar es Salaam. Additionally, the festival just started when I almost needed to return home, so I didn’t receive the opportunity to conduct extensive research about the festival. I still needed to conduct interviews with Singeli dancers as well, so I needed to reserve the time I still had left. In Tabora, I have interviewed the winner of the battle and his friend, who is a hip-hop artist. After, I wanted to attend a vigodolo party, which is the event where Singeli originated. However, this observation didn’t turn out successful given that many people were afraid to dance because of my presence. Nonetheless, I witnessed there the influence/importance of the fast tempo of Singeli on other genres in which they speeded up the tempo of other genres too. Thereafter, I observed a Singeli dance group at a taarab concert and during their rehearsals at a café. The Singeli dancers were also taarab dancers. Hence, the taarab concert appeared as an opportunity to find a possible connection.
between taarab and Singeli dance. Besides their rehearsals, they also explicitly demonstrated their Singeli dance moves, which I captured on video. Lastly, my own personal excursions in Tanzania served as the epitome of participant observation. By living in Tanzania for two months and spending time in its public sphere (clubs, beach, street, cafés,...) I noticed the influence of Singeli myself without manipulating the environment to extract information.

Even though Singeli dance and music are inseparable and equally important, I have chosen to mainly emphasize the music in this thesis for the following reasons. Firstly, given the limited amount of time, I was only able to interview one dance group in contrast with the detailed, large amount of information I have found on the music. Secondly, since no research has ever been conducted before about Singeli I was obliged to comprehend the music first since the dance developed after the music. Thirdly, I’ve never found the man who has lend his name ‘Kisingeli’ to the music/dance through his dance moves. He would have been an important source to understand the origin of the dance better but was, however, impossible to trace since he lost his phone and no one knew where he was. This doesn’t mean that I have decided to neglect the dance. It solely means that I will focus on the music and that I will use the dance to support my main arguments on the music. Therefore, I mainly look at the interpretations of the dance but won’t provide a technical analysis of every possible Singeli dance move given my limited knowledge on this aspect. This would be useless anyway because the boundaries are very fluid and the same moves are used on different music genres and new moves are invented every day on Singeli. What is typical Singeli is the different way/flow they dance the same/new moves. Hence, this is what I will describe.

Even though I haven’t been able to collect extensive information about Singeli dance, I still tried to trace possible influences on the dance and music, which is important to interpret Singeli’s claim on traditional/Tanzanian music/dance. Since influences can come from every corner in a globalized world, it is important to recognize that my thesis cannot exhaust all the possible influences on Singeli. Additionally, very limited research is conducted about the Tanzanian music-genres that influenced and preceded Singeli, like mchiriku. Hence, my thesis only offers one interpretation about the origin of Singeli which is based on the data I have been able to collect.

Another problem, in this aspect, is that some informants may purposely have refused to mention other influences of other genres in order to maintain their claim of Singeli as traditional/Tanzanian music. Hence, it is possible that they manipulated certain information to promote Singeli as Tanzanian music at an (inter)national level. Therefore, it is notable how
almost every informant, especially the artists, proclaimed Singeli as a ‘unique’ music-genre without any possible foreign influence. It is exactly this important observation that shaped my research question in which I aim to understand why and how my informants – the audience, performers and the music-industry – proclaim Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian music/dance.

Considering, the small number of female artists in the music industry in general and in Tanzania in particular I’ve only interviewed three female Singeli artists: Dotizo, Young Yuda and Mziwanda (Englert 2003: 76; Perullo 2011: 128-129). The Kiwalani dance crew, that I’ve cooperated with for several days, had only one female dancer who disappeared on the day of the interview. This occurrence can be further clarified in my analysis on the reputation of female Singeli dancers in Tanzania. However, given that my informants were predominantly male, I won’t focus substantially on the differences between female and male artists/dancers. Almost all the artists and dancers only finished primary education and all of them, including the producers, are approximately 18-35 years old. This supports the idea that Singeli arose from the young, uneducated poor who claim to be a better representation of Tanzania in opposition to Bongo Flava. Nonetheless, I have purposely interviewed a differentiated audience in order to identify different perspectives depending on their different backgrounds/identities. I selected a broad audience according to different class, age and gender to investigate whether the music is appreciated by elders and the upper class as well since it started as an incentive of the young lower class. Accordingly, I also wanted to check if Singeli really attracted a large audience, including elders, as some Singeli artists proclaimed. Both the radio presenter and the manager were male and middle-aged. The key informants in this research are Msaga Sumu, Man Fongo and Kapala. They are among the first Singeli artists which enabled them to deliver extensive information about Singeli’s history and development. The largest amount of my informants consists of Singeli artists since it is especially they who claim to be ‘real’ Tanzanian artists while the producers recognize other influences more readily.

Another challenge was that none of my informants spoke English, except for some of the audience members and the manager. Therefore, Hezron and Lucy appeared as my interpreters during all the interviews which were undertaken in Swahili. Lucy is another friend that I’ve made during the exchange program in Tanzania. She is a resident of Dar es Salaam, which enabled her to provide extensive information about its music-genres, especially Zaramo ngoma. However, Lucy and Hezron are not directly involved in the Tanzanian music-industry. During the interviews, which I recorded with my phone, they both translated the answers to my questions so I was allowed to ask more questions when I didn’t understand. This prolonged the
duration of the interviews and made some informants impatient. Afterwards, I always discussed the interpretations of the interviews with the interpreters which improved their understanding about what I wanted to investigate and, in turn, resulted in a better cooperation. However, for me this dependency was challenging since I noticed that they sometimes influenced the results. For instance, one of them told an artist that I was investigating the traditional music called Singeli but this invalidated the purpose of my research in which I wanted to investigate if they consider Singeli to be traditional music. Luckily, I understand some Swahili and this limited knowledge helped me to coordinate the interviews. After the fieldwork, Lucy and Hezron both transcribed the interviews for me, for which I compensated them.

I have conducted qualitative research which means that my informants appeared as active figures in the interviews and were able to create their own meanings instead of simply choosing between possible answers (Gubrium & Holstein 2012: 83). Rubin and Rubin (1995: 145 in Gubrium & Holstein 2012) discern three kind of questions in qualitative research: main questions which guide the research, probes to clarify the answers and follow-up questions to the main questions. I used all three of them. I composed different extensive question-lists for the different influence spheres of Singeli which I, in turn, adjusted to the context and informant. When I prepared the question-lists, I paid a lot of attention to the formulation and order of the questions since in my view the research should be shaped by the interviews/observations and the research shouldn’t shape the interviews/observations. This means that the researchers shouldn’t put her personal thoughts/evaluations in the research questions but ought to listen to what the informants tell her, which as a result shape the next questions and not the other way around. Therefore, I always asked which music they considered traditional or Tanzanian and the interview never started by asking whether they consider Singeli as Tanzanian/traditional music which would already insinuate that I consider it as Tanzanian/traditional music and thus influence them to offer normatively appropriate responses. Nonetheless, my interview questions are still inevitably shaped by my social and cultural background and the western literature I have read at home. Even so, my research question was built on informal conversations with informants during my first ethnographic research in which they exposed the struggle for ‘real’ Tanzanian music. Hence, I received the information upon which my research question is built through a spontaneous conversation, featured by a considerable input from the informant, without ‘fixed’ research questions.

Gubrium & Holstein (2012:105) claim in-depth interviews to be the best option for research when “different individuals or groups involved in the same line of activity have complicated,
multiple perspectives on some phenomenon”. Therefore, I’ve conducted in-depth interviews with different individuals involved in music/cultural industry who have a different vision about the same phenomenon: Singeli. Hence, I didn’t investigate facts but their opinion/interpretation about this phenomenon.

All the informants gave me the permission to use their information in this thesis and mention their artist names. They perceive it as an opportunity to promote their music-genre on an international scale. Except for the observation in Tabora, I have only conducted research in Dar es Salaam since it denotes the homeplace of Singeli, where the founders of Singeli reside. Singeli is thus mainly based in Dar es Salaam but it is not confined to Dar es Salaam. This is exemplified in the sole radio station of Singeli, EfM, which is based in Dar es Salaam and is broadcasted in various regions of Tanzania. It is further illustrated in the Singeli festival, muziki mnene, whereby EfM operates as a talent scout in various regions and the ultimate battle is performed in Dar es Salaam. The final winner would then be supported by EfM to record a song in Dar es Salaam. Hence, I have conducted multilocal research which “draw[s] on some problem, some formulation of a topic, which is significantly translocal, not to be confined within some single place” (Hannerz 2003: 206, italic in original).

My informants claim that Singeli doesn’t differ in other regions. Nonetheless, I haven’t been able to investigate whether there are considerable differences between them. This indicates the problem of multilocal research which always “entails a selection of sites from among those many which could potentially be included” (Hannerz 2003: 207). Hence, this research about Singeli doesn’t signify a representation of Singeli in the whole country. Even though Singeli performers construct a national identity through Singeli, this research is determined by the perspectives of a selected amount of people in Dar es Salaam, which can never speak for the whole nation.

However, selection is a feature of every anthropological research. The main danger of anthropological research resides in the reduction of complexity. Researchers can never exhaust and acknowledge all the possible complexities and when the results are moulded into a written text, it inevitably becomes a reduction of the complexity on the field. Marja-Liisa Swantz, Salome Mjema and Zenya Wild (1995: 5) explain this danger “of reducing complexity of the weave of a culture, or of ignoring seemingly extraneous material in order to make the concepts fit better into the unfolding pattern”. That’s why I focus on the agency of the different agents in the construction of national identity in Singeli, which enhances the complexity of the topic.
I have tried to gain an emic perspective on Singeli by including a high degree of participant observation in my analysis.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 GLOBALIZATION AND IDENTITY

In the 1970s the term ‘cultural imperialism’ was used to describe the traffic in culture which moved, according to its advocates, in one direction: from the US/West to the economically peripheral countries (Schiller 1976 & Sreberny 1997 in Hesmondhalgh 2019: 376). The ‘cultural imperialism thesis’ held that by the end of colonialism, international domination didn’t end but continued into a more indirect form by imposing western culture on the periphery which would result in cultural homogenization (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 376). Accordingly, the thesis envisioned the world as a ‘world of sameness’, eliminated of cultural difference. Since WWII Europe relinquished its hegemonic power to the US who acquired, thereafter, a dominant place in the new world-order. They monopolized the development of electronic systems of communications and the American broadcasting system, which depends on advertising revenue, became the archetype for other broadcasting systems in the world (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 15-16). Even though Hesmondhalgh (2019: 374) affirms that cultural industries have been dominated by the US for the last hundred years, Hesmondhalgh (2019: 375-378) and Inda and Rosaldo (2008: 17-18) also confirm that the concept of cultural imperialism doesn’t acknowledge the complexities and other upcoming forces in other countries which challenge this so-called domination. Firstly, cultural imperialism depicts the third world as passive consumers of imported cultural commodities and thus neglects that they interpret those goods in their own cultural terms. Secondly, the ubiquity of imported cultural goods is not a valid criterium to determine cultural homogenization but must be investigated in terms of the influence that those goods have on their everyday life. Thirdly, cultural imperialism solely emphasizes a one-directional cultural diffusion and rebukes the influence the periphery has on the West. Fourthly, it doesn’t take the processes of cultural differentiation into account. Lastly, the concept fails to recognize the flows of culture within the periphery itself which are often not considered as a threat but are welcomed because they are not associated with imperialist power (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 378; Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 18-27). Ernesto Laclau (1990 in Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 29) concludes that the world doesn’t consist of one cultural power centre but of multiple ones.
In the early 1980s the concept of cultural imperialism was replaced by the more ‘neutral’ term of globalization through its inclusion of the complexities of cultural diffusion. Even though the term obscures the enduring economic inequality, I will still use the term since my research focuses on its cultural dimension by analysing the different experiences of different actors about globalization in culturally specific ways (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 8, 33; King 1991: 4). In the most general sense globalization signifies an increasing long-distance interconnectedness. This interconnectedness is not something new since the depiction of culture bounded by a certain territory and language never corresponded with reality. The interaction and diffusion of ideas have existed throughout human history, but the movement of human beings, goods and meanings have intensified since the late 20th century. New media and transport technologies have extended the reach across space and time (Hannerz 1996: 17-19). A more detailed definition is given by Inda and Rosaldo (2008: 11) who describe globalization as a process of speeding up flows, intensification of links, modes of interaction, stretching of social, cultural, political and economic practices across frontiers and increasing entanglement of global and local. David Harvey (1989 in Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 8-10) claims that globalization implies more than interconnectedness and signifies a fundamental rearrangement of time and space: time-space compression. This means that time and space no longer determine the organisation of human life. He attributes this time-space compression to crises of overaccumulation in the capitalist system which caused the creation of new technologies and better modes of information/communication to move commodities around at a faster pace. Anthony Giddens (1990), however, emphasizes the interconnectedness of social life across time and space instead of economy. He defines globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which links distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990: 64). This doesn’t mean that locality doesn’t play an important factor in social life anymore but solely acknowledges the decreasing importance of co-presence (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 11).

The intensified movement of people, capital, commodities, images and ideologies makes cultural analysis increasingly complex. The culture of a certain place is increasingly defined by inputs from many other places while some groups of people increasingly share a transnational culture (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 4; Hesmondhalgh 2019: 375). Therefore, the nation as basis for a cultural analysis without a transnational framework fails to recognize cultural phenomena which circulates around, in and outside it (King 1991: 6). Particularly, popular music is an area of music which references global aspects of music and serves as the archetype of creolization.
and hybridization (Stone 2010; King 1991: 38). Therefore, the discussion of globalization needed to be incorporated in this thesis since Singeli aims to target an international audience by formatting its music according to international accepted modes. More importantly, Singeli serves as a reaction to globalization, which will be clarified later. It is especially this interaction which causes globalisation to be an important aspect in the analysis of this thesis. In this sense, I refer to the process of identity-making which is always constructed in relation to the ‘other’. This means that identity or culture, as constructions, would not exist if one was alone on the planet. Identity refers in the first place to the process of identification which is always constructed by splitting. Wallerstein (in King 1991: 16) affirms this view by representing culture as a reactive force: defining culture is a matter of defining boundaries. Identities and culture are not natural entities which are present outside our representation of them. Hence, the construction of identity is always in the making and never represents a closed totality but is composed of different discourses and categories which makes the organization of these layered identities always a struggle. Identities are ‘stable points of reference’ in a changing global world-order and are, in turn, called for in response to an eroding relationship between identity and state (King 1991: 21-57).

In short, globalization, doesn’t only provide a sense of we-ness or cultural continuity but also a sense of cultural discontinuity, caused by the process of identification which is, in turn, facilitated by growing interconnectedness. In contrast with the assumptions of cultural imperialism, globalization has not solely brought about cultural homogenization but has also produced cultural differentiation (Hannerz 1996: 21). Appadurai (1990: 588) highlights the complexity and difference of the global cultural economy by describing it as a “complex, overlapping, disjunctive order”. He explores this disjunctive order by analysing the relationship among the five dimensions of global cultural flows which he terms as ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes. They respectively refer to the flow of persons, information, technologies, finance and ideology. He uses the suffix ‘scape’ to emphasize the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes, which are not homogeneous but indicate perspectival constructs that are inflected by historical, linguistic and political situatedness. Therefore, his critical point denotes that the relation among these flows are deeply disjunctive and unpredictable because each of these flows is subjected to its own incentives and constraints (Appadurai 1990: 589-591). He depicts globalization as the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization that are moulded into heterogeneous dialogues (Appadurai 1990: 196).
Hence, the response to globalization brings forth cultural identities which emphasize the global and local at the same time. Global and local are thus not separated processes but are two faces of the same movement from one era of globalization, which were both not able to develop without each other. Likewise, the idea of nationalism (local) develops only in tandem with internationalism (global) (King 1991: 27, 78). Therefore, Robertson (1995: 28-40) proposes the term glocalization, which already became part of business jargon during the 1980s, to overcome the distinction between the global and the local and emphasize the simultaneity between them. According to him, this term deconstructs the weaknesses of the term globalization which increasingly involves the incorporation and creation of locality. Nonetheless, I need to use the global and the local separately in my analysis since my informants oppose and essentialize them in their struggle to present themselves as better representatives of Tanzanian music in relation to Bongo Flava artists.

Immanuel Wallerstein (in King 1991: 69-72) defines the twofold process of the local and the global as the ‘interpenetration of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism’. It is exactly this idea which is important in my analysis since Singeli simultaneously demands for assimilation into the universal by targeting an international audience and referencing global aspects in its music while affirming/reinventing the local/particular through the incorporation of ngoma etc. Universalization of particularism is then reflected in the promotion of a local/national genre, Singeli, in the global sphere whereas particularization of universalism is emulated in the local appropriation of global elements (foreign recording material and digital software). Another concept which emphasizes this two-fold is the concept of de/territorialisation, caused by globalization. This concept calls attention to the fact that deterritorialization always contains territorialisation within itself since deterritorialization of culture signifies the reinsertion of culture in a new context/space (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 12-14).

3.2 TRADITION

The idea of tradition took shape during enlightenment, with Edmund Burke as the first modern theorist of tradition (Shils 1981: 4; Handler & Linnekin 1984: 286). The belief prevailed that existing practices and beliefs had to be changed/replaced to pave the way for progressive societies. The novelty of this belief was that the responsibility to bring humanity closer to perfection on earth, was transferred from the prophets to ordinary human actors. Change, empirical science and rationality became the synonyms of progress opposed to tradition which
was linked with intolerance/ignorance, that stood in the way of progress. Romanticism casted tradition in a negative light as well by opposing the creativity of the individual to the rules/traditions of the society which inhibits the individual to flourish (Shils 1981: 2-11).

Only from the 1970s, traditions were re-evaluated in a positive sense (Otto et al. 2005: 30). Edward Shils defines tradition, in the 1980s, as “anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present” (1981:12). He includes in his definition material objects and beliefs but excludes particular actions which are unable to be transmitted in concrete form. He proposes objective criteria to distinguish traditions: a belief/practice needs to last at least for three generations to be qualified as tradition. Unlike previous generations, he embraces change as a part of tradition, inherent in the process of its transmission and present during the possession of their recipients. Whereas he admits that traditions might undergo very great changes, he opts that the remaining essential elements, which persist together with the changing elements, constitute the tradition as identical at successive steps of transmission/possession. He also pays attention to the fact that these changing conditions are often viewed by its recipients as unchanged (Shils 1981: 12-17).

Another author who emulates the aspect of change in tradition is Eric Hobsbawm (2012) through reframing various traditions as invented traditions. He defines invented traditions as:

“...A set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuities with a suitable historic past.” (Hobsbawm 2012:1)

The peculiarity of those invented traditions is that the claimed continuity with its past is largely artificial since they are responses to new situations with reference to old situations (Hobsbawm 2012: 2). Hobsbawm indicates that invented traditions are characteristic of whole human history and attributes them to large and rapid changes on the demand or supply side. Still, he points to the increase of these phenomena caused by the significant changes on the demand/supply side during the last two-hundred years. He makes several distinctions for the qualification of tradition. Firstly, he discerns customs, marked by change, from traditions, whose object is invariance. Secondly, tradition has a symbolic function/legitimization opposed to routine,
invented to facilitate social practice. He declares invented traditions as a process of ritualization and formalization, by imposing repetition (Hobsbawm 2012: 2-6).

Whereas both Hobsbawm (2012) and Shils (1981) introduced interesting theories to analyse the process of tradition-making, their analysis rested on the incorrect distinction between ‘real’ and fictitious traditions while traditions, like identity and culture, are always constructed (Handler & Linnekin 1984: 276). The biggest flaw in Shils’ analysis denotes the naturalization of tradition through affirming its changing nature in persistence with an essential/unchanging core. Handler and Linnekin (1984: 273) confirm that tradition doesn’t refer to a natural object but must be understood as a symbolic construction, which doesn’t exist apart from their interpretation. Ironically, Shils implicitly agrees with this idea by representing tradition as a symbolic understanding of the text which would be a physical, meaningless object without interpretation (Shils 1981: 17). After this assertion, Shils still decided to ascribe an essential nature to tradition, in company with its changing nature. But where then, one ought to draw the line to consider it as something completely new? Shils doesn’t consider this problematic issue in which the essentialization of tradition presupposes fixed boundaries which the changing nature of tradition doesn’t allow. Therefore, traditions are always necessarily invented because they are defined/reconstructed in the present by looking back to a past one is disassociated from and thus inevitably imagined/remembered differently. This idea doesn’t assert that present ideas have no correspondence to past representations, but it solely acknowledges the fact that those representations can be equally termed discontinuous as continuous. This conception simultaneously affirms traditions’ relationship with past references while stripping off its essential/natural character (Handler & Linnekin 1984: 275-288).

However, it is exactly this discontinuity which invented traditions, according to Hobsbawm, don’t acknowledge. While Hobsbawm doesn’t explicitly ascribe an essential nature to traditions, the term invention of tradition still implies that ‘real’ traditions exist opposed to the former (Otto et al. 2005: 12; Anderson 2006: 6; Linnekin 1991: 447). This vision, thus, doesn’t acknowledge that all traditions are invented. Unlike Hobsbawm, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1996 in Otto et al. 2005: 26-27) illustrate construction/invention as part of all traditions by distinguishing habit, custom and tradition as consecutive processes in time. According to them habits are more ‘unconscious’, individual repetitions of actions which mitigates the enduring pressure to make choices all the time. Customs refer to social, repetitive activities fixed by institutions to control human conduct. Tradition, then, contains the explanations/ reflections which justify the institutionalised social order (customs) by offering it
normative authority as well as cognitive validity. This analysis of tradition displays a high-level of consciousness in relation with former processes which automatically implies also a high-level of construction/invention. Wagner (2016) affirms this idea by defining invention as culture and vice versa. He claims that one may say that culture only becomes visible in relation to other cultures. In this regard, culture is continuously (re)invented through an inscription of new interpretations in reaction to other cultures. This doesn’t mean that it has no cultural continuity, but the presence of its ‘self-evident’ culture was simply forgotten and thus not defined (Wagner 2016: 14). It is exactly this process of defining boundaries which constitutes culture. Similarly, an anthropologist inevitably invents culture by generalizing his/her experiences and defining it. We are not born with certain traditions or cultures, but they are invented to make communication possible. All people thus need shared conventions in order to communicate with one another which is not possible without invention (Wagner 2016: 28-37).

This vision, which celebrates constant change and creativity, invalidates the use of the term tradition altogether, but I still need to use it in my analysis because my informants use this concept as an important criterion to evaluate Singeli (Wagner 2016: 43; Edmondson 2007: 48). In this sense, it doesn’t matter whether such essentialist discourse to interpret Singeli is correct or not since it continues to circulate in popular discourse, which points to the fact that traditions form an important part to validate their everyday life. If I would reject the use of this concept, I would neglect their experiences of Singeli, which is the main objective of this thesis. At the same time, the concept of invention of tradition disempowers my informants to envision Singeli in their own terms and thus questions its validity as tradition (Theodossopoulos 2013: 338; Linnekin 1991: 446-447). This idea and the deconstructions of the concept above, are the main reasons why I won’t use ‘invention of tradition’ to describe Singeli. However, the term ‘reinvention of tradition’ reassures that all traditions are invented and continuously involved with reinterpretation and change. This denotation would end the search for ‘real’ versus ‘fictitious’ traditions and recognise the equality of all traditions (Theodossopoulos 2013: 350). But this term would still take away the right of my informants to describe Singeli how they want. If traditions are all invented anyway, the term ‘invention’ renders itself useless. This indicates that the meaning of tradition itself should be re-evaluated by keeping in mind that tradition is determined by continuity as well as discontinuity (Handler & Linnekin 1984: 286).

Afterwards, Ranger (1993: 24) also became aware of the heavy weight ‘invention’ of tradition, imposed by Europeans on Africans, carried in his analysis for colonial Africa and replaced it by imagined traditions to emphasize the complicit agency of Africans in the construction of
tradition, built on previous imagined beliefs and practices. He realized that in pre-colonial Africa traditions were invented in much the same way and is thus not an exclusive merit of Europe (Ranger 1993: 7). While I have deconstructed the use of invention of tradition, the theory of Hobsbawm still contains some considerable merits. Ton Otto and Poul Pedersen (2005: 13) agree that all traditions are invented but they distinguish different levels of explicitness of (constructed) continuity. The invented tradition Hobsbawm describes is different from other traditions in its explicit reference to the past as primary source for legitimation. As described by the theory of Berger and Luckmann, traditions justify customary practices by commenting on them in different ways which doesn’t necessarily presuppose the past as its legitimation. Then, a more correct term to describe this specific form of tradition would be traditionalist tradition, which is then released from the problematic notion of ‘invention’. An opposition to this traditionalist tradition is for example a tradition referring to God which doesn’t claim continuity with the past to justify its customs (Otto et al. 2005: 29). As a result, these traditions are often not consciously framed as traditions even though they already exist for a long time. Thereby the conscious call for tradition itself denotes the explicit legitimation of the past and thus the traditionalist tradition. This theory proposes a different angle in the interpretation of Singeli.

Whereas I am aware that Hobsbawm mainly refers to a specific form of invented traditions, constructed by national authorities, which witness a high-level of explicit construction and institutionalization, I don’t agree with his argument that these invented traditions become inevitably fixed. He claims that invented traditions are characterised by invariance, but this invalidates his whole argument of invention of tradition which supposedly acknowledges change as part of tradition. The paradox of globalization indeed denotes that while it may simultaneously increase differences between cultures, by affirming its particularities, the differences within a certain culture might be diminished through defining boundaries as Hobsbawm argues. Hence, defining boundaries always entails a selection and cultural preservation inevitably alters, reinvent the traditions that they aim to fix (Handler & Linnekin 1984: 288). Still, this doesn’t mean that culture, with its traditions, is not receptive to change anymore since it is continuously reinvented in reaction to its changing environment.

Even though, other scholars agree that he mainly refers to ‘new’ traditions which are institutionalized, formalized and fixed by nations, Hobsbawm himself doesn’t represent them as a specific form of tradition but offers a general theory of invented traditions (Otto et al. 2005: 13; Ranger 1993: 22). Hallam and Ingold (2007) also defy his static vision by offering an
alternative vision of creativity. Just like culture is often imagined in terms of its achievements (science, art and technology), creativity is too often interpreted in terms of results (Wagner 2016: 24-27). Many scholars associate creativity with innovation as opposed to improvisation which denotes a conventional exploration within a framework of rules. Hallam and Ingold (2007: 2) challenge this one-dimensional view by including both improvisation and innovation in their concept of creativity in which the former characterizes creativity by way of its processes and the latter by way of its results. They describe improvisation as generative, relational, temporal and the way we work. Improvisation is generative because continuity of tradition is not a passive but active task of carrying on in which copying does not denote simple replication but a complex process which needs to take the constantly changing world into account. Subsequently, improvisation is relational in which creativity is not solely produced from the individual mind but from the total matrix of social relations in which the mind is embedded. Following, improvisation is also applied to certain procedures/routines which are temporally lived and never repeated in the same way. Thus, improvisation is temporal. Lastly, improvisation is necessary because life is unscriptable and no system of rules can predict every possible circumstance in a continuously changing world. Hence, improvisation is the way we work, part of everyday life (Hallam & Ingold 2007: 4-15). Hallam and Ingold defy Hobsbawm’s assertion by reframing the process of formalization of traditions as a creative process, receptive to change, within itself. In this thesis, tradition operates as a claim/resource which has no fixed meaning but is translated in different ways according to different contexts (Otto et al. 2005: 35). Each of my informants imagine traditions differently, whereby the claim on tradition to evaluate Singeli is not ratified by everyone.

3.3 IMAGINING THE NATION

The nation is also recognized as an invention of tradition by Eric Hobsbawm (2012) since the idea of nationalism is a modern creation originated in the 18th century and the term itself is invented in the 19th century. The nation claims continuity with a suitable historic past to legitimize itself and represents national unity as a linear process which conceals the previous breakdown of older and often larger structures. During the 19th century in Europe, the connection between state and individuals strengthened and by the end of the century the state shifted towards secular rule (Vale 1992: 45). As modern replacements for sacred institutions,
the nation state was no longer satisfied with the mere control over a certain territory but wanted to be obeyed and worshipped. Every modern nation state thus ‘invented’ traditions in order to authorize itself and express the unified culture of the people belonging to the nation (Lindholm 2008: 98).

I prefer the concept of Benedict Anderson to interpret the nation, who emphasizes the continuity more than the invention by pointing to the preceding cultural systems that enabled nationalism to take place. He describes the nation as an imagined community because the nation is too big to allow absolute face-to-face-contact with its members. Hence, it is the image of sameness and deeply felt comradeship, regardless of actual inequality, which constitutes the nation. The nation is both imagined as limited, with finite boundaries, and as sovereign, after the destruction of the religious, dynastic realm (Anderson 2006: 6-7). He assigns the possibility of a new form of imagined community to the convergence of capitalism and print technology, which paved the way for the construction/imagination of the nation. The commoditization of print enabled people to develop a sense of we-ness and denotes the basis for the rise of national consciousness.

In the 16th century, the print-industry boomed in Europe as a result of an exceptional prosperity during that time. Initially the print-market targeted Latin readers but the book sellers, in the name of capitalism, wanted to make considerable profits by adjusting its products to reach the largest audience possible. Since the 16th century the number of bilinguals in Europe decreased, which inflicted the publishers to increasingly sell the books in vernaculars. This process was stimulated by two other factors. Firstly, the change of Latin itself whereby humanists revived the antiquity and increasingly removed the language from everyday life. Secondly, the impact of the reformation in which Martin Luther nailed his theses in German translation to the chapel door in Wittenberg, which set the stage for the further spread of books in vernacular languages.

The use of vernaculars as instruments of administrative centralization by monarchs predated print but increasingly spread afterwards (Anderson 2006: 37-46). The process of vernacularizing arose as a gradual, more ‘unconscious’, pragmatic development distinct from the official language policies in the 19th century which served as a response to certain hostile popular linguistic nationalists. Nevertheless, the inclusion of vernaculars in literature elevated their status to languages of power and reduced the role of Christianity in the imagined community. The vernaculars captured in print facilitated the imagining of the nation in other ways too. Firstly, they created a unified field of exchange by exposing different people to the use of the same language. Secondly, vernaculars were assembled into one fixed language by print capitalism which assisted to build the image of antiquity as legitimation of the nation.
The European image of the ‘nation’ was then transferred to other territories through imperialism and colonization (Larsen 1999: 64; Anderson 2006: 110). Tanzania as well, modelled its nationalism on European nationalism (Lange 1995: 28).

In national ideologies, grown out of romanticism, language, culture and landscape served as the basic constituents of national identity. Nation-building is a process of belonging in which the national landscape ought to amalgamate its territory, collective and individual identity into a unifying national identity (Larsen 1999: 63-65). Firstly, Miller (1995 in Larsen 1999: 76-77) states that nationality is an important part of our identity to grasp our place in the world but is a result of historical over-determination and not of natural foundation. Yet, the national landscape, as a natural object, functions to naturalize the unity and common origin of people and place. The constituents of our national identity change all the time in which we cherish different parts of it according to different contexts. Secondly, he stipulates that nations are ethical communities, implying mutual obligations between members of the same national community. Thirdly, he enhances the political aspect of the nation in which the nation calls for self-determination by imposing limits on the inhabitants. Lastly, he insists that a nation can defend its self-determination in three different ways. The nation-state must provide the essential elements for the creation of identity, such as education. Subsequently, the nation must impose the basis obligations such as compulsory schooling. Next, the nation must maintain certain boundaries to exercise that self-determination in. These three aspects refer to the process of nation-building.

Imani Sanga utilizes the theory of spatial trialetics of Henri Lefebvre (1991 in Sanga 2008: 55-56) to understand nationalism. He considers nationalism as a three-layered social space. The first one is the physical space which the members ought to identify as territory of the nation. The second one denotes the mental space, including literary works, songs, dances and other forms which represent ideas about the nation. The last space is the lived space which contains the real experiences/feelings of individuals who identify themselves as members of the nation which, in turn, are shaped by the representations of the mental space. In my thesis, I will focus on both the mental and lived space by offering a general idea in how they construct the nation in the musical-genre Singeli while affirming deviant individual interpretations. Lefebvre argues that those three layers need to be interconnected to prevent confusion when moving between the different spaces. Valentin Mudimbe (1988: 15) indicates that colonization of Africa occurred in all the three spaces which enabled colonization, according to him, to take place. This means that the liberation/decolonization of Africa also has to take place in the three
different layers of space in order for its members to experience a complete liberation. This vision clarifies the policy of Nyerere who emphasizes the importance of a restoration of Tanzanian culture. African nationalism, which Nyerere adheres to, accentuates the liberation of the mental national space (Sanga 2008: 57-58).

Turino (2000) and Anderson (2006) both refer to a paradox of nationalism, with particularism and universalism as constituents. Nationality assumes an abstract (universal) identity which interferes regularly with the particularity of those concrete manifestations (Anderson 2006: 5). Turino states that those particularities, epitomized in distinct local groups, are necessary since they bestow the emblems to distinguish the nation of other nations. At the same time, the unity of the nation, as an abstract concept, is constantly threatened by those distinct local groups. That’s why Nyerere undertook a policy to weaken local ethnic identities in Tanzania, which will be clarified in the background literature of this thesis (Sanga 2008: 58). Similarly, nation-states are also simultaneously dependent on and threatened by cosmopolitanism. Nationalism itself is a cosmopolitan idea and represents a cosmopolitan category, based on a cosmopolitan model. In this sense, a certain nation must be similar to other nations in order to be recognised as a nation – with national flag, languages, anthems and so on. At the same time, the nation only exists in opposition to other nations and that’s where the local (non-cosmopolitan) emblems come to the foreground whereby distinctive cultural units are manipulated within a framework of similarity/cosmopolitanism. Nation-states are thus both threatened and dependent on localism and cosmopolitanism (Turino 2000: 215-217).

While Anderson emphasizes the convergence of capitalism and print technology as the basis for imagining communities, my thesis departs from this exclusive vision through the focus on performance in my thesis. In this regard, Anderson doesn’t take the situations into account where literacy is not widespread. This supports the vision of Askew (2002: 8-23) who claims performance as a main recourse to create an imagined nation in Africa. Thereby, she stresses the active engagement of all citizens in the construction of nationalism, among which their participation in performance. In this sense, performance denotes the active dialogue between performers and audience, opposed to a passive transfer between performers and audience. Thereby, performance is peculiar, compared to other symbols, in the sense that it is lived and representational at the same time, which makes it expedient for embodying an image of who one is (Hughes-Freeland 2008: 11). Susan Geiger (1996) also challenges scholars’ conflation of nationalism with important political leaders who in turn often constructed nationalism based on popular discourse. Similarly, Hess (2006) underscores the importance of popular culture
which not only reflects national discourse of the state but simultaneously produces it. Popular culture either supported official national discourse or contested, reconfigured and transformed it. Hess challenges the insight on how nationalism in postcolonial Africa can be imagined by redirecting the gaze on cultural forms, part of everyday life, which are rarely investigated for its contribution to this imagination. Thereby she defies the western cultural narrative which applies a ‘natural’ distinction between high art, displayed in museums, and low art, popular culture enjoyed by majority. In this thesis I bring attention to the different actors who are equally important in the construction of nationalism. Lastly, while Vale (1992) recasts the creation of a unitary national identity as means to achieve political ends, I will focus on the social function of national identity which provides the nation a claim to legitimacy and self-determination.

3.4 AUTHENTICITY

In English the word ‘authentic’ is linked to several evaluations like sincere, true, honest, absolute, basic, essential, genuine, ideal, natural, original, perfect, pure, real and right (Phillips 1997:5-6 in Lindholm 2013:362). However, what is considered as ‘authentic’ depends on the context in which it is evoked (McLeod 1999:139). Still, there are two dimensions which we can discern in the concept: the historical or genealogical origin and the content/identity it expresses. Something can thus be considered as ‘authentic’ if its source can be traced and if the characteristics fit into the recognized category Lindholm 2013: 362-363).

The word authenticity derives from the Greek words autos (self) and hentes (prepared) which constitutes authentes together. Originally, the word meant: ‘having full power over something’. It had negative connotations, linked to violence, but during modern times the word was revitalized in a positive sense (Lindholm 2013: 362). According to Trilling (1974 in Lindholm 2013: 364), authenticity received this positive inscription as a transformation from the word sincerity, which took place in the traditional European society of the 16th century. Medieval Europe was determined by social hierarchy, in which every member was assured of a place in it. In this hierarchy personal sincerity wasn’t valued, one was only concerned to live up the religious obligations one had (Lindholm 2013: 364-365).

This social hierarchy disappeared by the breaking-up of the feudal system and the influx to the cities. The era of modernity had arrived. In this new modern environment, people were enabled to break free from their previous distinct statuses the hierarchy prescribed. Now, people were free to determine their own destiny. However, this increased social mobility also brought about
more insecurity and deceit. People who had a prescribed role before, could now hide their
descent and pretend to be better than they actually were. In this way, they could claim a higher
status than they were entitled to. That’s why in this period sincerity, which means doing what
one says one will do, became a desired trait to have. The sincerity of a person was now valued
as the remaining basis for legitimation (Lindholm 2013: 365).

This was supported by the emergence of Protestantism, which stated that every person is
responsible for its own salvation and emphasized the intent behind the moral act. The
importance of sincerity conflated with egalitarianism that was praised by protestants. In turn,
this proclaimed equality translated itself in modesty. This was expressed in the ‘simple’ clothing
of the protestants, which represents the man in its original shape. The requisites of modesty and
sincerity produced two paradoxical consequences, which set the stage for the transformation
from sincerity towards authenticity. Firstly, is the idea of sincerity not a consequence of
individual pride and is it not an illusion to claim he/she succeeds to be sincere in all times?
Secondly, does the focus on the individual road to salvation not mean that one should also be
free to reject those social rules, like clothing, Protestantism imposed (Lindholm 2013: 365-
366)? This discrepancy emerges in almost any art-form, whereby personal authenticity requires
to remain true to one’s individual perception while one must also consider the demands of the

The support for the transformation from sincerity towards authenticity came from different
corners. For instance, the rise of scientific reason pointed to the danger of emotional bias which
could produce incorrect results. Descartes stated that the underlying reality could only be
revealed when eliminated from social and personal prejudices. He rejected imposed social rules
and searched for underlying, ultimate laws of nature which would put humans in concordance
with the mind of god and create inner, authentic, divine beings. Trade and exploration which
began in the 15th century also strengthened the concern for cultural and personal authenticity in
response to the discovery of the ‘exotic other’. While the exotic other was depicted as authentic
in the sense of pureness, without falsity, and origin, they were also repudiated as primitive
beings, holding onto traditional, spiritual forces which clashed with the beliefs of modernity.
Capitalism stimulated the development of a modern ideal of authenticity as well through the
loss of meaning and increasing alienation, emerging in the new form of labour which was
detached from previous social identity. The association of authenticity with familial intimacy
is a result of this alienation, specific to modernity, in which the primordial self, respecting its
roots, is praised. The rebuttal of public roles and growing interest in personal authenticity was
also given impetus by the gradual democratization in Europe since the notion of equality, essential to enlightenment, insinuates a belief in a universal moral self, existing under the social framework. The transformation from sincerity towards authenticity represents itself in the inner-search (Lindholm 2008: 4-7).

Authenticity was thus built on individualism, which developed into free rationality, posited by Descartes. In the romantic period, this form of authenticity was rejected for its ignorance of the role of society (Taylor 1992: 25). The way was cleared for collective authenticity, caused by the development of nations. Thereby, history and tradition, associated with collective identities, were emphasized (Lindholm 2013: 372, 389). At the same time this development was enabled by personal authenticity which emphasized equality and thus stimulated a passionate sensation of the collective (Lindholm 2008: 7). Collective authenticity is important for the evaluation of Singeli which ought to imagine the nation. Romanticism thus claims that the society and self are interconnected since the self develops in relation to its environment/society whereby its expression is partly seen as a reflection of society (Pennycook 2007: 103). Now, it’s not solely important to remain true to the self, but to remain true to the corresponding collective group wherein this self is located as well. Yet, this combination is very difficult to achieve and produces many contradictions along the way.

Rousseau is regarded as the inventor of modern authenticity through his emphasis on both the personal and collective part. He was the first writer who ascribed a positive picture to someone who lives an authentic life by conforming to his/her inner emotional needs, ignoring the opinions of others. He praised the ‘primitive purity’, which was now corrupted by modernity. He proposed an egalitarian society instead, characterised by both a loss of personal preferences and social pressure (Lindholm 2008: 8-9).

Authenticity is a concept that is regularly evoked by certain cultures to prevent assimilation with other cultures (McLeod 1999: 134). With this call for authenticity, they ought to preserve their identity. This concept is increasingly evoked in a globalised world, in which cultures are exposed more to each other, therefore, prone to homogenisation. Thus, to prevent homogenisation, they call for authenticity. That’s why, as mentioned before, globalisation can intensify the differences between cultures instead of destroying them (Osumare 2007: 66). Authenticity is a social construct and “is not inherent in the object or event that is designated authentic” (Peterson 1997: 5 cited in McLeod 1999:135). Authenticity, like tradition, is a claim made by someone which can either be rejected or accepted by others (Peterson 2005: 1086). In
dialogue, the audience decides what is considered authentic and not (DiMaggio 1987: 442-443). The concept is subject to continual change in response to its changing environment and can take numerous different forms, as illustrated above (Theodossopoulos 2013: 338). At the level of the individual this means: “I am authentic if I am true to my heritage and if my life is a direct and immediate expression of my essential being, that is, if I am true to myself” (Lindholm 2013:363).

Authenticity is thus concerned with the quest for real versus fake traditions. While I have already stated before that ‘real’ traditions don’t exist, the concept is still important because it is used by my informants to evaluate Singeli. The difference between the invented traditions or traditionalist traditions, as described by Hobsbawm, and authenticity is that the latter doesn’t solely rely on the past for its legitimation. In music no concrete object is worshipped but the act of performance. Charles Lindholm states that the authenticity of music is evaluated according to two different approaches: historical/genealogical (origin) or romantic/expressive (content). The quality of the music is determined whether the performance remained true to the original score/past of the music or whether the performance reflected the emotional essence of the music. The historical purist is thus mainly concerned with the authenticity of the technical form/rules of expression, often regarding instruments, while the expressive romanticist will focus on its inner talent or content of expression. This feeling/expressivity does not exist in a vacuum either but needs to be standardized in order to be recognized as authentic whereby this expressivity eventually also connects with past representations. For example, artists of country musicians are still expected to speak with rural accents and use easy vocabulary even though they don’t even have roots in the country (Lindholm 2008: 25-36). Genealogical and expressive authenticity accord approximately and respectively with staying true to the original source and staying true to the self or own culture. However, I argue that the original source, which is difficult to determine, doesn’t only have to consist of formal rules, as Lindholm argues, but may represent a certain culture to which the art-form must correspond to. These values are what he portrays as the expression or content, but he doesn’t explicitly signify their persistent connection with the original source (genealogical authenticity) even though it seems obvious since it won’t be considered country music at all if it doesn’t have any connections with its predecessors. The self, culture and original source may all denote sources to which the art-form must correspond to. This indicates the general idea about authenticity in which a source must be traced in the expression. Thereby, a tension exists between on the one hand the original source (e.g. American hip-hop) who dictates certain cultural principles of what it means to be authentic and
on the other hand a process of localization and adaptation to the current reality by following the principles of staying true to oneself or own culture (e.g. Tanzanian hip-hop) (Pennycook 2007: 103). This tension is exemplified in previous example whereby current country musicians stay true to themselves by not claiming rural origins and focusing on their personal talent but still adhere to a cultural dictate of the original source, that is decided in dialogue by the audience. In this sense, the past doesn’t represent finished business but is continually active in the present whereby memory serves as a guiding hand in leading the way (Hallam & Ingold 2007: 11). Nevertheless, while the expressive romanticists, in some respects, also rely on representations of the past, the past doesn’t serve as the sole basis for legitimation.

4 BACKGROUND LITERATURE

4.1 IMAGINING THE NATION BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

4.1.1 Swahili culture

Already from the 1st century AD, traders from the Arabian Peninsula, China, India and Southeast Asia exploited the Indian ocean to travel to and from East Africa and exchanged cultural practices, beliefs (Islam) and products with land-based traders. City states, grounded in Swahili culture, emerged along the East African coast as a product of the meetings between mainly African and Arab influences. The name Waswahili, is derived from Arabic ‘Sawahil’, meaning coasts and was thus applied to the communities that arose along the coast. Those people had a common religion, language, urban lifestyle and musical performances but didn’t have a common political/economic structure (Askew 2002: 32). During the colonial era, however, scholars attributed coastal culture to the Arabs since its mosques, stone and oral architecture was not reconcilable with their evolutionist, racist framework. After independence, scholars developed anti-colonial sentiments and emphasized the African roots of coastal culture (Askew 1999: 72). Arab migration was proven to be small and sporadic over time and Swahili was recognised as an African Bantu language, closely related to other languages on the Kenyan coast (Sabaki languages) which first emerged around the Lamu archipelago in the early 9th century (Bryceson 2010: 1; Spear 2000: 258). The Swahilis thus connoted the people who lived in the coastal settlements between the 9th and 16th century (Allen 1993: 12). The historical traditions of Swahili themselves, however, involve some contradictions. They talk about early immigrants who descent from Shiraz (Persia) and other traditions claim that the Shirazi didn’t come from Shiraz but from Shungwaya, which represents the Swahili homeland along the
Kenyan-Somali coast. Thus, those who claimed to be Shirazi were actually early Swahili who immigrated south in which adopting names of prestigious places denotes a common practice (Spear 2000: 259). While it is not possible to prove the provenance of the Shirazi traditions, Pouwels (in Spear 2000: 284) hypothesizes that these traditions relate to the 13th and 17th century when Arab immigrants challenged the Swahili hegemony and the local Swahili tried to distinguish themselves by invoking prestigious Persian origins.

Bryceson (2010: 1-2) defies the above-stated vision and claims that East African coastal culture is neither African nor Arab but constitutes a creole society through the fusion of two or more cultures, epitomized in the creolization in the form of slavery, population immigration and ethnic mixing that were according to him already evident in the Swahili coast even before the Atlantic slave trade. This creolization thus gave rise to a hybrid society with a common culture amidst class stratification from slaves to gentry. Swahili society is indeed characterised by the continuous assimilation of newcomers, for example the slaves from upcountry, which challenges the efforts to determine the Waswahili as a legitimate ethnic group. The newcomers also contributed to the development of Swahili culture, which emphasizes the openness of coastal identity through the incorporation of oppositions that constitute complementary and not conflicting elements (Askew 1999: 70-73). The Portuguese first laid claim to the coast in the 16th century, together with nomadic Oromo, who attacked the coastal settlements. After one century Portuguese control was eradicated by a certain Mohammad Yusuf Bin Hassan in Mombasa who started a jihad against them. However, the control was later replaced by Oman and in the middle of the 19th century a commercial empire had developed under Seyyid Said’s tutelage, with Zanzibar as its base. The East African slave trade transformed from an export-system to one that exploited labour within East Africa to meet local labour demands on the clove plantations of Zanzibar and the grain plantations of the coast (Askew 2002: 39-42). The ban against slavery in 1907 ushered at a time when the people, brought from inland to the coast, tried to integrate themselves into coastal society in which ngoma constituted an important avenue that played a central role in Swahili social life (Gearhart 2005: 23; Askew 1999: 76; Lange 1995: 3).

Ngoma, a bantu derived term, refers to a historical institution that is widespread throughout central, east and southern Africa which contains many local and regional variations (Barz 2004: 4; Janzen 1992: 84). The word ngoma means at once the term for drum, as well as drumming, dancing, singing or the entire musical event or ritual (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 11). Ngoma is commonly featured by a triple meter. Many variations are made on the basis of the triple meter,
each of which can establish a new ngoma style (Askew 2002: 78). Janzen (1992: 31) points to the distinction between therapeutic and entertainment ngoma which differ in their function but not in their form (dance and music). That’s why therapeutic ngoma is often called drums of affliction, indicating the importance of the drum and rhythmic song-dancing in the healing process where drumming is considered as the “voice…of… spirits that visit the sufferer and offer the treatment” (Janzen 1992: 1). While the therapeutic dimension is reflected in the use of ngoma to restore the order in the face of affliction, the secular ngoma for entertainment might possibly reflect an evolution from its previous original context/ritual (Janzen 1992: 31). In this thesis I don’t focus on the therapeutic dimension. However, the distinction that Janzen points to must be clarified and elaborated. Firstly, healing might also be exerted in ngoma that was originally oriented towards entertainment, detached from its original context, in which some songs address social issues to cope with the hardships of everyday life (Perullo 2011: 98). Secondly, ngoma entails many more functions than Janzen refers to. Ritual ngoma doesn’t only refer to healing but also refers to a traditional setting of instruction or cultural/religious/social affirmation (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 11). Conversely, ngoma might also reconfigure/contest the existing social order since the ranks of ngoma associations weren’t solely built on existing social status but on person’s capabilities and talent which made ngoma important avenues for former slaves to achieve recognition among privileged Swahili families who claimed Arab ancestry. This openness enabled newcomers of low social status to become powerful leaders of significant dance societies (Gearhart 2005: 25-26; Gunderson & Barz 2000: 11).

Consequently, former slaves played an important role in the development of Swahili culture in general and ngoma in particular, which instigated the decreasing prestige of experts concerned with the preservation of Swahili culture. The upcountry slaves brought to the coast in the mid-19th century consisted of Yao, Makua and Makonde who lived in the south of Tanzania and other East-African countries (Gearhart 2005: 30). This explains the link between southern Tanzania and coastal culture, which is important for my later analysis. Tanzania is namely divided into six geographical zones: coastal zone, northern highland zone, lake zone, central zone, southern highland zone and southern zone (Lange 1999: 47). Cultural intersection is especially exemplified in slaves’ female initiation rituals (unyago) which they brought with them to the coast and incorporated into Swahili culture. The slaves supervised those rituals since that was considered too embarrassing for elite families. One of the dances that slaves used to demonstrate is chakacha, which originated in Kenyan coastal towns like Lamu or Mombasa and, in turn, took the coast over by storm (Gearhart 2005: 30; Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016:...
Chakacha also denotes an important influence for Singeli. Chakacha simultaneously refers to the music, characterised by a fast 6/8 triple meter, and dance (Askew 2002: 78). The anyago ritual has a collective, secret character and took place after girls’ first menstrual period at initiation schools, often far away from town, where they were prepared for married life as a woman. Knowledge of married life was transmitted through dancing techniques (chakacha), metaphoric songs, sprinkled with sexual innuendo, and the use of symbols. Since those initiation schools don’t exist anymore, those dances were also incorporated into wedding festivities and other celebrations where unmarried women ought to dance in private, with exception to the male drummers.

Chakacha is characterised by the hip rotation dance (kukata kiuno) which serves as an instruction in the right movements during sexual intercourse. Each girl ties a kanga, Swahili clothing, around her hips which are rotated without shoulder movements as they progress around a circle (Fuglesang 1994: 239; Campbell & Eastman 1984: 475-478; Graebner 2004: 264). Chakacha is such an influential style on other music that it even became the national music symbol of Kenya, which is now taught and performed throughout the country (Barz 2004: 34). Chakacha both glorifies and denounces sex through the awakening of young girls to sexual pleasure in the dance movements whereby sexual desire must remain unanswered until marriage and the dance movements are restricted to the private space (Fuglesang 1994: 20). Currently, chakacha is increasingly taken outside of this private space. Franken (19994: 109) argues that chakacha has evolved from ngoma ya ndani (inside dance) to denote its new outdoor version but this isn’t affirmed by Fuglesang (1994: 237) who uses the terms chakacha and ngoma ya ndani interchangeably whereby they both take on the same functions and occasions. The Swahili coastal region is credited for its musical influences, developing the most famous ngoma styles, taarab and dansi (Askew 2003: 614).

As a result, the later incorporation of other people into Swahili culture indicates the need to define Swahili not as an ethnic group, linked by blood, but as a population linked by a common culture. Being Swahili doesn’t indicate an absolute state which excludes other identities but denotes the varying stages of Swahilisation, whereby its ascription depends on different perceptions (Allen 1993: 14-15). Swahili identity thus refers to a different degree and not a different kind in which “a person is Swahilised to the extent that his/her lifestyle conforms to that of one of the groups inhabiting traditional urban settlements on the East African coast or their modern counterparts in the interior and especially in so far as he/she has adopted the Swahili language as his/her own preferred language” (Allen 1993: 15). With preferred language
Allen (1993) refers to the language chosen for literary expression (oral or written). British and German colonizers contributed to this process of Swahilization through the use of Swahili as medium to facilitate their colonial rule (Blommaert 2006: 10). The British standardised Swahili in 1930 when they established the Inter-Territorial Language Committee to promote the Zanzibar dialect as standard-language. Despite its promotion by the colonial governments, Swahili was mainly spoken in the coast and towns (Campbell 1999: 107). Yet, since nation-building starts from the imagining of larger communities, Swahilization must be credited for its hybrid character and, therefore, its implicit contribution to the process of nation-state formation through the weakening of local ethnicities (Askew 2002: 65-69, 97).

4.1.2 Dar Es Salaam and its music

Dar es Salaam itself, as coastal city, exemplifies Swahili culture and cosmopolitanism, as a result of the constant incorporation of migrants. Dar es Salaam was first imagined by the sultan Majid of Zanzibar in 1862 but the construction only started in 1865. It was established on an already existing fishing village, Mzizima, which served as a meeting point between Zaramo people and Shomvi, Swahili people who claim Shirazi ancestry (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 14-16). The Zaramo claim to be the original inhabitants of Dar es Salaam but were actually recent immigrants themselves in the 19th century. Kamba raiders from Kenya namely attacked coastal villages and the Shomvi asked for military assistance from the Zaramo to drive them out. Thereafter, the Zaramo moved into coastal areas and intermarried with the Shomvi, aspiring to Swahili culture (Tsuruta 2003a: 63-64; Bryceson 2010: 5). In 1891 Dar es Salaam became the new capital of German East Africa and served as an emblem of its colonial strength, reflected in architectural investments (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 21). The early African inhabitants of Dar es Salaam may be divided into four categories. Firstly, the ex-soldiers who were employed by Europeans, the Sudanese and Zulu, and the ex-slaves from Congo. Secondly, the aforementioned Zaramo and Shomvi, embracing Swahili culture. Thirdly, the unskilled laborers, like Yao and Ngoni, who migrated mainly from the south. Lastly, educated Christians: the Chagga, coming from the north, and Nyakyusa who both had close links with colonial administration (Tsuruta 2003b: 197; Brennen et. al, eds. 2007: 35). Through most of the period before independence, the Zaramo constituted the largest ethnic group in Dar es Salaam (Tsuruta 2003a: 63). However, the Waswahili were held in contempt by some upcountry immigrants (wabara) since they constituted the lowest rung of the labour force, working as domestic servants or as casual labourers in the port while the wabara raised their level of education (Bryceson 2010: 5).
This contempt can also be explained by the association of slaves with Swahili culture as described above. The early population of Dar es Salaam constituted thus a multi-ethnic population from the beginning.

From the 1940s urbanization accelerated and the urban living conditions and unemployment worsened. The colonial government increased the wages but this only attracted more people to the city which worsened the living conditions again since there was an over-supply in labour and deficit in housing. The 1950s experienced the emergence of unplanned, un-demarcated ‘shanty’ settlements, referred to as uswahilini, which was even encouraged by the government. These settlements were characterised by the highest level of unemployment, mostly occupied by Zaramo and Waswahili. Thereafter, the industrial development in the city grew. Young, uneducated immigrants who moved to the city and contributed to informal economy, were demonized by the government as wahuni (hooligans). Colonial officials held them responsible for the increase in crime and even transported some of them back to rural areas. While some places in Dar es Salaam were ethnically concentrated, most settlements were ethnically mixed whereby urban Swahili culture denoted an important integrative influence, regardless of ethnic origin (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 15-48). Over time, the Islamic identity of Dar es Salaam was replaced by a multi-ethnic and multi-faith population that lived together bound by a shared language, Swahili (Bryceson 2010: 8).

Musical performance, during this period, also contributed to national consciousness in several ways. Firstly, through their pan-ethnic composition, uniting people from different ethnic groups. Secondly, by the nature of their performance, in which the songs are often characterised by a glorification of freedom, the party and other social matters which unite different ethnic groups. Thirdly, by the large audience they ought to reach, composed of different ethnic groups. Lastly, through the use of Swahili language in their songs (Martin 1982: 155).

Ngoma represents the longest tradition of musical performance in Dar es Salaam which influenced the other, consecutive music genres (Martin 1982: 156-157). However, ngoma increasingly influenced other music genres during the 1980s, coinciding with the shift to liberalization (Khamis 2001: 153). The people who migrated to Dar es Salaam, carried their traditional music with them which, then, underwent several transformations in their new context. Upon their arrival in Dar es Salaam two options were possible: either the original ethnicity associated with a certain ngoma was blurred through the involvement of any people or the musical characteristics associated with a certain ethnic group was blurred by the merger
with other musical events from different ethnic groups for similar functions (Martin 1982: 155-157).

Both Susan Geiger and Ranger proved that even though *ngoma* is often associated with a certain ethnic group, this wasn’t always the case (Askew 2002: 65). Conversely, multi-ethnic dance performances and associations became the overall trend by the mid-1950s, due to the city’s rapid growth (Tsuruta 2003b: 199-200). Ranger (1975 in Lange 1995: 5) investigated the *beni* dance associations which was invented in the 1890s along the Kenyan Coast, after the establishment of British and German control. The name *beni* came from the English word band and the groups, who were during colonialism introduced to the military brass bands through their recruitment in military service, imitated European military drills, dress and conduct with roots in pre-colonial dance. The organizations developed into self-help groups and spread from the coast to the interior of East Africa. *Beni* organisations denoted the first groups to transcend ethnic affiliations (Lange 1995: 5; Martin 1982: 159; Perullo 2011: 149). The British feared the political potential of such groups and instituted an office of censorship that controlled the performances through the introduction of mandatory fees and licenses. The British also attacked *ngoma* for moral reasons and banned those who contained ‘obscene’ behaviour (Askew & Kitime 2006: 139). The *beni* dance as popular culture died out in Dar es Salaam by the 1950s and was replaced as popular entertainment by *dansi* and *taarab* around the 1930s (Tsuruta 2003b: 200; Brennen & Burton 2007: 180). Similarly, Susan Geiger (1996: 469-473) points to the contributions of women *ngoma* associations in the shaping of nationalism in Dar es Salaam. Those women’s *ngoma* societies were activists of TANU and produced nationalism through their makeup, consisting of different ethnic groups bound by the use of Swahili, and through their performances in which they praised the party and encouraged unity. Therefore, it is incorrect to solely focus on the contributions of Nyerere in the construction of nationalism. In this case, it is not Nyerere who taught nationalism to those women activists, but it is those women themselves who created the nationalism that Nyerere needed to make his political, nationalist movement successful.

*Taarab* history is generally believed to trace back to the reign of Sultan Seyyid Barghash of Zanzibar in the 1870s. Upon the death of his father, Barghash tried to remove his brother from the throne. As a result, he was exiled to India where he was impressed by its court life. When he returned to Zanzibar, he wanted to establish his own court culture with music as a key element in it. He sent Ibrahim to Caïro to study Arabic music there, whereby his knowledge would be used to establish a similar musical tradition in Zanzibar when he returned.
Consequently, taarab as Zanzibari elite court music was born, sang in Arabic and performed on imported Egyptian instruments like violin, lute, flute, drum and tambourine which was solely meant as entertainment for royalty, restricted to play outside the palace. This represents the classical, orchestral form of taarab. Siti Sinti Saad, a women of slave origins, is generally credited for taking taarab out of the palaces and making it accessible to the less affluent African people by singing in Swahili in the 1920s (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 25-26; Hanneken & Oliveira eds.: 104). She inspired the formation of a counter-style in Zanzibar, kidumbak, developed by small, local groups of African descent which modelled their music on local ngoma whereby the name of its style refers to the two small dumbak drums they use during performance. Women were also influenced by Siti to establish networks of taarab groups, which emerged during the 1930s, known as taarab ya wanawake which draws both on kidumbak and the classical Egyptian style (Fargion 1995: 125; Gunderson & Barz 2000: 39).

This theory thus assumed that taarab on the mainland of the East African coast developed through the diffusion of the genre from Zanzibar. However, evidence proves that taarab developed in a more organic process on the mainland, separated from the official creation in Zanzibar that was simultaneously occurring, through the exchange of cultural musical traditions in the Indian Ocean trade network (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 27). Taarab may be divided into linguistic and regional categories in which each major urban centre developed its own distinctive style (Askew 2002: 100). The style of Dar es Salaam represented the classical style, strongly influenced by Zanzibar. Abdulbar Diwani is considered as one of the founders of the taarab version of Dar es Salaam. He learned taarab by himself through the available Swahili taarab records and established a small taarab group in the 1920s. The elders of the oldest, major taarab clubs, the Egyptian and Al-Watan club, founded in the 1930s and still active today, praised Abdulbar as the founder of taarab. Over time both groups developed from small ensembles into large orchestras and acquired more, different instruments like cello and bass. The groups performed mainly during weddings whereby no dancing occurred. During the 1950s Al-Watan also incorporated clarinets and rhythms by then were varied, drawing on Rumba, Arabic, Indian and ngoma rhythms. Family festivities, weddings in particular, remained the most important setting for taarab but starting from the 1950s those groups played weekend concerts more often. The audience of taarab was cosmopolitan ranging from Indian, Arab and African descent. However, for most members music did not denote a means of livelihood but a hobby, whereby many kept day jobs. Taarab songs often praised freedom from colonial oppression, uhuru, in their songs and politicians often visited concerts to give speeches
(Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 180-183; Tsuruta 2003b: 202-203). One of the most important characteristics of taarab is its adherence to Swahili poetry, composed of verses sung to the same melody, with an instrumental interlude and common refrain (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 25-26).

Beni ngoma is perceived as the ancestor of muziki wa dansi, which first appeared in the 1920s along the coast. During colonialism, Africans were namely recruited for military service and were trained to lead their own marching bands (Martin 1982: 159). Influenced by those experiences, dansi developed as a form of ballroom dance for expatriate Europeans who were living in Tanganyika (Charry 2012: 186). Dansi provided a way for African people to prove their equality along European lines. Even though, dansi was initially associated with the colonial elite society, it didn’t stay like that for long. From the 1940s Congolese rumba and soukous, made available by radio Congo-Belge that began with broadcasting of African music, entered the discourse of dansi (Askew 2002: 93-98). Dansi clubs were organised along similar lines to taarab, which both draw on the rivalry structure that is characteristic of ancient ngoma societies (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 187; Tsuruta 2003b: 205). In the 1930s two African dance bands were founded in Dar es Salaam: the African Jazz band and the Dar es Salaam Jazz band, which claimed to perform for all citizens of Dar es Salaam. Upon the return of war veterans from the World War II, new dance bands arose who brought back the latest Western popular dance and music, performed for the upper class. By the late 1950s, the electric guitar became the major instrument of dance bands in Dar es Salaam and they started to articulate preferences for ngoma rhythms (Tsuruta 2003b: 204-205). Dansi concerts were often used as a cover for politicians to discuss nationalist concerns and the songs themselves also incorporated political matters (Askew 2002: 94).

4.2 SOCIALIST ERA: FORMAL AND COUNTER-INFORMAL NATIONALISM

4.2.1 Traditionalism

This chapter explores the different interactions of the state, artists and audience in the process of nation-building whereby each proposed different interpretations of the nation. The growth for national sentiment started with the establishment of the Tanganyika African Association (TAA) in 1948, which was born from the Tanganyika Territory African Civil Service Association (TTACCSA), an organization for government officials (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 51; Askew 2002: 46). In 1954 the TAA was replaced by TANU, an adopted platform for self-government, established by Nyerere. Seven years later Tanganyika achieved independence and TANU became the only legal party in the country, with Nyerere as president (Fleisch &
Stephens eds. 2016: 187). In 1964, the republic of Zanzibar and Tanganyika were united in the nation, Tanzania. Nyerere was not gratified with the pure liberation of the landscape, uhuru, but felt the need to emancipate the mental national scape by restoring its confidence in its own culture through the concept of ujamaa (Sanga 2008: 57). He presented culture as the essence of the nation, based on the European national movements which stressed cultural continuity. This transferred nationalism from the realm of culture into the realm of politics (Lange 1995: 28; Vale 1992: 46). In 1962, Nyerere elaborated ujamaa on a pamphlet and suggested full independence by claiming African values that preceded the colonial, capitalist era (Sheikheldin 2015: 82). According to Nyerere, in contrast with European socialism, ujamaa didn’t start from the existing classes in capitalist society but represents a classless precolonial African society in which common ownership of means of production and an organic relationship between community and individual were respected. Thereby Nyerere denied the current existing class struggles (Fleisch & Stephens eds. 2016: 191).

Authenticity was an important concept in the construction of an independent nation, whereby almost every African leader wanted to build a national culture. This strategy took many different forms in various countries: ranging from Senghor’s négritude to Mobutu Sese Seko’s authenticité. Until today, it is still an important concept of African nationalism, called for by African countries who repudiate colonial cultural influences and ought to revitalize an African authentic past (Askew 2002: 169-170). The criticisms of Anderson (2006) and Hobsbawm (2012) can also be applied to the construction of the Tanzanian nation. Tanzania doesn’t consist of a single ethnic group but of more than 120 ethnic groups whereby many were also a recent colonial invention (Sanga 2008: 54). During the colonial period, the Sukuma and Nyakyusa perceived themselves as single, distinct groups while before they comprised of distinct, related communities (Lange 1995: 27). Similarly, Tanzania adopted previous colonial boundaries which didn’t preserve the boundaries of the different ethnic groups. Swahili was also presented as the national language, first adopted by the party and later implemented as the official language for administration and instruction in primary schools and adult education. However, this ignores the fact that Swahili was mainly restricted to the coast (Sanga 2008: 54; Campbell 1995: 107). Nevertheless, the implementation of Swahili as official language definitely contributed to the development of a national consciousness (Askew 2002: 182).

Tanzania thus didn’t have one great tradition which could be represented as the national culture because the 120 ethnic groups each had their own history, traditions and myths. Because of the lack of one single ethnic group and religion, these constituents were excluded from the
construction of a national identity. Therefore, the political system itself became the basis of national culture. *Ujamaa*, suited in their policy: cutting across ethnic lines, modernistic through its emphasis on Tanzanian development while glorifying the pre-colonial African village life (Lange 1999: 42). Whereas *ujamaa* calls for historical continuity, the concept itself was constructed in the present in reaction to colonialism and wasn’t able to develop without it.

Nyerere constructed a national culture, through the establishment of the Ministry of National Culture and Youth in 1962, aimed towards a reconstruction and collection of all local traditions. The ministry perceived literature and arts as a means of educating the people (Askew 2002: 170-171; Suriano 2011a: 121). In Nyerere’s inauguration speech he represented *dansi* as the cultural devastation of colonialism opposed to *ngoma*, symbolizing the authentic pre-colonial past (Edmondson 2007: 19). *Taarab* was also repudiated as a foreign genre. In order to be included in the national culture, *taarab* and *dansi* had to eliminate foreign musical influences and emphasize local aesthetics (Perullo 2011: 54-57). In his speech he also claimed that many inhabitants forgot their local traditions and replaced *ngoma* for European ballroom dancing. His speech depicts *ngoma* as a passive victim of colonialism and ignores the popularity of the *ngoma* groups that even contributed to national consciousness, as Geiger posited (Edmondson 2007: 20). Similarly, he essentialized the nature of the music-genres, which in reality couldn’t be classified in the way Nyerere proposed. Glorification of flexibility and change was replaced by an idealization of static music-genres to fulfil nationalist ideas. *Taarab* and *dansi* weren’t mere imitations of respectively Egyptian music and European, Congolese music but were adapted to local aesthetics. They both included *ngoma* rhythms before independence and were organised along the same rivalry structure, that is part of *ngoma* dance societies. Even then, imitation is never a static process but always entails change (Hallam & Ingold 2007: 5). Conversely, *beni* *ngoma* societies weren’t only influenced by local aesthetics but drew on European influences to reclaim equality along European lines.

The ministry founded the National Dance Troupe to revitalize indigenous culture. The revival of *ngoma*, however, involved some contradictions. *Ngoma* was praised as the popular national symbol, facilitated by its access to all Tanzanians regardless education and religion, but at the same time it was reduced to an object of disdain. The dancers of the troupe themselves, recruited from various regions, were held in contempt and paid minimal wages. This results from the general scorn the elite had towards *ngoma*. They saw it as an embarrassment and preferred drama as national symbol, which was the taste of the dominant, privileged minority (Edmondson 2007: 21). Yet, traditional dances provided useful means to educate the masses.
since local traditions already used dance-songs as modes of communication. During the first decade of independence, dance troupes performing ‘traditional’ national dances were established at factories, statal-institutions and schools (Lange 1999: 43). Whereas the nationalist cause revitalized the precolonial past through the promotion of *ngoma*, they reinvented the music to fulfil nationalist ideas, resulting in a loss of precolonial notions of the music. The original, local, poetic, humorous content of the songs was replaced by propaganda. The use of Swahili in the songs also affected the sound of *ngoma* since they needed to adjust the rhythm and melody to Swahili. The essence of *ngoma*, its innovative adaptability, was replaced by a static character to fit the socialist/postcolonial framework (Lange 1999: 44; Perullo 2011: 52-54; Askew 2002: 69).

### 4.2.2 Socialism and modernism

In 1967 *ujamaa* was anchored in the Arusha Declaration, which perpetuated a policy of self-reliance. The declaration was inspired by western categories but adapted to the Tanzanian context: democracy with TANU as its sole political party, modernity through rural development and socialism without existing class struggles. In the same year Nyerere announced *ujamaa vijijini*, villagization. This programme is evolved from earlier agricultural programmes recommended by the World Bank which failed to uplift the economic situation of the peasants (Fleisch & Stephens eds. 2016: 194). As a matter of fact, the earlier programmes created progressive farmers which were adopting the ideals of the capitalist system. This new programme was thus created to eliminate those corresponding inequalities. Villagization aimed to persuade people to live in villages in which land is communally owned, cultivated in common and proceeds are shared (Okoko 1987: 92-97). Two important philosophies took shape during socialism: *bongo* and *kujitegemea*. *Bongo* denoted the wisdom one needed to survive in an impoverished country. *Kujitegemea* indicated the policy of self-reliance, which pointed to the communal hard work of the inhabitants to improve the nation together (Perullo 2011: 8-9).

From this period onwards, Nyerere’s emphasis on traditionalism was substituted by a new ideological template of socialism and modernism. Whereas he initially perceived national culture as the collection of all local traditions, he was now concerned with the preservation of those that appeared modern and contributed to the development of the nation. This selective approach aimed to unify all the different groups into a single national culture, emphasizing those worthy of recognition and abandoning those that fortify negative, colonial perceptions of Tanzanians as backward (Askew 2002: 178-18). The concept of complementarization from
Eidheim (1987 in Lange 1999: 52) is central in this period, whereby different cultures are recognized as different but of the same worth. Specific guidelines were developed to establish cultural committees at village, district, regional and national levels that were responsible for the promotion of different activities on those fields: Swahili language and literature, music, singing, dancing, drama, traditional arts and crafts. The committees needed to follow-up the promotion and progress of the different traditions and determine the ones deserving of a place in national culture. However, those goals were never fully achieved by lack of financial and personal support (Askew 2002: 172-175).

The government discouraged ‘primitive’ traditions, like body tattooing, and banned the Maasai initiation of young men into warrior status in 1966. They also banned the performance of sindimba in public, a southern Makonde dance known for its erotic movements (kukata kiuno). The south represented by the Makonde and the north by the Chagga can be perceived as two opposite poles of the country. The south is shunned and stigmatised for its underdevelopment. The north, however, witnessed an early establishment of mission schools and contains, as a result, a higher level of educated elite. To many of them, traditional dance constituted remnants of ‘primitive’ life (Lange 1999: 41-47; Edmondson 2007: 160). As I previously discussed, kukata kiuno is an instruction of sexual techniques, taught during initiation rites (unyago), which is not limited to the coast but is also taught to girls of southern ethnic groups (Edmondson 2007: 160). The south and the coast have similar dance movements, which is logical if one considers the history of southern slaves brought to the coast, participating in Swahili culture. The government condemned the dance as immoral. They were convinced that it would incite promiscuous behaviour. Thereby they extended the erotic nature of the movements to those who perform them (Askew 2002: 199-210; Edmondson 2007: 160).

However, official rhetoric was countered by alternative interpretations of the nation by the informal, civil society who preferred the erotic dance movements (Lange 1995: 56-60). Eriksen (1993 in Lange 1999: 55) represents nationalism as a dual phenomenon, characterised by informal nationalism, proposed by the civil society, and formal nationalism, perpetuated by the nation-state. Informally cultural institutions are more closely connected to the needs of the masses, which facilitates the production of meaning in national culture. The attempt to create a tasteful canon of ngoma failed and schools also participated in the widespread eroticization of the official, formal rhetoric (Edmondson 2007: 160). The government continued the colonial policy of censorship through mandatory fees and licenses. Artists who criticized the government were arrested. Art needed to promote the socialist cause and art as pure
entertainment was repudiated for distracting the citizens from its duties to the nation (Askew & Kitime 2006: 141-146). Thereby dancing ngoma wasn’t considered a skill, which decreased the status of the dancers (Edmondson 2007: 26).

The government monopolized the mass media, whereby RTD existed as the only radio of Tanzania. The newspaper act of 1976 made it almost impossible for private editors to launch a newspaper without the consent of the government. Committees were established to review all the song lyrics before they were played on the radio. Thereby, song-lyrics needed to contain an appropriate social message to ‘improve’ the society and refuse foreign influences (Askew & Kitime 2006: 146; Sturmer 1998: 313). The policy of self-reliance restricted the import of items considered not essential for subsistence, among which the import of instruments. This restriction caused privately run music bands, like taarab and dansi, to be confronted with financial difficulties. Bands that were supported by the state, however, managed to keep their heads above the water throughout this period. Dansi clubs in 1960s were strongly influenced by Congolese rumba but Muhiddin set the stage for a new kind of dansi, sprinkled with a local taint. His band, set up by the national body of trade unions, became a model for many groups in post-independence. He is perceived as the founder of mitindo, which refers to a kind of musical trademark that distinguishes bands from one another. Mitindo thereby relies on regional/ethnic ngoma. Muhiddin himself incorporated ngoma of the Zaramo in his music (Brennen et al. 2007: 188-192). This incorporation of local aesthetics reflects the policy of Nyerere who ushered music-bands to repudiate foreign influences. Yet, taarab and dansi weren’t included in official national culture and they were not performed by the national troupes (Askew 2002: 224). They were also given very little airtime on the radio (Perullo 2011: 214).

The search for worthy national traditions was accompanied by a more vigorous repudiation of European traditions. As a consequent, European plays were removed from school libraries and an alternative was proposed in the establishment of the National Drama Troupe in 1974. Conversely, 1965 fourteen boys and six girls were sent to China to study acrobatics, and as a result to establish the National Acrobatics Troupe upon their return in 1969. This foreign exchange was accepted because China was a socialist country. The three national troupes inherited the colonial legacy of divided art-spheres and performed separately. Women occupied a marginalised position, compared to men, in the process of nation-building. Firstly, less women than men were involved in the national performances. Secondly, they were confined to repetitive waist wriggling (kukata kiuno), while men were exposed to a greater variety of movements, expressing vigour and strength. These characteristics are also present in the
performance of Singeli. The National Acrobatics Troupe differed from this general representation of womanhood and girls undertook the same bold stunts as boys (Edmondson 2007: 22-25).

A large number of cultural troupes developed between 1967-1974, alongside the national troupes. These troupes offered an alternative vision of nationalism by exceeding the tripartite model of the national troupes proposed and including different performances like kwaya to promote socialism (Edmondson 2007: 26). Kwaya originated from missionary work and represents a mix of Christian choral music with local rhythms (Charry 2012: 186). These troupes were, however, supervised by the state and a party secretary was appointed to each troupe. Despite the economic crisis in the 1970s, these troupes continued to promote the state and use Swahili. Mashindano, a deeply-rooted East African tradition referring to rival group competitions, organised around complex networks, prompted the troupes to deviate from the socialist framework. A network of local Makonde groups developed, competing against each other in the performance of sindimba, which was initially condemned by the government. The popularity of sindimba, however, compelled the government to succumb to the taste of the audience and accept it as part of national culture. Instead of the usual glorification of the state, those newly established local groups proposed an alternative culture of rivalry, rooted in long-established East African traditions. Thereafter, the state established army troupes which borrowed from the cultural troupes to create new models of nationalist performance (Edmondson 2007: 28-30; Askew 2002: 211).

4.2.3 Commercialism

The national troupes disintegrated in 1981 and the responsibility for the canonization of ngoma was transferred to the newly established College of Arts, founded by the Ministry of Culture in Bagamoyo. The economic crisis in 1979 paved the way for the development of new survival strategies whereby previous cultural troupes developed into commercial troupes, independent from the state, and run on a purely professional basis. They started to perform at local bars, entertaining low-income masses, to compensate for the diminishing subsidies. These groups assembled precolonial and postcolonial performances into one single performance in the mid-1980s, displaying ngoma, acrobatics, kwaya, dansi, taarab and theatre (Edmondson 2007: 30-33, 156). The College of Arts excluded the erotic dances of the south, like sindimba, and the other remaining erotic dances were subdued in the official canon of ngoma. Even though, the popular, commercial groups avoided criticism of the ruling party in their lyrics, probably out of
fear, they explicitly refused the directives of the state by adopting southern *ngoma* in their display. The groups also predominantly consisted of dancers from the south. However, some female spectators now shunned *ngoma* out of shame, thereby rejecting the counter-invention of national culture of the popular troupes. The context of *kukata kiuno* clarifies this reaction. The movement is normally confined to the private sphere, where intimate aspects of cultural identity are shaped, and through its external placement in the public sphere the movement is transformed into a source of embarrassment (Edmondson 2007: 156-161).

Despite the efforts to exclude erotic dance movements, the college also increasingly participated in the eroticization of the dance-moves, thereby displaying ten out of twenty dances from the southern zone (Edmondson 2007: 161; Lange 1999: 47). As a result, the academically trained elite abandoned the idea of a national culture whereas the artists of the commercial groups still acknowledged the existence of a national culture (Lange 1995: 60-61). With commercialization *ngoma* underwent several shifts, with separation as its main characteristic. The dances were taken out of their original ritual context, placed into a context of competition, creating a division between audience and performers. Most of the lyrics were stripped of its original, local content and replaced by a political message, whereby the dance movements and lyrics expressed something completely different. The transmission of the local, traditional song-dances also resulted in the loss of the original interpretation by artists who didn’t know the local language. Consequently, the songs didn’t constitute an essential part anymore of *ngoma* and the dance was singled out as a genre by itself. The popularity of the erotic dances, exploited by the commercial groups, produced the widespread idea that *ngoma* is equivalent to dancing with the hips. Dances, which were originally performed by a single sex, were now choreographed for both. The reputation of men, however, was not affected by this transformation, whereas women were granted a lower status, to the degree that they were perceived as prostitutes (Lange 1995: 77-113). Nevertheless, commercial popular culture plays an important role in the creation of a national identity. The commercial nature of the groups, based on profits, instigates them to reach as many customers as possible, regardless of religious and ethnic differences, while drawing on problems that citizens have in common. The groups also weakened local ethnicities through its pan-ethnic makeup (Lange 1999: 55).

Whereas nationalism depended on Swahili language for its success, with Mswahili as the national citizen, Nyerere implicitly repudiated Swahili culture (Blommaert 2006). Firstly, he condemned erotic *ngoma, dansi* and *taarab*, three music-genres born at the Swahili coast. Secondly, he reframed coastal cities as a symbol of foreign power, expressed in the ancient
networks of Islam and trade along the coast (Callaci 2016: 97). As a result, Dar es Salaam as coastal city was not conceived as Tanzanian heritage (Enwezor & Achebe 2001: 236). The ideal Tanzanian was depicted as the rural farmer. *Wahuni* were casted as enemies of the state, who didn’t contribute to the progress of the nation. The government repatriated unemployed *wahuni* back to the countryside who couldn’t prove their residence and demolished urban squatters. *Ujamaa* thus continued previous colonial policy by restricting the mobility of the African population, using the same rhetoric against *wahuni* and thereby thus classifying ‘authentic’ Africans as rural (Brennan 2012: 165-171; Callaci 2016: 106, 114). This discourse of *wahuni*, which firstly took shape during colonialism, is important for Singeli, given that its artists are frequently called *wahuni*.

4.3 **Neoliberalism: Politics of the Local and Global in Tanzanian Music**

4.3.1 Policy

In 1973 the villagization programme Nyerere established, transformed from a voluntary, bottom-up approach into a coercive, top-down approach after a slow progress of villagization. The programme failed and didn’t achieve the expected results. The state became increasingly authoritarian, as a result of economic depression. The war with Uganda in 1979 deepened financial grievances and corruption became endemic. Even though Nyerere promulgated a policy of self-reliance, the country became increasingly dependent on foreign aid. The economic crisis even worsened in 1983, which provoked the IMF and the World Bank to demand for economic reforms as a prerequisite for continued loans and aid. The demands of the World Bank and IMF consisted of a structural adjustment programme and liberalization reforms (Fleisch & Stephens eds. 2016: 195-203). In 1985 Mwinyi assumed presidency and transformed Tanzania into a capitalist country instead of a socialist one. The state gradually withdrew its economic involvement in local industries, which gave rise to new creative practices. However, the foreign loans didn’t achieve the expected results and even worsened the living conditions of most Tanzanians. The formal economy didn’t create enough jobs, so the population took on secondary jobs, which wasn’t allowed under the rule of Nyerere. As a result, the informal economy expanded. Under these neoliberal circumstances, the two philosophies, which took shape during socialism, were revitalized. Self-reliance trickled down to the level of individuals instead of the nation and *bongo* denoted the inventiveness of the inhabitants’ survival strategies. This doesn’t mean that Tanzanian inhabitants repudiated socialist values. On the contrary, a certain tension prevailed between those adhering to socialist
values and those influenced by western lifestyles. However, this tension is not strictly demarcated but remains fuzzy since many artists combine both visions in their own personal way (Perullo 2011: 7-26). The inability of the government to keep up with growing urbanization, caused an expansion of unplanned settlements. *Uswahilini* was no longer a synonym of poverty through the inclusion of a middle class in these settlements. However, the anxiety towards *wahuni* and Swahili culture remained intact (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 62; Demissie 2007: 51).

The Broadcasting Services Act of 1993 ended the monopoly of RTD (Sturmer 1998: 174). Thus, privatization of the media and free market opened the door for foreign cultures (Suriano 2011a: 115). During the socialist period, culture was conceived in communal terms, in service of the society. Neoliberal transitions stimulated the commodification and competition of cultural forms through its increasing acceptance of economic value and individual ownership (Perullo 2011: 18-25). This resulted in the promulgation of the Copyright Act in 1999 (Perullo 2011: 285). Liberalization fostered consumer interests in luxury goods, exemplified in the introduction of television in 1994, and integrated Tanzania in the global mass culture through the penetration of internet at a fast pace (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 62; Hyden et al. 2002: 210; Sturmer 1998: 191). This instigated a growing interest in the life of celebrities, especially African-American artists, who epitomize living fantasies. Between 1994-2009 Tanzania witnessed the rise of 52 radio-stations, 100 recording studios and 27 television-stations (Perullo 2011: 122, 5). However, increasing liberalization doesn’t mean that government control is completely restricted. Artists or music bands are only allowed to perform in public if they received licenses and permits from BASATA, the National Arts Council (Askew & Kitime 2006: 152-153). BASATA is founded in 1984 and is concerned with the promotion and development of artistic works. It doesn’t only issues fines for those who don’t adhere to registration demands but also bans certain works that they consider immoral (Chimanda 2018: 13-17).

In 1992, multi-partyism was established, which allowed the existence of opposition parties (Askew 2002: 240). However, CCM still occupies a dominant position in the political scene and uses state power to preserve its hegemony (Paget 2017: 154-155). CCM is founded in 1977 through the merger of TANU and the Afro-Shirazi Party from Zanzibar (Vale 1992: 148). Since the presidency of Magufuli in 2015, CCM is increasingly characterized by authoritarianism through the distribution of laws and regulations that shrink the political space and constrict opposition. CCM operates as an authoritarian state, through the restriction of freedom of speech,
as well as a moral spokesman, through a higher rate of banishments of works that are considered immoral. They justify their state authority through a nation-building program, featured by a strategic use of Swahili, employment policy, national history and socialist ideology. Thereby, Magufuli ties himself to the revered president, Nyerere, who still retains a saint-like position in the popular imagination. This nation-building program is successful in the absence of other popular opposition parties (Paget 2017: 155-157; Chimanda 2018: 20). Tanzania has one of the most developed national identities whereby each period, pre-colonialism, colonialism and postcolonialism contributed to this process (Herb & Kaplan 2017: 85).

4.3.2 The ngoma impulse

Under the auspices of structural adjustment, the Tanzanian music-scene underwent several transformations. Parastatal cultural groups were denounced for their social connotations from the 1980s onwards. The commercial cultural troupes contracted into three companies that dominated national performance: Tanzania One Theater (TOT), Muungano and Mandela. CCM demanded Komba to establish TOT in 1992 since the party feared the loss of support after the introduction of multi-partyism. Komba maintained close connections with the party and his troupe was financially supported by the state, which rendered it a privileged position compared to the other troupes. Even though lyrics in praise of CCM were banned, the party still used popular performance to increase its popularity in the political space and songs that praised the nation itself were retained. Each of the three troupes competed against each other through different proposals of national cultures. Muungano marketed itself as a producer of traditional culture, TOT promoted modernization and Mandela aligned itself to the working poor. However, all the groups were oriented towards the urban working poor since the middle and upper class perceived popular performance as uncivilized and repudiated the intense participation of the lower class in this. TOT mocked traditional practices as backward but still included ngoma in its repertoire. They solved this contradiction, however, by eliminating southern dances and modernizing ngoma through its performance on an electronic beat (Edmondson 2007: 34-50).

In the 1980s dansi dominated the musical soundscape in Dar es Salaam, which was finally accepted by the state as a popular music-genre. In the 1990s, the dominant position of dansi was seized by a new form of taarab in Dar es Salaam, modern taarab or mipasho, with TOT and Muungano as the main innovators in this style (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 76-77). Lange (2002: 165) asserts that those transformations are not only a result of popular taste but also of
political changes. The cultural troupes of Dar es Salaam incorporated a simplified version of taarab in their shows since they couldn’t afford string instruments and used all round artists instead of specialised taarab singers. Theatre was no longer the most popular item in performance and TOT challenged Muungano through the introduction of a more modernised form of taarab to promote CCM as hip and modern and gain popularity among the masses (Lange 2002: 170-171; Edmondson 2007: 42). The troupe combined traditional taarab instruments with modern instruments from the dance music sphere, like the electric guitar, drum set, bass and keyboard (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 77; Khamis 2001: 149). Nevertheless, the use of global consumer goods didn’t lead to abandonment of local music traditions. Conversely, they were used to strengthen tradition. The drum machine turned out to be the major innovation in this process, by the magnified reliance on ngoma rhythms, which wasn’t a prominent feature of taarab before (Graebner 2004: 248-251).

The troupes competed in all genres but the rivalry was especially expressed through taarab. The rivalry of the troupes transformed taarab into dance music and diminished the rich metaphorical potential and rigid poetic structure of the lyrics, which became more explicit to express the rivalry (Lange 2002: 173-178) The meaning of the songs is now less hidden in the text, while it previously made extensive use of riddles (Askew 2002: 133-134). Mipasho (message) thus refers to the use of explicit lyrics that allude on rivalry or sex since ngoma became increasingly associated with hip movements that, in turn, were linked to the female-only sexual instructions. The mipasho free style with explicit references and allusions to sex, accord well with the vigorous tempo of the music and erotic dance movements. In fact, these denote a higher level of freedom in performance altogether (Khamis 2001: 148). Whereas classical taarab featured a sitting audience, modern taarab was now featured by a dancing audience who increasingly participated in the performance (Lange 2002: 168). Taarab now entered the commercial world of nightclubs (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 77).

TOT and Muungano were not the sole innovators in taarab. Many groups experienced with new musical instrumentation, which came available after liberalization. Tanga already witnessed a high level of indigenization of taarab in the early 1950s. The incorporation of local ngoma rhythms reflect a tension to reject postcolonial assumptions that represented taarab as a foreign music-genre. This tension is inherited from the postcolonial policy of Nyerere who repudiated foreign influences and ushered the music to reclaim a position in the local music-scene (Khamis 2001: 152-153; Gunderson & Barz 2000: 27-29). At the same time, the revitalization of taarab was necessary to reach a larger audience since the poetic structure of
the songs was often too elaborate to be understood by people who didn’t have knowledge of coastal Islamic culture (Graebner 2004: 266). The radio thus helped to foster this transformation by demanding a shorter version of the songs and straightforward lyrics to reach a large radio audience (Perullo 2011: 214-215). Taarab bands made references to many different ngoma rhythms like kidumbak, beni, kumbwaya, vugo, lelema and so on (Graebner 2004: 254; Khamis 2001: 152). However, chakacha influenced the taarab bands the most and the term is even used to describe a type of taarab that extends the East-African coast from the Tanzanian mainland and Mombasa to Burundi and Uganda (Fargion 1995: 126-127).

*Mchiriku*, the precursor of Singeli, appeared already in the 1970s but was banned by the government for its lewd lyrics and erotic dance-style (Perullo 2011: 363). *Mchiriku* made a comeback in the 1990s. It is grown out of other types of ngoma, mostly chakacha-taarab groups by replacing the harmonium with a keyboard, small local drums and rudimentary self-made instruments. *Mchiriku*’s distinct sound comes from a small keyboard. It is mainly performed in low cost housing areas in the periphery of Dar es Salaam and is hired for celebrations with family and friends. *Mchiriku* is characterised by amplification through the use of megaphones, that are powered by cheap small amplifiers, which sets it apart from other urban ngoma styles in Dar es Salaam. *Mchiriku* became the voice of the less privileged youth, living in Dar es Salaam’s poorest quarters like Tandale or Manzese, addressing social and political issues, opposed to Bongo Flava, which is associated more with the middle class. *Mchiriku* doesn’t solely rely on chakacha rhythms but also draws on Zaramo ngoma, mdundiko (Perullo 2011: 363; Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 76-82). *Mdundiko* is an initiation dance-music from the Zaramo and is similar to the sindimba of the Makonde, containing many sexual elements (Leseth 2010: 70). It is played at family festivities, usually the circumcision of boys, when they proceed the streets to bring the good news to family and friends in town (Demissie 2007: 51). The increasing popularity of *mchiriku* in Dar es Salaam attracted drunkards and pickpockets to the streets at night. Therefore, the music became increasingly associated with drugs and other criminal activities ranging from knife stabbing to prostitution. The artists themselves came from the city’s unemployed who took on additional survival strategies (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 83). In contrast to Bongo Flava, most *mchiriku* artists weren’t guided by managers and lacked regular performance venues or other forms of publicity (Perullo 2011: 363). It didn’t receive support from the radio-stations, and other media forms, that favoured foreign music in the first decade after structural adjustments in the 1990s (Perullo & Fenn 2003: 32). *Mchiriku* occupied the informal, local sphere, whereby many groups didn’t register with BASATA. As a result,
mchiriku became again a target of government bans by its lewd lyrics, erotic dance-style, criminal connotations and lack of registration (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 83).

The famous Al-Watan club of Dar es Salaam, which was known for its adherence to classical taarab, was revived in the 1990s as the Young Stars Modern Taarab, indicating its shift towards the new form of taarab. They established the new style Segere, when they were invited to play Zaramo ngoma at a wedding in 2000. They transferred the sound of vanga, a fast-paced Zaramo ngoma, to the contemporary instruments they used. They improvised a song, segere meaning to enjoy, there at the wedding. This song was later recorded in 2002 and became a direct hit, known by all inhabitants of Tanzania. The members of Young Stars Modern Taarab started a new band, named Segere Original in 2004 and recorded their first album with a new singer, featured by several innovations: inclusion of a trumpet player and the sound of Zaramo rimba (xylophone) which was imitated on the keyboard. They explored Zaramo traditions even further, following rhythms and melodies of mdundiko and tokomile. The song segere was sung in Zaramo which spread rumours that it would contain an immoral content. In 2002, BASATA banned the song from the radio or television because they were convinced it would encourage promiscuous behaviour. The band was forced to change the lyrics and to create a new video (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 83-87; Askew & Kitime 2006: 152).

Recently, baikoko became the city’s favoured night entertainment in Dar es Salaam. Baikoko originated in coastal Digo villages in Tanga in the early 1990s. There, the music-genre developed from older Digo ngoma genres. The way they dance on this music is linked to ngoma ya ndani. This music-genre entered Dar es Salaam by chance when Juma Hussein visited Dar es Salaam in 2009. There, he received the idea to establish a baikoko group in Dar es Salaam when he found plastic drainage pipes on the ground, which can imitate the sound of the drums. The music-genre spread to the lower class who took the women-only dance outside because of the lack of space. Consequently, baikoko gained a notorious status for the dancing of ‘half-naked’ women in poses of sexual intercourse at celebrations. The music-genre became increasingly linked with this dance-style whereby the original values of the music became lost. Therefore, baikoko also became the victim of banishments by the government (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 88-91).

### 4.3.3 Bongo Flava

Liberalization and privatisation of the media also paved the way for new foreign music genres to enter Tanzania in the 1990s (Suriano 2011a: 115). Consequently, American hip-hop reached
Tanzania through music and video cassettes, which set the development of Bongo Flava in motion. The first people who encountered these hip-hop cassettes were the young, educated middle and upper class, since knowledge of English was required to understand the American hip-hop. They imitated the original rap of the cassettes in English to develop a feeling for the rhyme and flow and to educate themselves about the electronic production techniques of hip-hop, for which they didn’t have equipment yet. The first phase of Bongo Flava was thus characterised by ‘meaningless’ rap through the imitation of American hip-hop. Eventually, the music was localized through adapting it to the local culture and language, Swahili, and was spread to the poor, deprived youth (Reuster-Jahn & Hacke 2011: 3-5; Suriano 2011: 117). Tanzanian values were affirmed in the songs and themes about violence, prevalent in American hip-hop, were rejected (Perullo & Fenn 2003: 27). Subsequently, a shift developed to socially conscious lyrics (Suriano 2011a: 117). Bongo Flava aimed to educate the entire Tanzanian society through criticizing social and political problems, linked to the Tanzanian population, and the use of Swahili. This strategy is inherited from the socialist ideals of Nyerere, but at the same time they didn’t want to offer a utopia but emphasize the Tanzanian reality (Suriano 2007: 216; Stroeken 2005a: 489). Thereby it adopted the global keepin’ it real credo, which they translated as *hali halisi*, ‘the real situation’ (Stroeken 2005a: 502; McLeod 1999: 135-136). Bongo Flava still distinguished itself from gangsta rap, through its goal to ‘improve’ the society, whereas gangsta rap avoids this confrontation (Stroeken 2005b).

Initially, Bongo Flava was a synonym for Tanzanian hip-hop. *Bongo* is, besides cunningness, Swahili slang for Dar es Salaam. This denotes the giant music-industry that is located there. Afterwards, the word was extended to Tanzania (Suriano 2011a: 115). The word flava derives from the English word flavour and is adapted to Swahili. Tanzanian music-artists were criticised for their reliance to foreign music. Consequently, they invented the word Bongo Flava, to emphasize the localization of the music-genre. This general term caused much confusion since this implies that all the available different music-genres in Tanzania belong to Bongo Flava while the term is only invented in the 1990s. Later, Bongo Flava thus served as an umbrella for the combination of the different new, foreign music-genres that entered Tanzania after liberalization. Thereby, different genres like R&B, Zouk, Reggae and Ragga became a part of Bongo Flava, indicating the general term of all the flavours from Tanzania (Suriano 2007: 208-209; Charry 2012: 187-188). Since 2005, Bongo Flava was revitalized, which produced a narrower definition of Bongo Flava. It is developed into a pop-genre, whereby it discovered a profitable formula by replacing hip-hop with R&B as a dominant subgenre. This formula
consists of love songs and dance tunes (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 6; Clark 2013: 9). As a result of the fusion with other music-genres, with R&B as the dominant one, an emphasis on danceable rhythms instead of rhymed lyrics, the loss of its previous educative function and increasing commercialization, hip-hop artists don’t identify themselves with the music-genre anymore (Suriano 2007: 217). Hip-hop-artists defend their authentic character by constituting clear boundaries between hip-hop and Bongo Flava. The concept of authenticity is thus applicable to Bongo Flava and hip-hop whereby the latter reaffirms the differences between them, out of fear of assimilation with Bongo Flava, which doesn’t adhere to the core values of hip-hop anymore, according to its artists. Thereby, the differences between the genres are emphasized but the differences within the genre are diminished through hip-hop’s exclusion from Bongo Flava. Bongo Flava, in the broad sense, thus denotes all the available music-genres of Tanzania. However, Bongo Flava, in the strict sense, indicates a new music-genre based on slow dance tunes and love songs, distinguished from hip-hop which persistently aims to adhere to its original function, style and content. I argue that the use of Bongo Flava in the broad sense is decreasing and that most people apply the term in the strict sense.

In short, globalization brings forth music-genres that encompass both local and global elements. The music-genres combine local and global along different ways, expressed in the different sounds. The local and global exist in relation to each other as reactive forces. It is not a coincidence that local traditions are increasingly valued when Bongo Flava experiments with foreign, global sounds. Bongo Flava is set apart from the other music-genres through its lack of ngoma rhythms. Hence, Bongo Flava doesn’t explicitly use tradition to legitimize oneself while the other music-genres use tradition to gain popularity. Thereby, especially Zaramo and coastal traditions are used to create new contemporary forms, which is associated with the erotic hip-movements. Bongo Flava also receives more support from the media, sponsored by advertising, who often control the course/image of the music-genre. Consequently, Bongo Flava artists achieved an international image while the other music-genres are more or less confined to the local sphere (Hanneken & Oliveira 2016: 77, 92).

Even though Bongo Flava and the other music-genres follow different courses, it’s still clear that during this period a trend towards dance music arises, which entices increased audience participation. This is built on the legacy of multi-ethnic commercial cultural groups, which in turn is the unintended result of the socialist cultural policy of Nyerere who promulgated the revival of ngoma. The music is increasingly valued for its beats instead of lyrics. This is exemplified in the loss of rigid Swahili poetic structure and rhyme structure in respectively
taarab and Bongo Flava. This doesn’t mean that lyrics don’t constitute an important element in music anymore since this is still determined by personal preferences, but it just proves the increasing demand for dance beats. The commercial popular music-genres play again an important role in the creation of a national identity. The commercial nature of the music, based on profits, instigates it to reach as many customers as possible, regardless of religious and ethnic differences, while drawing on problems that citizens have in common. The groups also weakened local ethnicities through its pan-ethnic makeup (Lange 1999: 55). They are currently still contested by the government who rejects the inclusion of the erotic dance-style and its corresponding expressive lewd lyrics in national culture. However, this is quite contradictory since CCM regularly exploited popular taste, in TOT, to gain political popularity. This contradiction mirrors the previous ambivalent cultural policy of Nyerere. He promoted a restoration of precolonial culture to create a unified national identity. Therefore, he ushered the revival of precolonial ngoma and promoted Swahili as the national language of all citizens. However, at the same time ngoma occupied a marginal status compared to the other national troupes and Swahili culture itself was framed as foreign and immoral through its association with foreign trade and erotic dance-movements. Ngoma, in general, was still perceived as ‘primitive’ by some national elite and coastal and southern culture, in particular, were conceived as immoral. However, the marginal status of ngoma itself is linked to the popularity of coastal and southern culture, whereby ngoma is increasingly associated with those vigorous hip-movements.

5 DATA ANALYSIS: SINGELI

5.1 HISTORY

Singeli emerged in the poorest quarters of Kinondoni, the north-western district of Dar es Salaam, namely Manzese or Tandale. It is part of the largest unplanned settlements of Dar es Salaam, referred to as uswahilini or uswazi, and gained a notorious status for its illicit services (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 54). The term refers to houses which have been built without land permits, where services such as electricity, sanitation and running water have not been centrally established by the government. The houses are densely populated around narrow alleyways and are either built with temporary materials or brick (Kerr 2015: 73). However, the majority now lives in unplanned settlements, caused by the government’s inability to keep up with the city’s
congestion. *Uswahilini* don’t longer serve as a synonym for poverty since a diverse range of people now live in these settlements, including the middle-class. Most government workers for example still earn low wages, instigating them to rent rooms or built houses in the *uswahilini* area. However, *uswahilini* are still commonly linked with poverty and the office workers inhabiting these spaces separate themselves from the lifestyles of the uneducated or informally employed surrounding them (Demissie 2007: 51). *Uswahilini* are known as an area of intense gossip and sociability and are central to musical performance (Kerr 2015: 73).

Singeli is born in *vigodoro*, parties which are held in the informal neighbourhoods of *uswahilini*. The event was previously known as *rusha roho*. Whereas taarab was normally performed live, *rusha roho* refers to a later development where cassette-recorded, modern *taarab* is played for a female audience who dance to the beat (Khamis 2001: 150). It was replaced by *vigodoro*, around 2000, when MC’s or other performers were invited to those parties (Producer Sisso 2018). *Vigodoro* mean small mattresses in Swahili and symbolizes the act of partying all night until morning, without sleeping on their mattress at home. The parties take place for family festivities, like birthday-parties or wedding celebrations, where ‘traditional’ music is played like *mchiriku* and *Segere* but mainly *taarab*. The parties usually start in the evening at 9/10 pm and only end in the early morning (Kerr 2015: 75-76; Artist Man Fongo 2018). Man Fongo (2018) asserts that *vigodoro* need to take place outside, in an open area of *uswahilini*, otherwise it can’t be perceived as *vigodoro*. These denote civic and transgressive spaces, that occur largely outside the control of the government and offer possibilities to engage in activities that are less acceptable during the day. Therefore, the performers and audience utilize more sexually explicit dialogue in these spaces. They use equipment to amplify the musical sounds to attract a larger audience, whereby performers can become local celebrities if they offer a good performance (Kerr 2015: 75-76). *Vigodoro* are not only restricted to Dar es Salaam but are known in other regions as well, however, it can be given different names there. *Vigodoro* are organised by women, who invite their fellow female friends and family (Artist Kapala 2018; DJ Tito 2018). This explains the preference for *taarab* on those parties, which is dominated by female singers and mainly loved by a female audience (Askew 2002; Perullo 2011: 134). Other informants also confirm that *taarab* was the most popular music in *uswahilini* at that time through its transformation into modern *taarab*. However, Kapala (2018) affirms that men also visit those parties often without invitation. Because *vigodoro* takes place outside, they are also not able to prevent men from visiting the party. The women organisations contribute financially to the arrangement of the event for the renting of sound equipment and supply of drinks for the
performers. The invited performers, however, are not financially compensated and no entry-fee is charged for the party (Kerr 2015: 75-76).

Msaga Sumu, who belongs to the Makonde in the south, is recognised as the founder of Singeli (Listener Lucy 2018; Manager Kandoro 2018). He was selling second handed clothes during the day and was invited as MC to vigodoro at night, which he started around 2000. His profession provided him with talkative skills to entertain the audience. DJ’s were also invited to entertain the audience with traditional music. When the gifts were offered at those parties, the musical interlude of taarab was looped, so the MC could entertain the audience. That’s when Msaga Sumu decided to sing by narrating stories that really happened to him or his community on the looped taarab beat (DJ Tito 2018; Artist Msaga Sumu 2018; Artist Virus Mdudu 2018). However, the way he sang deviated from the usual vocal style of taarab and he didn’t follow the Swahili prosodic poetry of taarab. The vocalization of taarab normally has a pseudo-Arabian and Indian sound, which is based on the methods of reciting the Qur’an, which the taarab singer must retain to a minimal degree (Khamis 2001: 149). Even though modern taarab or mipasho is also recognised by laxity to Swahili poetry, the poetry structure was not completely abandoned but was still retained to a lesser degree. Msaga Sumu (2018), however, didn’t adhere to these formal characteristics of taarab. The speed of taarab was increased as well. Thereafter, he got the idea to record a song that he had improvised at one of those parties, mama wa kambo (see YouTube 2019), which was liked by the audience very much (Artist Msaga Sumu 2018; DJ Tito 2018). This music of Msaga Sumu was called muziki wa ladha, flavour music, and consists only of the fast looped taarab beat and his vocals (Artist Kapala 2018; Artist Man Fongo 2018; Artist Virus Mdudu 2018; Artist Msaga Sumu 2018). Msaga Sumu (2018) explains that muziki wa ladha, is a general term referring to any music with low tempo. This is clarified by the word ‘ladha’, flavour, which is also used to describe Bongo Flava, generally known as slow music.

After Msaga Sumu, many followed his path in proceeding a music career based on those looped taarab beats (Artist Msaga Sumu 2018; DJ Tito 2018). The beats that they looped from taarab derived from modern taarab, especially from the Jahazi modern taarab band, which was the most famous taarab band at that time (DJ Tito 2018). However, this resulted in an intense dispute with taarab artists, who registered their copyrights and sued those who used their taarab beats. Msaga Sumu (2018) was even arrested by the police for the offence of copyright. That’s when many realised that they needed to change the beats so that the copied taarab beats were not recognizable anymore. However, this transformation, traced back to 2010, was also
instigated by popular taste since DJ’s already experimented with mixing different beats at those parties. The DJ of Makaveri is credited with this transformation by increasing the speed of *taarab* even more and mixing it with other samples, mainly from *mchiriku* and other *ngoma* styles. Makaveri then started to sing faster, which gave a new taint to the music-genre. Makaveri also brought his own dancer, Kisingeli, to the party and that’s when the new name Singeli was coined for the music (Artist Virus Mdudu 2018; Producer Sisso 2018). He started to bounce his booty on the rhythmic changes of the music while placing his hands on the ground (Dancer Hemedi Kiduku 2018). Many people liked this way of dancing and urged Kisingeli to dance on those parties, whereby his popularity instigated a conflation of his name with the music (Artist Kapala 2018). Hence, the term Singeli only emerged when the DJ added samples (*ngoma*) to the looped *taarab* beat and the term ‘*muziki wa ladha*’ only referred to the fast looped *taarab* beat without extra samples. As previously demonstrated, an urge for *ngoma* rhythms and faster music was increased after liberalization and erotic hip-movements were increasingly associated with *ngoma*. So, this transformation was also stimulated by the audience who claimed that modern *taarab* still didn’t satisfy their needs and was still too slow to dance on.

Currently, there are two types of production to create Singeli beats. Initially, they used Virtual DJ, mixing, to produce Singeli beats. That means that they cut/loop a piece of a song, increase the speed and add samples to this. The songs that they loop can derive from any music-genre, however, they mostly use African dance music since Singeli denotes dance music in the first place. Thereby, they mostly use *kwai*, *taarab*, Bongo Flava and *bolingo*. They are flexible to choose between very different music-genres because they become almost unrecognizable by the fast speed and high number of samples they add. The samples, however, derive mainly from *mchiriku* and Zaramo *ngoma* which they also cut pieces from. Nevertheless, they confirm that they can use any *ngoma* from different regions of Tanzania. They can also make the samples themselves by recording the rhythm of some self-made rudimentary instruments or local drums. The second mode of producing Singeli is characterised by FL software. This production is a later development, whereby they create the fast Singeli beat completely themselves. They don’t loop a piece of a song and add samples but start from scratch. I’ve witnessed this production myself when the producer Medick Chopper (2018) recorded solely the sound of some pots and pans and created a rhythm from this by using the software. Thereby, he added some extra samples, from FL software, to boost the song with extra melody and rhythm. FL software has all kinds of samples of sounds from different music instruments like piano, drum, guitar and so on (Producer Medick Chopper 2018; Producer Duke 2018; Manager Kadoro 2018; Producer
Sisso 2018). Classical music, like the initial version of taarab, lacks a prominent and periodic beat which causes the listeners to feel the music internally but not to externalize it. Contemporary dance music, however, is characterized by a periodic and prominent beat which almost forces the dancers to move. Thereby, the duration of the repetition period defines the tempo of the music. R&B, soul and hip-hop are featured with a longer repetition period compared to other dance-music and thus correspond to a lower tempo. However, Singeli is characterised by a very short repetition period and thus corresponds to a very high tempo. The short repetition period evokes shorter movements, which is exemplified in the vigorous, isolated dance-movements of Singeli (Moelants 2003: 649-652; Moelants 2008).

The Singeli producers, artists and dancers are recognised as uneducated youth. The category of youth, however, is not marked by age but by certain activities that mark adulthood. As many still struggle to gain social and financial capital, they don’t receive the status that would mark their entry into adulthood (Kerr 2015: 73). Their backgrounds range from those who have only completed primary education to those who have completed secondary school. Therefore, they don’t possess the knowledge of English. This indicates the high level of creativity and inventiveness, bongo, the producers need to have to produce Singeli beats since the digital software operates in English. Thereby, many producers watch videos on YouTube to teach themselves how to produce beats (Producer Medick Chopper 2018). In the US and Europe, the music producer refers to the one who organizes recording sessions, manages the budget and personnel. The sound engineer is then the one who is responsible for the producing of beats. In Tanzania, however, the producer includes both whereby he needs to possess a lot of knowledge from several different subjects like music theory, technology and business. Through a lack of formal education in music and arts, the producers and artists need to rely on themselves to create the necessary skills for their career. They do this by listening to music themselves, through different media, or by following some sessions with fellow artists/producers (Perullo 2011: 145-165).

The Singeli artists, producers and dancers are predominantly male. In Tanzania, with some exceptions, men dominate the popular music-industry. This results from several stereotypes which prevail in this sphere. Thereby producing/playing instruments is confined to men and female performers on stage are associated with obscene behaviour in the popular imagination. These stereotypes are reinforced by the women themselves who are, therefore, scared to perform. The restrictions thus mainly exist in the prevailing stereotypes and to a lesser extent in pragmatic ways. With this statement, I mean that formal rules don’t really exist to prevent
females to participate in popular music. However, pragmatic restrictions still emerge in informal ways in the Tanzanian music-industry (Perullo 2011: 128-140). For example, I’ve noticed that female Singeli artists needed to pay money for their music to be played on the radio while men didn’t. In my previous research, female artists also reaffirmed certain restrictions since many producers only offered to help in exchange for sex. This also explains the obscene status of female performers in popular imagination since successful female artists/dancers are often thought to have reached their success through sex since many producers only help in exchange for it (Brennan et al. 2007: 217). The stereotypes thus also translate into informal restrictions. However, currently more and more female artists are emerging on the music-scene and male artists encourage this (Perullo 2011: 140).

The Singeli dancers I’ve interviewed were all taarab dancers. This indicates a transformation in the performance of taarab which previously didn’t include dancers on stage. Even though academical literature affirms the revitalization of taarab into dance-music, I have never read any information about professional dancers on stage. Hence, the Singeli dancers also use the same moves that they dance on taarab and adapt it to the faster music of Singeli. The dance move, kiduku, for example is also used in Singeli. This is a move in which they dance in a bent position, using their toes and legs and moving their hands extensively (Dancer Hemedi Kiduku 2018). However, the Kiwalani dance crew (2018), asserts that they use much more hands in taarab compared to Singeli. Both men and women bounce/shake their booty, but the men also use their legs while the women are confined to the bouncing of the booty. This mirrors the previous national dance troupe in which women were confined to waist wriggling and men were exposed to a greater variety of movements. Thereby the men claimed that the women are not able to do those leg movements. These stereotypes are then again reinforced by women, who are afraid to participate in those movements. Again, when men dance these hip-movements it doesn’t affect their status as much, but the women are granted a lower status.

Hemedi Kiduku (2018) explains that Kisingeli only used the style of bouncing the booty, whereas Hemedi later invented new movements by using his legs. Hemedi is a very famous Singeli dancer, who appears in many videoclips of famous Singeli artists like Msaga Sumu and Man Fongo. He refers to Kisingeli’s movement as kukata kiuno, which literally means to cut/isolate the waist. This reaffirms my assumption about the link with the female-only instructions (unyago), which then again clarifies the women’s low status since the movement imitates sexual intercourse and is normally confined to the private sphere. Vigodoro is thus linked to chakacha in which wedding festivities, originally targeted for a female audience, were
taken outside by the lower class because of a lack of space inside. Thereby the female-only *kukata kiuno* was transferred into the public sphere. However, I’m not completely sure how this movement was used by previous *ngoma* groups since I didn’t have the opportunity to compare them. Therefore, when previous literature mainly referred to *kukata kiuno* as rotating the hips, I’ve noticed that Singeli is mainly characterised by the bouncing of the booty, without rotating the hips. Lucy (2018) affirms this difference. This is also commonly known as twerking, which is a global widespread movement that developed in New Orleans as early as the 1980s (Gaunt 2015: 247). Lucy and Hezron (2018) themselves also referred to the movement as twerking. Nevertheless, Kyra D. Gaunt (2015: 247) confirms the link between twerking and centuries-old dance-drums, rooted in African cultures. Thereby she explicitly refers to *chakacha*, which then reassures the link between them. Even so, in Singeli they also rotate their waist, but it is less common. The fact that Hemedi (2018) still referred to Kisingeli’s movement as *kukata kiuno* maybe indicates that the term is given a new meaning. It might denote an innovation, based on the previous hip-movements. Who started this innovation, however, is not known.

Even though Singeli dancers probably don’t use the exact same movement of previous *ngoma* groups, it still points to the increasing interest for hip and booty movements in general. Lucy and Hemedi (2018) also affirm that the dance-movements in Singeli are influenced by *sindimba* and Zaramo *ngoma* like *mdundiko*. Thereby they incorporate previous movements of *ngoma* or other genres in Singeli but constantly invent new movements on Singeli itself, which are then regarded as specific moves for Singeli (Dancer Chogo Chuma 2018). *Ngoma* and Singeli influence each other on both sides since Singeli is now also often danced on *ngoma*. Singeli influences many other music-genres at *vigodoro* since they now increase the speed of other music-genres at those events too (Personal observation 218). Each Singeli dance-movement is given a name, which often clarify the way they dance. Therefore, I argue that the movements exist outside the music-genres and are not restricted to a certain music-genre but should be approached in a holistic way. This means that the dance movements themselves don’t frame the context, but it is the intention behind the dancing that frames it (Braun 2014: 55). This idea is clarified in the next chapter in the example of Kangamoko dancers.

The autonomy of the dance-movements is exemplified in *kukata kiuno* which prevails in many different music-genres. Therefore, it is very difficult to determine which dance-moves define Singeli and to trace its origin. However, I did recognise a typical way of dancing in the music-genre of Singeli, based on the performance of the four dancers that I’ve interviewed. Thereby, they use their legs and buttocks often while they use their hands in a very relaxed way. The
hands support the movements of the legs and buttocks and are not used vigorously compared to taarab. The male dancers also use a lot of facial expressions to imitate experiences of daily life. For example, Hemedi invented a movement to imitate the crying of children on the street. Therefore, Singeli has humorous connotations whereby the booty-movements of the men are perceived in a funny way by the audience while the booty-movements of the women are not (Dancer Ibranoma 2018; Dancer Hemedi Kiduku 2018). Thereby, it seems that many male dancers hide the sensuality of the movements by using humour. The twerking, which I referred to previously, is known in Swahili as *chura*. This literally means frog in Swahili and serves as a metaphor in which women sit on the ground ‘like a frog’ and shake their booty. In the broad sense, *chura* refers to twerking but in the strict sense it is linked to the bouncing/isolating of the booty while sitting on the ground (Artist Man Fongo 2018). The dancers and Man Fongo (2018) state that *chura*, in the strict sense, is danced by women only.

5.2 **THE MOTORS FOR CHANGE**

The drive to create their own ‘pure’ Tanzanian music, as they call it, is stimulated by many different factors. K. Mziwanda (2018), a female Singeli artist, claims that:

> “Singeli ni muziki wa asili kwasababu zamani tulikuwa hatuna muziki wa asili wa nyumbani. Kwahiyoko kwa sasa muziki wa nyumbani ni singeli (‘Singeli is traditional music because previously we didn’t have our own home-made music. So now, we have Singeli as our own music from home’).”

With this statement she doesn’t neglect the presence of *ngoma*, but she points to the fact that there didn’t exist one single ‘traditional’ genre to represent the whole nation. Man Fongo (2018) affirms this:

> “Kwa sisi wote kabila lina muziki wake mzigua ana muziki wake, mmakonde ana muziki wake lakini sasa inabidi tuwe na kitu chetu cha kusupport ambacho kinaingia kwene miziki yote ndo mimi sasa naipenda lakini hasa naisupport singeli kwa sababu singeli hata ukipiga muziki wowote ule toka kabila lolote Tanzania yaani lazima tu itaendana nayo. (‘To us every tribe has its own traditional music. Zigua people have their music, Makonde people they have their own too but we need to have one thing which will stand neutral and represent all the tribes and get support from all the people within the country. That’s why I decided to do Singeli music because it can include all
the elements from other traditional music and can get support from all the corners of the country’).”

This explicitly refers to the construction of an alternative national culture, whereby they inherit the policy of Nyerere that granted a privileged position to *ngoma* compared to other music like *taarab* and *dansi*, which were repudiated as foreign. In this case, nationalism is constructed by the informal, civil society who offers an alternative view on the official rhetoric of the state that rejects erotic dance-movements and sexually explicit lyrics. The main difference with previous official national troupes is that they presented a (selected) collection of dance-songs (*ngoma*) from different ethnic groups on stage, while Singeli incorporates different ‘traditional’ elements from different ethnic groups within one music-genre. Through Singeli’s emphasis on the transcending of ethnic boundaries, they evoke a quest to imagine the nation. Even after the localization of both *taarab* and Bongo Flava, which became the most popular music-genres after liberalization, they were still not conceived as ‘purely’ Tanzanian by everyone.

The perseverance to imagine the nation is facilitated by the transition from analog to digital recording, which enables the process of mixing ‘traditional’ elements with relative ease (Perullo 2011: 268; Davies 1996: 3). Due to this transition music-production can take place entirely in front of the computer screen since they are liberated from the restrictions of studio acoustics and an enormous amount of wiring (Nyre 2008: 62). From the mid-1960s until the 1980s multitracking dominated professional audio recording, whereby the multi-track recorder provided individual input for the sounds of each instrument, that could be mixed later. However, this stacking up was altered by the emergence of samples (the digital restoration and manipulation of sounds), MDI (system for interconnection between computers and machines) and software that imitate the recording studio. Now, changes to the music could be made through the computer, without the need for re-recording. These new technologies privileged rhythm through the development of other instruments (synthesizers) as elements of rhythm (Bennett 2005: 276-281). The recording equipment, together with musical instruments, are imported from outside Africa and are heavily taxed. However, since most producers rely on computer-based recording technology, the piracy of computer software ensures cheap music-production. Producers now find less hindrance to create a new genre like Singeli (Perullo 2011: 246-259). Singeli artists even find less restrictions since they only need their voice to perform. This indicates another reason for the emergence of Singeli. The rise of unemployed youth, caused by the lack of adequate formal employment, stimulate inventive survival strategies.
In this sense, Singeli offers itself as a new mode of survival for the lower class, who can afford the low restrictions imposed on Singeli.

Manager Kandoro (2018) also discusses the restrictions of previous music-production, which prevented them to reach much success. Taarab, dansi and ngoma groups namely consist of live bands whereby the regular renewal of instruments is very expensive. Therefore, a Singeli artist only needs money to pay for the studio recording while members of previous clubs needed to pay membership fees and use their income of their performance to renew their instruments (Brennan et al. 2007: 187). Between and within those clubs many conflicts arose since artists constantly changed between bands when better opportunities emerged (Perullo 2011: 172-181). Similarly, the manager (2018) doesn’t ignore the presence of other music which can be regarded as Tanzanian, but he solely points to the financial difficulties of those groups to achieve (inter)national success. In this sense, Singeli mirrored itself to the strategy of Bongo Flava to gain (inter)national status who, in turn, bases itself on the mechanisms of international music-industry companies (Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 77). The music-industry is known as a risky business since it depends on the unpredictability of consumer interests, whereby most of its revenues comes from a small number of hits. Consequently, they pursue different strategies to minimize the danger of risk. They do this by formatting cultural products in which they connect individual stars with the product to make the product more attractive (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 31-37). In Singeli they also pursue this strategy, whereby certain individuals epitomize the possibility for the lower class to gain better living-standards.

Another stimulant for the rise of a new music-genre is that the knowledge to play mchiriku is dying out with its artists (Msaga Sumu 2018). This points to the fact that many young people don’t possess the skills anymore to play mchiriku. Hence, a new music-genre is created in which those capacities are not required. With the new music production, the skills of playing mchiriku are not necessary anymore since they can use the samples of mchiriku songs or they can make the rhythm on the computer by listening to many mchiriku songs. They don’t need to play it on the original instruments anymore.

Abduli (2018), a fan of Singeli music attributes the urge for ‘pure’ Tanzanian music to globalization:

“Ni kwasababu ya utandawazi, utandawazi umepelekea sisi kuona aina tofauti za muziki za mataifa mbalimbali na kutufanya sisi kutaka kua na muziki wetu wenyewe ambao utatutambulisha sisi kama watanzania. Sababu kabla ya utandawazi tulikua na muziki
Tanzanians increasingly participate in a pan-African and global culture as consumers and cultural producers, which is made possible through international TV stations such as MTV (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 9). Thereby the radio presenter (2018) used South Africa and Nigeria as examples for countries who developed their own distinctive, national sound. In Tanzania Nigerian music, known as Naijabeats, became especially popular in 2006. Their international success stimulated Tanzanian artists to follow their path (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 13-14). Globalization thus increased differentiation in which particularities of sound are increasingly favoured in the international market. Hence, diversity sells (Robertson 1995: 29). While many Tanzanian music-genres initially featured imitation of foreign sounds, this is gradually replaced by the localization of sounds to increase its appeal on an international scale (Englert 2003: 82).

Another merit of globalization is the global spread of authenticity to evaluate artistic works. On the surface it seems as if the ideals of hip-hop (representing the street, remaining true to the self and the culture, giving a voice to the poor and so on) are moulded into the new music, Singeli (Clark 2018: 16-19; McLeod 1999: 146). However, I argue that it is the global talk about authenticity itself, also used by Tanzanian hip-hop artists, which influenced the urge for ‘pure’ Tanzanian music (Pennycook 2007: 103). Authenticity refers to staying true to the source/content, which in this case is Tanzania. Their call for a better representation of Tanzania is now answered by Singeli, who takes up their task to carry the image of the nation. Thereby Singeli aims for a better representation of Tanzanian sound and lyrics, while hip-hop mainly focused on a representation of Tanzania in its musical content/expression (Hip-hop artist Medy Botion 2017). The quest for ‘real’ Tanzanian music is thus expanded. Singeli thus serves as a reaction to globalization which increasingly exposed Tanzanians to other music-genres that also tried to create their own, national distinctive sound and aimed to defy cultural homogenization by affirming national/local particularities.

Even though, Singeli aims to imagine the nation, it’s obvious that it is rooted in coastal culture. Thereby Singeli emerged by the increasing demand for danceable rhythms and hip-movements, that are born in coastal culture. This is built on the previous postcolonial policy which favoured
ngoma which, in turn, unintendedly stimulated the emergence of commercial cultural troupes that popularized erotic hip-movements. These troupes caused the transformation of ngoma in which songs didn’t constitute an essential part anymore and dance was singled out as a genre by itself. Consequently, sound is becoming increasingly important in the evaluation of music. This example is set by other African music-genres, like Naijabeats, which reach international success despite the fact that many people don’t even understand the lyrics, that is written in pidgin English (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 9).

A fan of Singeli points to another important reason for the creation of a new music-genre. He refers to the need to establish an official music-genre that will be accepted by the entire society and won’t be restricted to people who are familiar with vigodoro. This statement evokes the efforts of the government to ban music-genres like mchiriku and baikoko, which were often played at vigodoro. These music-genres often lack registration and are not recognised by the government as ‘appropriate’ official music through its erotic, illegal character. His statement is also clarified by the emergence of Kangamoko dancers who denote the female dancers that I’ve discussed before. These female dancers earn a living by dancing almost half-naked at parties. They are looked down upon and labelled as prostitutes by the society. The term Kangamoko indicates the clothing they wear during their performance. Kanga is a Swahili term which means a piece of fabric that women wrap around their waist and upper body. Moko derives from the word moja, which means one in English. Hence, they dance in those parties in a single piece of kanga, that they often loosen during their performance. The female dancers initially danced on baikoko but currently they also use Singeli for their performance (Sanga 2016: 82-84). This illustrates the autonomy of the dance-movements that are not restricted to a certain music-genre. The dancers use the same movements that I’ve seen in Singeli. They bounce their booty and rotate their hips in different positions on the ground. Hence, this illustrates the fact that the dance is framed by the intentions behind the dancing and not by the dance moves themselves. However, it must be noted that I refer to the Kangamoko dancers that I’ve seen in the club but, I do not know exactly how they danced originally. Since baikoko entered Dar es Salaam before Singeli, the dance-genre denotes an important influence. However, they are both framed in a general trend towards hip-movements, linked to chakacha, which took the coast over by storm. Therefore, innovations in hip-movements can be situated from different corners along the coast.

The emergence of Kangamoko dancers, who use Singeli to dance on, also elucidates the need for new dance-movements in Singeli. Thereby, male Singeli dancers varied their movements through the incorporation of leg movements. While Kisingeli initially focused on hip-
movements, the Kiwalani crew is trying to eliminate the ‘immoral’ reputation that is linked to those hip-movements through the display of a greater variety of movements. The Kangamoko dancers thus usher the emergence of a whole new dance-genre, that is not solely restricted to hip-movements anymore. In short, the bad reputation and banishments of previous music/dance-genres stimulate the creation of a new music/dance-genre that will be accepted by the nation. The rhetoric of the state, which they still contest, stimulates them to explore the boundaries of morality further.

Another important motor for change is the competition among the different music-genres, which has been an important factor in many East African societies. Competition in East Africa is referred to as mashindano, indicating an ‘organized competitive event’. Those events are essential in the reaffirmation and revitalization of community values and the inspiration of new musical styles, fashion and ideas (Gunderson & Barz 2000: 7-17; Graebner 2004: 268). This competition is framed in the unemployment of many Tanzanian inhabitants, who pursue different strategies to survive. The music-industry is an important factor in this.

5.3 CATEGORISATION: TRADITIONAL AND/OR TANZANIAN MUSIC

During the interviews it became obvious that when my informants evaluated Singeli as traditional music, they explicitly valued the music for its connections with the past but when they framed the music as ‘real’ Tanzanian music they included the connections with the present in their evaluation by evoking expressive authenticity instead of only genealogical authenticity (traditions). My informants imagined traditions differently, whereby the claim on tradition to evaluate Singeli is not ratified by everyone. My informants proposed several criteria for the claim on tradition. Some proposed time as an appropriate indicator for the qualification of tradition. Therefore, they distinguished taarab and ngoma as traditions and excluded Singeli since ngoma and taarab are present in Tanzania for several generations while the latter emerged as a very recent phenomenon. This can be linked to the view of Shils, who advocated a certain duration (three generations) for a belief/practice to be qualified as tradition.

Hence, Hobsbawm’s idea is partly applicable to Singeli because it denotes indeed a new music-genre, as response to new situations, with reference to old situations and possesses a high level of conscious construction. The awareness of this change is marked in the new entitlement ‘Singeli’ instead of ngoma, mchiriku and so on. Consequently, some informants hesitate to consider Singeli as traditional music and rely more on Tanzanian authenticity for its legitimation. Still, as I have stated before, I don’t agree with the term invention of tradition to
describe Singeli. Yet, Singeli can be envisioned as a traditionalist tradition in which it tries to promote/legitimize itself against Bongo Flava artists by claiming continuity with the past. However, Hobsbawm’s particular assumption of invariance as an objective of invented traditions, does not apply to Singeli. The objective of Singeli is anything but invariance since its success depends on the constantly changing needs of its consumers. Singeli is also still an upcoming music-genre, less characterized by formalization in comparison with other music-genres, like Bongo Flava. But lately, Singeli indeed formalizes and institutionalizes its music more to reach an international audience and to compete with other national music-genres.

Others challenge the previous vision, in which time denotes an important indicator in the evaluation of tradition, and state that Singeli has already become a tradition. However, through this statement they recognize that Singeli isn’t a mere continuation from the past but indicates a recent/new phenomenon, with references to the past, that has turned into a new tradition for the people who grow up with it. Still, it is possible that over time they will regard Singeli as the ‘true’ traditional music and forget the original context of ngoma and the history of Singeli itself, which actually originated from the sampling and looping of taarab. Many of the audience are indeed not aware about the origins of Singeli. An elder fan of Singeli stated that kids nowadays don’t know their traditional ngoma of their ethnic groups anymore but that they learn about ngoma through Singeli.

Others qualify traditional music for its ethnic affiliations, spoken in ethnic languages. This criterion is called for in certain degrees. The winner of the Singeli battle in Tabora, Super Dasman, called Singeli the traditional music of Dar es Salaam which evokes the roots of Singeli in coastal culture. The use of ethnic languages is linked to the previous context of ngoma whereby each ethnic group has its own ngoma in its own language. Thereby, the use of Swahili, which is the mother-language of many inhabitants in Dar es Salaam, served for Super Dasman as a sufficient criterion for the claim on tradition. For others, however, previous ngoma in its complete original context is perceived as the sole music that can be qualified as traditional music but not Singeli with its pan-ethnic affiliations since the inhabitants of Dar es Salaam come from very different regions. Others challenge this view by stating that ngoma rhythm, melody or instruments are adequate components for the qualification of traditional music. In this sense, they all evoke genealogical authenticity by adhering to the original form/structure of ngoma to a certain degree.
Hemedi Kiduku recognises commercialization to be an important factor to exclude certain music from traditional music. He states that commercial music like Singeli, which is driven by profit and demands of the audience, will disappear eventually while traditional music continues to be an important factor in certain rituals or celebrations. Therefore, this music doesn’t only exist for commercial incentives which reassures its continuation. However, this ignores the current changes in the everyday life of inhabitants of Dar es Salaam. Many play Singeli at vigodoro now instead of ngoma. This transformation can destruct the long-during presence of the original ngoma. They all agree, however, that original ngoma in its original context indicates traditional music, which they praise for its lack of foreign influences before the advent of colonialism.

The criteria for Tanzanian music are even more varied. The radio-promotor stated that ngoma is the only 'real' Tanzanian music. Similarly, producer Sisso indicates that traditional ngoma rhythms or instruments need to be incorporated in order to be recognised as Tanzanian music. The music from Tanzania in the present can thus only be validated as Tanzanian when they take the structure/form of past ngoma into account. In this sense, the 'realness' of the current Tanzanian music still depends on the past whereby tradition is conflated with Tanzanian music and the other way around. Others estimate that the originality and lack of foreign elements signify the most important conditions for Tanzanian music. Difference then becomes the benchmark in the analysis of Tanzanian music, whereby its sound should be distinguished from any other music. This doesn’t mean that it is not allowed to copy any other music, even though their repudiation of foreign elements would claim so, but it should not be heard in the eventual results. This criterion automatically frames traditional music as Tanzanian music, but not necessarily the other way around if one applies a certain duration as prerequisite for example. Both approaches refer to the paradox of nationalism (Turino 2000), with particularism and universalism as constituents. In this case, they underscore the necessity of particularity as part of nationalism since they denote the emblems to distinguish the nation from other nations.

Three Singeli artists claimed that music only becomes Tanzanian when it is appreciated by the majority of the country and thus extends ethnic boundaries. This assertion aligns with the theory of Benedict Anderson (2006) who describes the nation as an imagined community in which the image of sameness prevails. Thereby the Singeli artists acknowledged that ngoma didn’t receive enough media support to carry the image of the nation. After liberalization, radio hosts initially favoured foreign music and the pan-ethnic makeup of Dar es Salaam resulted in the loss of ethnic ngoma (Perullo & Fenn 2003: 32; Martin 1982: 155-157). Hence, I presume that when
my informants mentioned the limited media support of ngoma, they referred to ngoma in its original context, with its ethnic affiliations. Even so, the ngoma styles which were born in Dar es Salaam, like mchiriku and mdundiko, suffered an ‘immoral’ reputation by the state. This probably discouraged the radio hosts, who still depend on the state for the allocation of broadcast licenses (Perullo 2001: 194-201). That’s also why Super Dasman decided to describe Singeli as traditional music from Dar es Salaam since according to him Singeli doesn’t receive enough support yet to be appreciated by the entire nation. Consequently, media support plays an important role in the rise of national consciousness. Hence, taarab should be framed as Tanzanian music then as well since it has become increasingly popular through its transformation into modern taarab and it receives sufficient radio support (K. Mziwanda 2018; Lange 2002: 178). Some are claiming, however, that the popularity of Singeli will result in the end of taarab.

A combination of several criteria is also possible to evaluate the music. Msaga Sumu proposes both originality and popularity as yardsticks for Tanzanian music. If only one of them is valid, it can’t be perceived as Tanzanian music. Others claim that ‘real’ Tanzanian music must represent the current reality of the inhabitants of Tanzania. This assertion evokes expressive authenticity. Whereas not everyone agreed on the depiction of Singeli as traditional music, most of them did ratify Singeli’s claim on Tanzanian music.

What strikes me is that most of my informants also viewed taarab as Tanzanian music. In my previous research the interviews showed different results in the sense that most of them didn’t regard taarab as Tanzanian music. They recognised the origins of taarab in Zanzibar and pointed to the range of taarab, which extends the East African coast and is thus not restricted to Tanzania (Askew 2002: 103). This discrepancy makes sense if one considers the history of Singeli, which developed by the looping of taarab beats. Hence, it would seem contradictory to portray Singeli as Tanzanian music while repudiating its initial basis as foreign. If they rejected the music as foreign, they would actually have copied from a foreign music-genre which would invalidate Singeli’s claim on Tanzanian music. Nonetheless, the next chapter clarifies that they don’t completely reject the use of foreign music in its musical repertoire, but it should only not be heard in the eventual results. When I asked which music-genres they perceive as Tanzanian music the artists and producers mentioned the music-genres on which Singeli is based (mchiriku, mdundiko and taarab).
Except for three informants, everyone agreed that Bongo Flava doesn’t represent Tanzania’s reality and sounds similar to other music-genres abroad. Hence, the quest for ‘real’ Tanzanian music, in reaction to globalization and internal forces, entails the redefinition of Tanzanian music which, in turn, becomes more fixed/narrower, by excluding Bongo Flava from its current definition, but Singeli itself is continuously receptive to changes.

In short, when my informants called for tradition, they explicitly chose the past as criterion for evaluation but when they claimed authenticity they pointed to the past as well as the present to evaluate Singeli. Both, authenticity and tradition are thus important constituents/claims in the evaluation of Singeli which ought to imagine the nation as a response to the changing, global world.

5.4 **Exploiting Difference: Claims for Tradition and Authenticity**

In the previous chapter, I have discussed which criteria my informants deemed necessary for the qualification of traditional and Tanzanian music. In this chapter I will apply their vision about authenticity and tradition on Singeli in detail. Whereas the previous chapter analysed the general conditions for traditional and Tanzanian music, this chapter thus aims to understand why my informants portray Singeli as traditional and/or Tanzanian music. Some prerequisites that I have discussed in the previous chapter, however, will be mentioned again in this chapter.

The informants depict Singeli’s quest for ‘real’ Tanzanian music primarily in opposition to Bongo Flava since they argue that those music-genres dominate the current popular music-scene in Tanzania. Therefore, I will often compare the characteristics of Singeli with Bongo Flava since they define themselves in relation to Bongo Flava. This refers to the process of identity-making in which identity is always constructed by splitting and defining boundaries. Hence, social identities exist through oppositions and similarities. Singeli defines itself in relation to Bongo Flava in two distinct ways. Firstly, Singeli performers distinguish themselves from Bongo Flava because they believe that the latter doesn’t represent Tanzania as it should. They use this claim on Tanzanian and/or traditional music to make Singeli more attractive on the (inter)national scale, which currently favours the particularization of sound. Secondly, they mirror their practices to Bongo Flava to achieve (inter)national success. Thereby they pursue the same business or formal strategies as Bongo Flava to compete with Bongo Flava and international music on an equal basis. However, this second mode will be discussed in the last chapter. While the first manner exploits difference to define Singeli, the second mode
emphasizes similarities to determine its identity. The second strategy is also necessary since Singeli must have some similarities with other music-genres in general to be accepted as music on an (inter)national scale. Just like nation-states, Singeli both depends on localism and cosmopolitanism.

Through analysing the claims of tradition and authenticity, I will discuss the specific characteristics which define Singeli as a music-genre. I will analyse these claims based on origin, style and content which is opposed to Bongo Flava. As Fabbri (1982 in Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 192) states, genre exists in a system of difference in which the rules are derived inductively. This means that music-genres don’t emerge in a vacuum but in a musical system that is already structured. Thereby, I’ve deducted the characteristics of Singeli after observing the arrangement of genres within the Tanzanian musical system. However, this doesn’t mean that Singeli indicates a static assemblage of empirically verifiable musical characteristics since no single text seems to fit all the rules of a given genre (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 190). That’s why I have ordered the three criteria (origin, style and content) according to the salience of the claims. However, it must be noted that the order of these three yardsticks is not that clear-cut since some informants deemed certain criteria more important than others. However, I have established an order based on the opinion of the majority and on the main difference with other music-genres since they define Singeli in opposition with them.

In this chapter, authenticity and tradition operate as resources/claims which don’t have a fixed meaning but depend on the context in which they are evoked (Otto et al. 2005: 35). They also don’t speak to everybody in the same way, at the same time. The claims on authenticity and tradition are evaluated in an ongoing dialogue with musicians, who in turn, adjust their aims to the audience. Even though my informants didn’t use the term authenticity literally, they referred to it by describing Singeli as a ‘pure’ or ‘real’ Tanzanian music.

5.4.1 Origin

Singeli artists claimed that they finally founded ‘real’ Tanzanian music. This statement implies that they didn’t perceive prior music like dansi, taarab, kwaya and Bongo Flava as Tanzanian music. Even though I have already discussed the restrictions of the live-bands, I believe that Singeli didn’t only emerge out of pragmatism but is also stimulated by the belief that they didn’t create ‘real’ Tanzanian music yet. I argue that the way Singeli is created indicates the major difference with other music-genres. All my informants emphasized that Singeli emerged as an
incentive of the lower class in *uswahiliniluswazi*. Initially, I didn’t quite understand this emphasis because *taarab, dansi* and hip-hop were all eventually appropriated by the lower class. However, I realized that these music-genres didn’t start by the lower class but were initially associated with the middle and upper class. Even though academical literature currently suggests different origins for *taarab*, in the popular imagination *taarab* still emerged in Zanzibar as court-music (K. Mziwanda 2018). *Dansi* also originated as a form of ballroom dance for expatriate Europeans and was thus associated with the colonial elite society. *Dansi* is still primarily found in urban nightclubs and is rarely found at weddings (Askew 2002: 99). Similarly, *kwaya* started as a form of hymn singing at missionary posts and was initially restricted to the church (Charry 2012: 186-187). The forces that produced these genres are thus associated with foreign domination and the elite. Thereby, my informants inherited the cultural policy of Nyerere who presented these music-genres as foreign and declared *ngoma* as the ‘rightful’ claim on ‘real’ Tanzanian music because of its lack of foreign influences.

Likewise, Bongo Flava started by the middle class who had been given access to cassettes to imitate American hip-hop. K. Mziwanda (2018) states that the current Bongo Flava artists mainly represent the educated middle class. Even though, there are exceptions the majority of the Bongo Flava artists still enjoy financial privileges. This is linked to the business strategies of the media, who often force Bongo Flava artists to depict a middle-class image in return for promotion and sponsorship (Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 77). For the first time a new music-genre emerged through the incentives of the lower class. Thereby the place of origin also denotes an important factor in Singeli’s authenticity. Singeli emerged in a context, *vigodoro*, where traditions are transmitted. *Vigodoro* celebrates weddings and other life events which carry great weight in Tanzania (Demissie 2007: 53). The association with *vigodoro* thus facilitates Singeli’s claim on tradition through its emergence in a context where traditions stood in the centre of attention. *Uswahilini* also represent crowded neighbourhoods. These share the sociality that is typical of rural areas, which contrasts with ideas of urban anonymity (Demissie 2007: 50). Some informants depicted Singeli’s emergence as an instinctive occurrence, coming from the heart and soul by responding to the demands of the audience at *vigodoro* (Lindholm 2008: 37). Even though some artists indeed improvised at those parties by mixing various samples, this neglects the contribution of the studio’s in the creation of Singeli. In this sense, they defined themselves in opposition to Bongo Flava artists, which they associated with artificial studios. According to some, Singeli is the direct result of the creativity of certain DJ’s at those parties.
Many informants state that the uneducated lower class represents the majority of the country. This denotes the major reason as to why Singeli serves as a better representation of Tanzania since authenticity demands that the expression (singeli) must correspond to the source (Tanzania). The emphasis on society is inherited from *ujamaa*, in which the society stood at the centre instead of the individual. Between 1995 and 2005 unemployed youth grew about a third in all Africa. The young people were most affected by these neoliberal reforms which caused cuts in the education system and reduced formal employment (Englert 2008: 72). Ibrahim (2018), one of my friends in Tanzania, explains that if he would be an artist, he would present the ‘real’ life of the society:

“They don’t have to be confused, going to Dar Es Salaam, seeing that they are living a good life. Most of them are not even Tanzanians but are from abroad. Most of Tanzanians live a really poor life and you have to show the people that their life is not what they think their life is.”

Singeli thus claims authenticity through status identity in which the value of the work is mainly judged by the authenticity of the artist instead of the quality of the work (Peterson 2005: 1087-1088). Listeners and producers affirm that the content of the music is less important. Consequently, it is not so much the lyrics that have to represent Tanzanian reality, but it is the practice of Singeli itself which creates a sense of community among the uneducated youth who have been framed as *wahuni*. They take this as an opportunity to combat moral constraints and the prevailing stereotypes about uneducated youth as hooligans. Singeli gives a voice to the poor and is used as a source of self-empowerment. The Singeli artists set an example for poor people who struggle to make their living, in which Singeli epitomizes the possibility to make ends work (Perullo 2005: 75-76; Englert 2008: 71-74). In this way, Singeli doesn’t only aspire to represent Tanzanian reality but desires to change the reality of poor Tanzanians as well:

“Mimi nadhani lengo la muziki wa singeli ni kuonesha kua watu kutika mitaani na wenye maisha ya chini wanaweza kua na mchango katika jamii, kwa sababu muziki wa singeli unahusisha watu ambao hawajasoma, hivyo muziki huu unaonesha kua kuna elimu ya mtaa (‘I believe that the purpose of singeli is to show that even these kids from the streets can play a part in the society, because Singeli involves uneducated people’).”

(Producer Abba 2018)

The artists exploit this association with the uneducated poor in their performances to gain popularity among them. During the Singeli battle at the festival of *mziki mnene*, one competitor
shouted *uswazi*, which is linked to poverty, and this cry was answered by the crowd with much enthusiasm. This association with poverty thus bestows Singeli the emblems to distinguish themselves from other music-genres. Nevertheless, the question remains if Singeli will then be appreciated by everyone, including the middle and upper class.

Singeli artists are thus frequently called *wahuni*. The concept of *wahuni* is rooted in the colonial and postcolonial policies. During colonialism young educated immigrants in Dar es Salaam were demonized as *wahuni* through their engagement in the informal economy. This policy was continued after independence whereby *wahuni* were framed as enemies of *ujamaa*. Uneducated youth were depicted as inauthentic persons who didn’t contribute to the progress of the nation through their informal survival strategies (Brennan 2012: 165-171; Callaci 2016: 106, 114). Thereby, youth’s engagement in music was also framed as hooliganism. The stereotype of *wahuni* is thus not restricted to Singeli but generally prevailed in the music-industry (Suriano 2011b: 408; Perullo 2005: 75-76). This is connected to the previous socialist period in which art wasn’t perceived as a talent or skill. Conversely, art was conceived in communal terms, in service of the state (Perullo 2011: 18-25). Thereby, the national troupes, who served the state, presented art in its finest form but artists who searched for individual wealth through their profession were repudiated as *wahuni* (Callaci 2016: 106, 114). Music was thus not perceived as a ‘real’ job. Consequently, it didn’t contribute to the progress of the nation in the popular opinion. The link with hooliganism and music is also caused by the common belief that music may contribute to immoral behaviour such as alcohol consumption (Suriano 2011b: 408). Whereas such beliefs still exist, music is increasingly viewed in professional terms. Therefore, rappers and *dansi* artists were initially framed as *wahuni* but they were able to combat these stereotypes (Suriano 2011b: 408; Perullo 2005: 75-76). That’s why I argue that this designation doesn’t mainly derive from the negative stereotypes about the music-industry any longer. In this case, Singeli artists are primarily labelled as *wahuni* because of their poor and uneducated background. The negative stereotypes also derive from the ‘immoral’ behaviour that is associated with Singeli.

I’ve noticed that Singeli artists frequently call themselves *wahuni*. This exemplifies the immunizing strategy, promulgated by Stroeken (2005a: 502), in which they immunize and empower themselves against its offensive content by adopting the term Singeli artists reinterpreted the meaning of *wahuni* by attributing positive moral values to it. While the government repudiated them as useless, Singeli artists appropriated their struggle for survival as a pleasurable way-of-being in the world (Shipley 2013: 364). *Wahuni* is translated as a hustler
which indicates a hard worker that takes care for one’s family. They translated their survival strategies in such a way that it still connects with the legacy of *ujamaa*, which emphasized hard work. Nyerere is still regarded as a spokesman for the poor so his philosophy continues to denote an important way of interpreting everyday life in Tanzania (Kerr 2015: 78-81). Kerr (2015: 81) claims that underground rappers in Dar es Salaam define their masculinity based on their ability to battle against the struggles of everyday life. This assertion is also valid for Singeli artists and it is especially exemplified in the famous song of Msaga Sumu, called *Mwanaume Mashine* (See YouTube 2017). In this song he claims that a ‘true’ man is defined by his hard work but not by his ethnicity or appearance. Thereby, he urges the male audience to work hard to achieve success. The image of the hustler is also illustrated in the initial challenges the Singeli artists faced at the start of their music-career. Many artists stated that their profession wasn’t taken seriously, and they were paid very little at the start of their music career. However, Singeli artists still suffer from negative stereotypes and continue to fight this.

Nevertheless, many informants still claimed that anyone, including the middle-class could participate in Singeli. This exemplifies the strategy of Singeli to imagine the nation in which they aim to transcend social classes and ethnicities. So even though Singeli is currently still associated with the lower class, this doesn’t mean that they want to exclude the middle and upper class since they aim to achieve (inter)national recognition. Therefore, I also wondered if Singeli would still be perceived as ‘real’ Tanzanian music if the artists’ lifestyle starts to change when they achieve financial success. This question is raised by the tension between the principles of staying true to the self and staying true to the culture. The financial success of the Singeli artists can produce a luxury lifestyle which is not shared by the majority of the Tanzanian society and is thus not part of their culture. The possible participation of the middle-class in Singeli can also violate Singeli’s claim on Tanzanian music, which is evaluated by the authenticity of the artist. Consequently, K. Mziwanda (2018) answered my questions by defending Singeli’s authenticity based on its origin:

> “Hata kama muziki utafika wapi bado asili yake itabaki kuwa uswahilini maana watu wote wanajua singeli ni muziki wa uswahilini (‘Even if the music will become famous, still it won’t lose its origin because even all the people know that singeli is a music from lower class and slam dwellers’).”

This statement clarifies that even if Singeli becomes famous and maybe loses its association with the lower class altogether, the people will never forget that Singeli first started by the lower class. That’s why I concluded that the origin of Singeli denotes the major difference with other
music-genres, which renders Singeli a privileged position in the construction of ‘real’ Tanzanian music.

5.4.2 Style

Singeli emerged from the urge to create a distinctive national music-genre that sounds different from other countries. This urge is exemplified in the history of Singeli itself whereby they increased the speed and added so much samples to the looped taarab beat so that it wasn’t even recognizable anymore. That’s also why it was difficult for me to understand how Singeli could originate from taarab. I argue that difference indicates an important benchmark to evaluate Singeli’s authenticity. In every interview the importance of difference returned by their emphasis on the ‘uniqueness’ of the sound of Singeli, which can’t be found anywhere else.

This difference was measured in opposition to Bongo Flava and other foreign music-genres. They translated this difference in the reliance on ngoma to create a distinct Tanzanian sound since many perceive ngoma as the only ‘real’ Tanzanian music for its lack of ‘foreign’ influences. In this way they rely upon static and rigid concepts of tradition (ngoma) to define themselves against foreign music-genres. Therefore, the past is inextricably intertwined in the validation of current Tanzanian music. In this sense, the use of traditional elements appears to be a way to liberate the national mental space from the colonial mental space (Sanga 2008: 57).

In Singeli they mainly mix samples of mchiriku, mdundiko and vanga. The last two denote fast Zaramo ngoma. Mchiriku draws both on chakacha and Zaramo ngoma. This indicates the dominance of Zaramo in Dar es Salaam, who depict themselves as the original inhabitants of the city. The use of ngoma rhythm indicates the main reason why Singeli is framed as traditional music. While Lindholm (2008) mainly described genealogical authenticity in the use of traditional instruments, Singeli obviously contests this. I argue that the authenticity of Singeli is proven by the reliance on ngoma rhythm and melodies but not necessarily through the use of traditional instruments. What defines Singeli is then the fast speed, the high number of samples they add and the triple meter of ngoma rhythm. The fast speed is a feature of many ngoma, especially chakacha and Zaramo ngoma. Thereby they can use any sample to imitate the different ngoma rhythms. That’s why manager Kandoro (2018) said that the original instruments of ngoma don’t have to be used since they can imitate those rhythms by self-made instruments like pots and pans. Therefore, it is the fast rhythm, empowered by many samples, which defines Singeli and not the instruments themselves. Manager Kandoro claims he has never heard a Singeli song with less than twenty samples. However, the radio presenter regards
the absence of traditional instruments in Singeli as the major reason why Singeli can’t be perceived as Tanzanian music. Even so, the people who depict Singeli as a Tanzanian music-genre point to *ngoma* rhythm as the most important criterion. Whereas *ngoma* rhythms were already incorporated in *taarab* before, they didn’t dominate the songs. Now, *ngoma* rhythm constitutes the most important element in the new music-genre, Singeli.

Thereby, they rely often on existing *mchiriku*, *mdundiko* or *vanga* songs which supports Singeli’s claim on tradition. They copy existing *ngoma* songs to differentiate themselves from other music-genres. This denotes another major difference with *taarab* which relied mainly on *ngoma* instruments and famous *ngoma* rhythms but rarely included the exact same *ngoma* songs (Listener Lucy 2018). Singeli can thus use sounds of western or foreign archives but what is most important is that they create a rhythm or tunes that are distinctly Tanzanian, whereby the western sounds aren’t even recognizable. This creates a sort of illusion for the audience who don’t even recognize the looped Bongo Flava or western beats. Producer Duke (2018) affirms this illusion:

“Bongo Flava is a copied music, they use even Nigerian beats. But in Singeli even if we use Bongo Flava beats you will never notice.”

As a result, the audience doesn’t recognize the foreign influences. That’s also why Hobsbawm’s theory is quite useful for Singeli since the audience conceives Singeli as the continuation of *ngoma* practices, which are praised for its lack of foreign influences, while its history proves otherwise. The use of digital software, which is imported from abroad, is ignored by the audience. They predominantly point to the uniqueness of Singeli’s sound while ignoring the processes which gave rise to it.

While I won’t claim that Bongo Flava doesn’t create its own distinct tunes, my informants don’t perceive it as Tanzanian through its lack of *ngoma* rhythm, which they describe as the ‘true’ Tanzanian sound. The major difference between Bongo Flava and Singeli, according to them, is that while the former used foreign influences to create a similar sound to other nations, the latter used it to create a different sound in opposition to other nations. Whereas Bongo Flava might use traditional instruments, my informants claim that Bongo Flava’s rhythm and tempo sound similar to foreign, especially Nigerian, music-genres. Reuster-Jahn (2014: 18-19) also talks about the popularity of Naijabeats in Tanzania which resulted in the production of Bongo Flava songs that are modelled after Naijabeats. The song of Diamond Platnumz, Bum Bum
(2014), serves as an example of this kind of production. This doesn’t mean that Bongo Flava only imitates Naijabeats, however, Singeli repudiates any similarity to foreign music-genres.

The popularity of fast ngoma rhythms, chakacha and Zaramo ngoma also caused an increasing association of fastness with ngoma. This is contrasted with the slow tempo of Bongo Flava, that is therefore perceived as foreign. It also seems that my informants conflate fastness with dance-music in general since some of them stated that the tempo of hip-hop is too slow to dance on. Similarly, modern taarab, which even incorporated ngoma rhythms, was still too slow for many to dance on. That also explains why Msaga Sumu didn’t recognise the presence of ngoma rhythm in modern taarab, since the tempo of ngoma was adjusted to the tempo of the song and thus didn’t constitute the ‘true’ ngoma. Msaga Sumu’s assertion is also clarified by the dominance of melody in modern taarab. Modern taarab is characterised by vocals and a musical interlude in which the ngoma rhythm comes more to the forefront. However, this musical interlude is often only at the end of the song. Thereby, Hemedi Kiduku stated that he skipped the vocals to dance on the musical interlude. Even though, Bongo Flava also constitutes dance-music, many informants claim that the music is too slow. Thereby slow music is conflated with boredom. Consequently, dance, fastness and ngoma are conflated in the authenticity of Singeli. Through the emphasis on Singeli as dance-music, artists depict Singeli as a very lively, energetic music compared to Bongo Flava. Man Fongo claims that Singeli artists can perform for three hours on stage while Bongo Flava artists only one hour. Hence, Bongo Flava is portrayed as passive in opposition to Singeli.

Through the depiction of difference as the yardstick in the authenticity of Singeli, I don’t mean that other music-genres are static or don’t inhabit change. I solely mean that difference operates as the justification for the creation of Singeli. As I stated before identities are always constructed in relation to each other and bring forth similarities as well as differences. While initial Bongo Flava artists in Tanzania proved their authenticity through similarity with American hip-hop by its reliance on different, ‘foreign’ sounds, Singeli defines its authenticity through the difference with (inter)national music-genres by evoking similar indigenous sounds (Perullo & Fenn 2003: 25). That’s also why several hip-hop artists rejected the term ‘Bongo Flava’ as synonym since hip-hop represents a global phenomenon (Clark 2013: 6). Even during my first ethnographical research, while hip-hop artists fought to represent Tanzania, this was built on the general core values of hip-hop, which they regularly referred to (Clark 2018: 16-19; McLeod 1999: 146). This indicates a different process of similarity and difference. While Singeli utilizes similar past ngoma rhythms, it does so to sound different from other (inter)national music-genres. In this
case, the similarity of past *ngoma* doesn’t serve as the basis of legitimation but operates as a means to produce a different sound in opposition to (intern)national music-genres. Similarity is subjugated to difference. Accordingly, they only emphasize the characteristics of *ngoma* (fast rhythm) that contrast with the features of Bongo Flava (low tempo). This explains why Singeli doesn’t require strict formal adherence to past *ngoma* songs because their authenticity doesn’t depend on the complete preservation of original *ngoma*. Nevertheless, Singeli often produces the same *mchiriku* songs through the lack of digital software to produce their own rhythms and melodies, but it doesn’t mean that they are obliged to produce these in order to defend their authenticity.

The audience, producers and many Singeli artists state that the beat of Singeli denotes the most important indicator to recognize Singeli. Man Fongo (2018) states:

>“Beats kwasababu beat ndo inauasili wa singeli unaweza ukaimba hivi ukachana wimbo ambao nimeimba singeli ukachana katika hip hop na ikakaa vizuri lakini kama utachukua hayo mashairi ukaweka katika beat ya singeli inajulikana kabisa hii ni singeli (‘Beats are important because the beat is the origin of singeli you can take some singeli lyrics and put them in bongofleva or hiphop beats and no one will recognize that its singeli lyrics but if you take other music’s lyrics and put them on singeli beat when you play every one will recognize that the music plays its singeli music’).”

However, some Singeli artists dispute this in order to defend their lyrical skills. Nevertheless, popular opinion refers to the beat as the second major indicator for Singeli’s claim as a Tanzanian and/or traditional music-genre by its reliance on *ngoma* rhythms. This also explains the free verse style of the content of Singeli. Artists don’t follow strict rules in their content but adjust it to the context.

Difference is translated into flexibility which is opposed to the static character of Bongo Flava. Manager Kandoro describes Singeli as live-music in the sense that they communicate in a different way than Bongo Flava. He claims that Bongo Flava depends more on the mass media and dominates the television and radio while Singeli prevails on the street and depends more on live-performances. This supports their claim on authenticity whereby Singeli artists physically stay close to the people that they represent in their music. Therefore, the manager calls Bongo Flava ‘fake’. These performances indicate liminal spaces, which occur largely out of the control of the government. In these spaces, the audience is free from their responsibilities of home and the boundaries of morality are shifted (Lindholm 2008: 34). Man Fongo (2018)
talks about the different living standards between Singeli and Bongo Flava artists. Singeli artists live close to the community in *uswahilini* while Bongo Flava artists live in fancy mansions, physically demarcated from their fans. That’s why Singeli’s musical content is assumed to derive from ‘real’ experiences while living in *uswahilini*.

This physical proximity is further illustrated in the interaction between Singeli artists and the audience. Singeli is featured by an intense participation of the audience during performances. This became obvious during the festival of *muziki mnene* whereby Singeli artists gave instructions to the audience. Sholo Mwamba, a famous Singeli artist, instructed the audience to dance like Maasai and to take their clothes off. This evokes a link between Singeli and nudity, since many *Kangamoko* dancers use Singeli to dance on. In this sense, they exploit the associations of Singeli with nudity which simultaneously gives them an ‘immoral’ reputation but also bestows them the emblems to distinguish themselves from Bongo Flava and gain popularity among the youth. The audience danced non-stop during the performances of Singeli artists while they remained passive during Bongo Flava performances. However, this is quite logic because *muziki mnene* was intended for Singeli fans. Intense interaction is also witnessed between the dancers and artists whereby the artists urge them to dance in a certain way. The Kiwalani crew even borrowed the names of their dance-moves from Msaga Sumu who invented the names on stage.

Bongo Flava is sponsored by the media, that in turn is sponsored by advertising. Advertisers privilege Bongo Flava for its associations with the middle class which, as a result, attracts middle class customers, who are known for conspicuous spending. This results in a monopoly whereby Bongo Flava is subjugated to the demands of those corporations (Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 77). Accordingly, Bongo Flava is transformed into a profitable commodity whereby its artists follow a profitable formula and repeat it, creating a pop culture trend (Clark 2013: 14). This explains why Singeli fans and performers perceive Bongo Flava as a static music-genre through its strong dependence on the media. Singeli defines itself in opposition to Bongo Flava whereby they deem themselves free from the artificial hold of media corporations. Hip-hop artists define themselves in the same way by opposing commercial success against street credibility. They despise popular award shows and mainstream media channels which violate the ‘original’ character of hip-hop and causes an alienation between the commercial product and the corresponding culture the product represents (Clark 2013: 8; McLeod 1999: 141).

However, this street credibility involves a tension with (inter)national success since Singeli doesn’t want to remain a local music-genre. Therefore, I wonder if Singeli will still be perceived
as the ‘real’ Tanzanian music by everyone when they cross borders and will increasingly depend on mass media. Nevertheless, because they portray the origin and sound of Singeli as the most important criterion in Singeli’s authenticity, it’s possible that Singeli will still be conceived as the ‘real’ Tanzanian music-genre in the popular imagination.

Liveness is opposed to mediation whereby the former is associated with authenticity (proximity) and the latter with artificial reproduction. However, this distinction is culturally determined and is not clear-cut since electronic media can partake in the ontology that is ascribed to live performance and the other way around (Grant 2017: 171; Auslander 1999: 51). Accordingly, mediation and live performance exist in relation to each other and mediatized performance derives its authority from reference to the live and live performance (e.g. theater) becomes increasingly mediatized. In the first place, Singeli takes form as mediatized performance through their reliance on digital recordings (samples) which are based on technologies of reproduction. However, their mediatized performance becomes naturalized by assuming the characteristics that are associated with live performance. Manager Kandoro (2018) describes Singeli as live-performance through its relation between visuality and the production of sound (Auslander 1999: 1-86). He states that every live-performance of Msaga Sumu is different from the previous because he always adjusts his lyrics to the context of performance. I’ve witnessed this myself during a concert that was sponsored by the government for HIV-prevention. Msaga Sumu adjusted his lyrics of Mwanaume Mashine and sang that a ‘real’ man is brave enough to test himself. Similarly, the DJ doesn’t play the recorded song on stage, but he mixes the song live on stage. Therefore, he can even add different samples and increase the speed of the song on stage. Thus, the recorded song always sounds different from the song on stage, which contests the reproduction that is associated with mediatized performance. Improvisation also denotes an important characteristic of ngoma since the songs always changed according to the different contexts. Hence, the essence of ngoma is retained in Singeli (Askew 2002: 90). This is again opposed to the static character of Bongo Flava. Manager Kandoro claims that Bongo Flava relies on playback during live-performance. This means that the artists don’t sing live but play the recorded song on stage. In this way, the visual evidence of performance has no relation to the production of sound anymore whereby live performance is deprived from its original authenticating function (Auslander 1999: 86). Therefore, Bongo Flava is associated with reproduction which produces a static character.

While Singeli translates its differentness in opposition to (inter)national music-genres by adhering to ngoma sounds, Singeli can still evoke a static character by remaining true to this
source. Nevertheless, because they define themselves in opposition to Bongo Flava and describe this as a static music-genre, the importance of difference trickles down to the level of Singeli itself. Difference is thus translated into flexibility which is opposed to the static character of Bongo Flava. That’s also why I argue that difference and change denote an important indicator for the authentication of Singeli. If difference solely translated itself into the strict adherence to *ngoma* songs, I wouldn’t have argued that difference indicates an important criterion in the authenticity of Singeli itself. Difference serves as the legitimation of Singeli in opposition to Bongo Flava but difference/change is also used as a criterion to define a ‘good’ Singeli artist. This is exemplified in the festival of *muziki mnene*. This festival operated as a talent search for new Singeli artists whereby they needed to battle against each other. Firstly, the participants were forced to perform freestyle on stage because they didn’t know the beats on which they would perform beforehand. Hence, the winner of the battle represents the person who performed the best on the changing beats. Secondly, the participants were evaluated according to three different criteria: creativity (distinct flow/style), lyrics and interaction with the audience. Thereby, creativity indicated the most important factor in the evaluation of the Singeli battle. Consequently, Super Dasman won the battle in Tabora according to his flexibility to regularly change his vocal styles according to the different beats. The importance of flexibility doesn’t mean that Singeli isn’t recognized by invariance, but it means that flexibility is regarded as a desired trait in the performance of Singeli. Flexibility exists in relation to invariance. Therefore, the emphasis on flexibility is also caused by the increasing Singeli artists who copy each other’s style and beat. Because singeli doesn’t impose many restrictions and serves as a means to elevate the poor, many people perceive Singeli as an opportunity to make a living, whereby not everyone participates in the authenticity battle against Bongo Flava. My informants urge them to stop copying from each other because it destroys the flexibility on which their authenticity is built.

The urge for differentness stimulated the establishment of two different Singeli styles: Singeli *ladha* and Singeli *michano*. The former refers to the initial style of Singeli in which they sing, like Msaga Sumu for example. This style is recognized by a lower tempo than Singeli *michano*. Singeli *michano* refers to rap which emerged later by some Singeli artists who wanted to distinguish themselves from the former Singeli style. Singeli *michano* is still recognized by a different vocal style compared to American rap due to the different beats. Nevertheless, this proves the influence of hip-hop artists, who inspired other Singeli artists in their call for authenticity. Rap is defined as “a narrative form of vocal delivery in which rhyming lyrics are
spoken or “rapped” in a rhythmic patois over a continuous backbeat” (Neal & Forman eds. 2004: 178). Even though Singeli artists speak fast, they don’t adhere to the rhyme patterns of rap. This proves their urge for differentness whereby they don’t want to sound similar to any foreign music-genre. Man Fongo (2018) affirms this assertion:

“Muziki pure ni singeli kwa sababu singeli haina uzungu haina sijui mambo ya watu wa nje. Singeli imepenya sana uswahilini na uswahilini ndipo kunakotokea changanyikeni ya watu wote na kila kitu na singeli ndo muziki wetu unaoweza kutuwakilisha popote pale kwa sababu hata tukirap kwa style ya singeli lakini tukiangalia utaona rap imetokea huko kwa akina Tupac ila katika singeli tuna style zetu za pekee ambazo unaweza kumconvince mtu akasikiliza na kuona kitu kipya. (‘Pure music from Tanzania is singeli because it doesn’t have foreign elements. It is rooted in slams and people of low class and it has its uniqueness even in rapping. You can’t compare singeli rapping with what Tupac was doing, so still you can convince someone to listen to singeli because he expects to learn or hear something new and unique only from Tanzania’).”

The radio-promotor depicts Singeli michano as the ‘real’ Singeli. According to him, the vocals of Singeli michano is faster and thus corresponds better to the fast rhythm of the music. In this way, the source indicates the fast rhythm which accords with the fast vocals of Singeli michano (expression). Thereby, he uses the same criterion (fastness), that Singeli artists use to define themselves as ‘real’ Tanzanian artists in opposition to Bongo Flava, to evaluate the authenticity between Singeli artists.

Nevertheless, the importance of flexibility doesn’t mean that they won’t stay true to the fast ngoma rhythms because that’s how they define their difference in opposition to Bongo Flava and the beat remains the second major criterion in the authenticity of Singeli. Flexibility indicates the third major criterion in the authenticity of Singeli. The different vocal styles of Singeli prove that sound denotes the most important indicator in the authenticity of Singeli whereby the lyrics are more open to change, compared to the beats.

5.4.3 Content

The distinction in content between Bongo Flava and Singeli artists is more dubious since it depends on the personal preferences of the artists, who are given more freedom on this part. In this section, I will also rely on the information of my previous research since Singeli and hip-
hop artists deploy the same rhetoric for the musical content in opposition to Bongo Flava. Therefore, I will sometimes refer to the interviews with previous hip-hop artists.

Even though Englert (2008: 46) points to the variety of topics Bongo Flava artists discussed, as a strategy to reach a large audience, my informants address the unilateral themes (love) Bongo Flava artists employ in their musical content. Singeli artists discuss a broader range of topics, like love and social issues in *uswahilini*. However, they don’t criticize political issues in their lyrics (Artist Kapala 2018; Artist Man Fongo 2018). Considering the ‘immoral’ status that they are granted by some official authorities, it’s logic that they don’t want to risk their reputation even further if they want to become the new official national culture. Singeli artists are thus allowed to talk about love, but they do not focus on this topic as much as Bongo Flava artists (Producer Duke 2018; Bongo Flava artist Meckioly 2018).

Thereby, Singeli artists often employ different themes within one song, which sometimes causes confusion among the audience. However, this strategy is changing, and this will be discussed in the last chapter. The one-sidedness of the topics serves as a criterion to distinguish Singeli from Bongo Flava whereby Singeli talks about several topics and Bongo Flava often about the same theme (love) in one song or album. George (in Neal & Forman eds. 2004: 45) talks about the meaning of hip-hop for its founders: “It is the constancy of their lives. It defines their past and affects their view of the future.” This calls for the staying true to yourself principle in which the music needs to correspond to the personal life of the artists. This means that they need to recount stories that have really happened to them. This assertion indicates the continuous importance of the local in the global. Hence, the local refers to the everyday face-to-face experiences which activate all the senses. This is contrasted with the activities one has only read or seen on the internet for example which doesn’t trigger all the senses. Consequently, according to the informants, the everyday face-to-face experiences are perceived as ‘real’ experiences in contrast to the latter (Hannerz 1996: 26). Whereas the Singeli artists emphasize the importance of ‘real’ experiences to a lesser degree than the hip-hop artists, they still pointed to this difference with Bongo Flava artists as well. Msaga Sumu, Man Fongo and Young Judah claim that their music talks about the ‘real’ daily life in *uswahilini*. Man Fongo’s song, called *Kibaka* (see YouTube 2016), talks about the robberies that happened in *uswahilini*. Young Judah, a female Singeli artist, released a song, *Makopo* (see YouTube 2016), which talks about the people who collect and sale empty bottles on the street in order make a living from those profits. Lastly, the song from Msaga Sumu, *mama wa kambo*, talks about his personal experiences with his stepmom when he was a child:
“Mwenzenu nahama mimi jiji la Dar es salaama. Mwenzenu nahama mimi jiji la Dar es salaama Narudi kijijini mimi namfata mama. Maisha ya mjini kwangu me hayana mana. Kwansa siwezi kuishi mimi bila ya mama. Haya nimekubali mama wa kambo walasi mama. Kuna siku mama akaniita ila siku sikia. Akaja na maji ya moto mama akanimwagia. Walikuja majirani wakanisaidia. Wakanipaka asali pale nilipounguwa. (‘I’m leaving Dar es salaam. I am leaving Dar es salaam. I’m going back to my mom in the village. City life is not for me. I cannot live without my mom. I agree step mother is not your mother. One day my step mom called me, but I didn’t hear her. She came with hot water and threw it on me. Neighbours came to help. They treated my wounds with honey’).”

All these lyrics thus talk about events which took place in the Tanzanian society. The same strategy is reflected in the dance-movements. The Kiwalani crew extract inspiration for new dance-movements from the daily life on the streets. Hemedi Kiduku explains that he was inspired by cats and dogs who were fighting on the street, so he imitated this fight in Singeli. Similarly, they invented a dance-move, called *Mzee Jongo*, which imitates an old friend of them who walks with a stick on the street. This explains why facial expressions are very important in Singeli since they often imitate ‘real’ experiences from the street. Chogo Chuma, the professional dancer of Msaga Sumu, also explains that the dance-movements on stage often mirror the lyrics of the song. He states that during his performance on a certain Singeli song, which talks about the ills of smoking weed, he imitates the detrimental effects of smoking weed in his dance-movements. In this case, the dance-movements (expression) stay close to the lyrics of the song (source). This also indicates a characteristic of original *ngoma* whereby the meaning of the lyrics accords with the dance-movements (Lange 1995: 84).

This is contrasted with Bongo Flava artists who often dream about western lifestyles and thus don’t always talk about events that took place in Tanzania. Therefore, Experience Xp (2018), a hip-hop artist that I’ve interviewed during my first research, states that they don’t represent their own life in their lyrics: “In Bongo Flava, they talk about wanting the dream and other life how other people live, I live in Tanzania but I’m dreaming about America.” Authenticity is translated into a distaste for foreign imitation. Afande Sele, a famous hip-hop artist, raps in his song *Darubini Kali* (See YouTube 2012):

“Useme kwenu una Benz wakati jumba la udongo! Mh! Bwa’ mdogo acha upambe. (‘You say that you’ve got a Benz at home while you live in a house of clay! Mh! Young brother, stop being a pretender’).”

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The friend of Super Dasman, Henry (2018), depicts the same image of Bongo Flava artists:

“The friend of Super Dasman, Henry (2018), depicts the same image of Bongo Flava artists:

“Siyo sana ila bongo flava ya zamabi ndio likua inaongelea kuhusu maisha ya mtaani. Lakini siku hizi wanajali kuhusu pesa ndio maana wengi wa bongo flava wanashauriwa kuumba kama wasanii wengine maarufu kutoka nchi nyingine na muda mwingine wanaiga hadi midundo ya nyimbo. (‘Not really, the old bongo flava talked about our lives and the reality in the street we live in. But now bongo flava is only about making money that’s why so many bongo flava artists are encouraged singing like famous foreign musicians and sometimes they even copy their beats’).”

The dreamworld or utopia that Bongo Flava artists initially didn’t want to offer, becomes now an important criterium for the distinction between Singeli and Bongo Flava (Stroeken 2005b). Nevertheless, this distinction remains fuzzy since this criterion is considered less important in the authenticity for Singeli in opposition to Bongo Flava. The beats of Singeli are considered more important than the lyrics. Therefore, the main function of Singeli is to make people dance. Producer Abba (2018) explains:

“Singeli inaweza isiswe na mada ya kueleweka lakini ukaipenda, sio lazima iwe na maudhui yanayo leta maana ila unaweza ukaipiga na watu wkacheza. tofauti na aina nyingine za muziki lazima maudhui yake yalete maana. Mara nyingi maudhui yake yamelenga kwenye burudani. (‘The content of singeli song doesn’t need to make sense but still you will like it, you can play the song and people will dance regardless its content, which is different from other styles of music whereby its content needs to have a message and should make sense. Most of the times its content is based on entertainment’).”

However, Singeli artists contest this vision and state that they aim to educate the society as well. Education in this context refers to the social ills that they want to combat. In Man Fongo’s song for example, Kibaka, he urged the people to stop robbing. This emphasis on education is rooted in the socialist period whereby art was perceived as a means to educate the people. It is quite logic that Singeli artists will defend their lyrical skills since their success still depends on it. Nevertheless, when I asked which part was considered more important in Singeli, almost everyone, including the artists, pointed to the beats. So even though Singeli artists still address the importance of the lyrics, they don’t constitute the major criterion in Singeli’s authenticity, which is determined in opposition to Bongo Flava. This indicates an important difference
between Singeli and Tanzanian hip-hop whereby the latter mainly defended their authenticity based on the vocal style (rap versus singing) and the musical content.

Whereas one could argue that some famous Bongo Flava artists still remain true to themselves in their lyrics since their success allows them to adopt a luxury lifestyle in reality, this is not considered a representation of the reality of Tanzania. My informants claimed that the lower class present the majority of the society, so they can’t associate themselves with the luxury lifestyle that Bongo Flava artists present in their lyrics. Bongo Flava targeted the entire society from the beginning. This aspect deviated from American hip-hop, which initially only targeted the urban youth (Stroeken 2005a: 493). Bongo Flava still targets the entire society since it evolved into a pop-genre, however it doesn’t reflect the Tanzanian reality anymore according to Singeli and hip-hop artists. The emphasis on the society is again inherited from the socialist period. This difference between Singeli and Bongo Flava refers to the discrepancy between staying true to yourself and staying true to your culture, whereby the luxury lifestyle of Bongo Flava artists is not considered a part of Tanzanian culture. In Singeli those two principles coincide since its artists originate from uswahilini, which renders them a better position to represent the Tanzanian society.

In short, the repudiation of foreign influences reoccurs in the musical content of Singeli. Singeli artists aim to represent the daily reality of poor Tanzanians in the present. Virus Mdudu (2018) considers his song, Bora nioe Masai (See YouTube 2018), the best song he has ever written because he talks about the culture of Masai, which proves for him that Singeli is Tanzanian music. The rejection of foreign characteristics is also reflected in the language Singeli artists utilize in their songs. They don’t use English, in opposition to Bongo Flava artists, and generally choose among standard Swahili, Swahili urban street language and local languages (Reuster-Jahn 2014). However, they mainly focus on Swahili in order to imagine the nation. Yet, they use more Swahili urban street language than standard Swahili, which is favoured by the youth (Listener Lucy 2018). Singeli also uses a lot of indirect language by means of proverbs and metaphors. This is exemplified in the song of Virus Mdudu, called Bora nioe Masai:

“Hasikii haelewi ananipenda mimi. Ameapa tuwe pamoja mpaka Kesho kaburini. Alivyonichanganya mwingine sitamani. Kwake sisikii la shekh wala muhadhin. Yale mahaba niue huyu wangu wa ubani. Kilichopenda roho nyama mbichi ipo kooni. (‘She doesn’t listen to gossip, she only loves me. She has sworn to be with me until tomorrow in the grave. The way I act with her, I am not attracted to anyone else. I don’t listen to
Shekh or Muhadhin. Her love is killing me, she is mine for sure. My heart’s desire is like fresh meat in my throat’."

The last sentence refers to the proverb ‘Kipenda roho hula nyama mbichi’ which literally means ‘when the heart loves, you will eat raw meat’. Figuratively, this proverb means that you will do anything for something or someone you love. Virus, however, twisted the common proverb but it still denotes the same meaning. These metaphorical characteristics are shared by taarab artists who are known for their indirect language of Swahili poetry. However, Bongo Flava artists also employ indirect language (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 17). Singeli song lyrics also make many sexual allusions, which is also not restricted to Singeli but refers to the general trend towards sexual references in the Tanzanian music-industry (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 17). Man Fongo’s song, hainaga ushemeji (See YouTube 2016), illustrates this trend:

“The words that I’ve highlighted in bold are both metaphors of Swahili urban street language, which refer to sexual intercourse. The song talks about his desire to have sex with his sister-in-law. So, the people who don’t comprehend urban street language, won’t get the message of the song.

5.5 THE AUDIENCE: CONTESTING SINGELI AS IMAGE OF THE NATION

The previous chapter discussed how Singeli artists, producers and fans portrayed Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian music in opposition to Bongo Flava. However, this claim is not ratified by everyone. Some audience members contest the image that the artists and producers portray. The youth and lower class, which are represented in Singeli, constitute the majority of the country which renders them a better position in the representation of Tanzania (Index Mundi 2018). The limited growth of a middle class, who often live in the same settlements, uswahilini, as the lower class also helped to blurry the boundaries between them and facilitated a visual image of homogeneity which kept in line with the previous agenda of socialism (Demissie 2007: 51-52). Nevertheless, this doesn’t mean that everyone agreed on the lifestyles that Singeli portrayed
and even if Singeli is associated with the lower class, this also doesn’t mean that everyone from the lower class praises this music and that no one of the middle or upper class doesn’t like Singeli. Hence, taste also depends on personal preferences and is not solely a product of social background (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 66). For example, Mariam (2018), who studies law at the university of Mzumbe claimed that Singeli represents Tanzanian reality better than Bongo Flava. In short, whereas the music-genres don’t correspond strictly to one single class, Singeli is still imagined as music from/for the lower class, just like Bongo Flava is imagined as music from/for the middle class (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 197-198).

I didn’t interview enough audience members to distinguish their different views based on class, gender and age. Therefore, in this chapter I will outline their arguments which contest Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian music, but I won’t distinguish them based on their different identities. Even though I don’t distinguish the listeners according to their different identities, they still reassured the different class connotations between Bongo Flava and Singeli. The interviews also proved that Singeli is enjoyed by elders as well. Whereas some claimed that elders didn’t like Singeli, the interview with the elder women, Nuru Shabani (2018), proved the opposite. She perceives Singeli as an opportunity for her kids to learn about ngoma and stop listening to western music.

First of all, many listeners point to the localness of Singeli which is rooted in the coast. This means that not everyone is familiar with the hip-movements and fastness of Singeli, which is born out of the general trend towards fast ngoma rhythms and hip-movements along the East African Coast. That’s why many stated that it’s very hard for people in Mwanza, which is located in the north, to appreciate the beats of Singeli. Nevertheless, Singeli doesn’t want to remain a local genre and the next chapter exposes the several strategies they pursue to achieve that goal.

Secondly, the performance of Singeli is considered immoral by some listeners for several reasons. Therefore, they claim that Singeli doesn’t respect Tanzanian culture. According to Durkheim, the content of morality differs from society to society, but the form remains the same. He provides an abstract theory of morality which consists of three essential elements: discipline, attachment to the society and autonomy. Discipline is a fundamental element of morality in the sense that morality is essentially restrictive because it is regulative and authoritative. These two aspects constitute discipline together whereby morality regulates behaviour and holds authority over individuals. Thereby, the society indicates the true source of morality and operates as the supra-individual source which disciplines the society to act
Morality is autonomous in the sense that an act can’t be considered moral except when it is performed without coercion (Zigon 2008: 33-37). Foucault, however, includes coercion in the perception of morality. He claims that morality constitutes the codes or rules that a society establish and impose on its members. These codes then determine which acts are forbidden and permitted as well as the negative or positive values that are attached to it. This view focuses on morality imposed from above, however, morality can also be exerted from below. This act from below is what Foucault describes as ethics (Zigon 2008: 42-44; Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 62). However, many scholars don’t make a distinction between (Zigon 2008: 3) ethics and morality. This morality from below indicates a personal and social process whereby an individual chooses between a certain limited range of possibilities that are available to all persons within a society. Freedom and autonomy thus constitute an important aspect on the level of the individual and allows the person to reflect on himself in order to do proper moral work (Zigon 2008: 42-44). Both perceptions on morality, from above and below, are important in Tanzania whereby the BASATA bans certain works which they consider immoral and members of the society construct themselves as moral persons (Chimanda 2018).

The hip-movements of Singeli are condemned as ‘immoral’ through its erotic/sexual implications. Even though hip-movements don’t have to be linked to sexuality, the background of female-only kukata kiuno clarifies this association (Sanga 2011: 360). The movement is normally confined to the private sphere of women, where intimate aspects of cultural identity are shaped, and women are instructed in proper movements for sexual intercourse. Through its external placement in the public sphere the movement is transformed into a source of embarrassment (Edmondson 2007: 156-161). Dance-movements, which were originally performed only by women, were now choreographed for both. The reputation of men, however, was not affected by this transformation, whereas women are granted a lower status, to the degree that they are perceived as prostitutes. Producer Sisso (2018), who operates as audience in this case, perceives women who perform chura in a negative way and depicts them as hooligans. I’ve noticed, however, that the audience was divided between condemning those female movements as morally corrupt or praising it as part of the culture of Tanzania. Even though female Singeli dancers remain true to the accepted notions of femininity to a certain degree by confining themselves to kukata kiuno, they transgress the normative understanding of femininity by replacing those in the public sphere and reinforcing the sexual explicitness of the movements by dancing ‘like a frog’ on the ground (chura). The Kangamoko dancers take this a level further by performing those movements in different sexually explicit positions on the
These female dancers thus invert the sexual image which was originally allotted to them (Braun 2014: 48-56). These transformations and the popularity of hip-movements cause a conflation of sex with *ngoma*. Graebner (2004: 263) confirms that *ngoma* recently has also come to denote ‘having sex’. As I’ve mentioned before, the dance-movements themselves, *kukata kiuno*, don’t frame the context but the intention behind the dancing matters (Braun 2014: 55). The different intentions of the *Kangamoko* dancers causes Lucy (2018) to exclude those movements from Singeli. She stated that *Kangamoko* and Singeli are very different from each other whereas they still use the same dance-movements. Nevertheless, just like *baikoko* dancers didn’t originally dance like the *Kangamoko* dancers in Tanga, they were granted an immoral reputation through the *Kangamoko* dancers who used that music for their performance (Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 88-91). Similarly, Singeli music is used for the performance of *Kangamoko* dancers which also gives it an immoral reputation by some. *Kangamoko* dancers are regularly confronted by the police and BASATA, who often block their live and online dance shows (Sanga 2016: 92). The sexual song from Man Fongo, *hainaga ushemeji*, and the song *chura* by Snura were also both banned by BASATA, based on its ‘immoral’ content in 2018 (Chimanda 2018: 20). The title of the song of Snura implies its content, whereby several female women perform the *chura* style in the videoclip.

Singeli is also considered immoral through the people who participate in it. They frame them as *wahunis*, who promote and partake in illicit, immoral behaviour. This illicit image is enabled by the context in which Singeli took place. Singeli was initially performed at night on the street whereby certain thieves profited from the situation to rob people. This situation caused many people to believe that Singeli artists are thieves as well. This mirrors the same evolution of *mchiriku* which was rendered an illicit status by the activities that took place during the night-performance. The mother of Lucy (2018) portrays Singeli as an outlet for the people from the street who use weed. She states that they often use offensive street language which insults women indirectly. She also disapproves the dress-code of male Singeli dancers and artists who perform in shorts. This so-called inappropriate dress-code is also reflected in *Kangamoko* dancers who perform in one piece of *kanga* and loosen this during performance. Therefore, nudity is associated with Singeli, reflected in the Singeli festival. There, the audience followed the lead of Singeli artists to take off their clothes. This action clarifies the concerns of Lucy’s mom whereby Singeli artists exert an intense influence on the audience. In Tanzania women who put on a miniskirt or a blouse that doesn’t cover her whole belly is considered to be ‘half naked’ by official authorities. Men, who take off their shirt during rap are not condemned to be
half-naked, however, Lucy’s mom still considers the dancers’ clothes as indecent (Sanga 2011: 361). Women’s dress became an important subject in the construction of a national culture in the 1960s. This is illustrated in the campaign of ‘Operation Vijana’ in 1968, set up by TANU, which attacked women for the wearing of indecent clothing, especially miniskirts, in Dar es Salaam (Brennan et al. eds. 2007: 213). This task was later assumed by the BASATA, which was set up to maintain Tanzanian culture (Chimanda 2018). Consequently, the BASATA prohibited several female artists to perform on stage because of their clothing style which was considered socially unacceptable (Sanga 2011: 361).

The performers of Singeli are thus looked down upon as wahuni by some of the audience members. Therefore, I wonder if Singeli will be able to carry the image of the nation for everyone, especially the upper class, as long as they represent a stigmatised group and are conceived as ‘indecent’ by some. The taxi driver (2018), for example, claims that Singeli will never achieve (inter)national recognition:

“Hapana sababu Singeli ni muziki ambao ni wa watu wa aina fulani na wanaotokea maeneo fulani hapa tanzania, kama watu kutoka mbezi beach hawawezi kusikiliza singeli au watu wa masaki hawawezi kusikiliza singeli. Watu wanaopenda singeli ni watu wa maisha ya chini na ya aina tofauti (‘No, because Singeli is a music of certain kind of people and who are from specific areas in Tanzania, like people from Mbezi beach cannot listen to singeli or someone from Masaki and many people don’t like singeli. People who like singeli are people from low life with different life style’).”

Mbezi beach and Masaki are both neighbourhoods that are associated with the upper-class. According to him, Singeli can thus only be appreciated by people from the lower class, which he frames as indecent people. The marginal status of Singeli performers is rooted in the history of southern and coastal culture, which occupied an ambiguous position in the cultural policy of Nyerere. Back then, ngoma, in general, was perceived as ‘primitive’ by some national elite. For the disenfranchised Tanzanians, however, tradition operated as a source of power (Edmondson 2007: 49). The marginal status of ngoma itself is also linked to the popularity of coastal and southern culture, whereby ngoma was/is increasingly associated with vigorous hip-movements that were considered immoral. The low status of coastal culture is also clarified through the interaction between southern slaves and coastal people, which cumulated in chakacha. This link explains the similarities between southern and coastal music-traditions (sindimba, chakacha and so on) and clarifies the low status of Singeli performers that is rooted in both cultures. I
don’t know whether the upper and middle class still perceive ngoma as ‘primitive’, however, the lack of ngoma rhythm in Bongo Flava and its association with the middle class indicate that the middle class pays less attention to tradition than the lower class. David (2018), a local entrepreneur and resident from Dar es Salaam, favours Bongo Flava and frames traditional musicians as ‘lazy’ people. These stigmatisations and the contestations by the government thus raise the question whether Singeli will achieve its goal and carry the image of the nation. Nevertheless, the demarcations between upper, middle and lower class are not that clear-cut.

Others also reject Singeli, based on the assumptions they have about popular music. Their prejudices are thus shaped by Singeli’s deviations from Bongo Flava in which the latter fulfils their ideas about how music should look like. Hamisi Mbwana (2018), a young local entrepreneur from Dar es Salaam, states that the lyrics of Singeli don’t make any sense because it includes many different themes within one song. This reflects the flexibility of the artists, who don’t follow strict formal rules in their lyrics and don’t really sit down to write the lyrics but sing whatever comes in their mind in the studio. Consequently, some parts of the lyrics are often not connected to each other. Hamisi’s statement is informed by comparisons with Bongo Flava artists who stick to one single theme in their lyrics. Therefore, he repudiates Singeli for its lack of music formalities, which makes him conclude that anyone can perform Singeli without any talent. With music formalities he also refers to the common formal structure – verses which are interspersed by a chorus – of pop-songs, which Singeli doesn’t follow (Johnson 2009: 26). His prejudices are also based on the western idea of stardom, in which artists must be ‘exceptional’ persons in order to be celebrated (Grant 2017: 163). However, I argue that Singeli’s lack of formal restrictions and open access both indicate other factors in how this music contributes to nationalism.

5.6 Exploiting similarities for (inter)national success

Singeli combats the stereotypes about themselves along two different ways. The two previous chapters explore how they empower and immunize themselves for the offensive content of these stereotypes by adopting them. They gain the decision-making power over these stereotypes and contest the previous interpretation by the society. They reinterpreted the meaning of wahuni by attributing positive moral values to it and portraying themselves as ordinary people, who work hard for what they want to achieve. Hemedi Kiduku (2018) explains how Singeli denotes an ordinary job like anything else, which should be taken seriously. They appropriate the distinct
emblems/stereotypes (street language, wahuni, poverty, informality and nudity) to differentiate themselves from other music-genres. Through these efforts they shift the boundaries of morality, which makes them popular among the youth. Whereas they appropriate the negative stereotypes and bestow them a different meaning by questioning what should be morally appropriate, they also realize that this strategy doesn’t succeed to gain the approval of the entire Tanzanian and international audience.

Therefore, agency is not only exercised in the resistance of morally accepted norms, but in the construction of morally appropriate persons (Zigon 2008: 90). Singeli performers thus also contest the prevailing stereotypes by rejecting them and conforming to the morally accepted norms in order to be accepted by the whole society. So, on the one hand, the afore-mentioned distinct emblems mark out their social identity but on the other hand they need to conform to the morally accepted norms to reach a larger audience. Similarly, they need to assume some similarities with other music-genres in order to be included into the category of popular music. This indicates the paradox of nationalism again (Turino 2000: 215-217). Every Singeli artist declares that his/her goal is to reach international recognition but to achieve this goal, they inevitably rely on the same mediums and formal structures as popular music. Man Fongo (2018) explains how they mirror themselves to the strategies of Bongo Flava, which already achieved an international image:

“Malengo yangu ni makubwa kwasababu tunaona wenzetu wanachofanya na tunajifunza mengi sana toka kwaotunapowaona, kwahiyo katika malengo yangu nitakapofika nitaongea kwawe media kwamba leo nimefika nilipokuwa nakusudia katika muziki ila kwa sasa bado sijafikia malengo yangu (‘I wish to achieve big goals like our fellow Bongo Flava artists, they are doing big things so I learn a lot from them and one day after I’ve reached what I wanted to reach, I will declare it even in the media so people will know what I have achieved’).”

A tension exists between those two different strategies. So even though Singeli is increasingly adapting their music-genre to morally accepted norms and musical formalities, this doesn’t mean that the distinct emblems in which they define themselves disappear. When I conducted the research, I’ve witnessed several occasions in which they still pursue the first strategy.

Categories, in other words shared conventions, are necessary to enable communication among each other. Nicolas Scaringella, Giorgio Zoia and Daniel Mlynek (2006: 2 in Clark 2018: 12)
state that “musical genres are categories that have arisen through a complex interplay of cultures, artists and market forces to characterize similarities between musicians or compositions and organize music collections…” In other words, if Singeli wants to be sold on the market, it needs to be formatted in order to facilitate the sale. The category of popular music, however, is not an evident category and defies precise definition. The criteria that are used for the qualification of popular, are open to debate. For example, classical music is generally opposed to popular music, while classical music has collected a sufficient following to be considered as popular (Shuker 2013: 5). English academical literature often tends to equate pop-rock with popular music. This is clarified by the history of pop-rock styles. The term pop-rock is used here to overcome the fuzziness between them since the history of rock music includes artists that belonged to the sphere of pop, like Madonna. Pop-rock are depicted in this history as the developments/mutations from the starting point of rock ‘n roll. It refers to music that is produced by means of amplification, electronic instruments and sophisticated recording equipment (samplers). By the early 21st century pop-rock included a broad range of genres like soul, funk, disco, dance, house, hip-hop, reggae, techno and so on. Nevertheless, the global term of popular music is not restricted to these mutations/developments of rock styles and includes non-Anglo-American genres such as Flamenco and so on (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 34-36).

The definition of the global term of popular music is based on two different approaches. Many scholars claim that commercialisation indicates the key to the understanding of popular music (Shuker 2013: 6; Frith eds. 2001: 94). Commercialisation points to the urge for popular music to extract profit, as a matter of enterprise. This approach emphasizes the importance of popularity, which is quantified through radio airplay, charts and so on. However, this approach still excludes meta-genres such as world music which only have a limited commercial exposure (Shuker 2013: 6). The second approach defines popular music, based on its relationship with technology in which some writers maintain a distinction between mass culture, which is associated with recording, and ‘folk mode’, which is predicated on live-performance. However, my previous analysis about liveness already indicated that this distinction is not evident and popular music cannot solely be defined by means of technology. The logic behind this approach, is that the artists who wish to reach a large audience must record their music, which is increasingly technological in nature (Shuker 2013: 7). I will focus on the commercial nature of popular music, in which Singeli pursues similar strategies to promote its music.
The commercial aspect of popular music is the result of longstanding processes of industrialisation and commodification of culture. Commodification refers to exchange value which supersedes the previous use-value. Goods and services are thus not only developed for use but for exchange in markets as well. The commodification of culture has its origins in the rise of capitalism, but it only takes firm shape with the establishment of copyright laws from the 19th century onwards. This results in a tension between private property and common ownership of cultural goods. The last thirty years witnessed a further intensification of the commodification of culture and the media started to dominate the cultural industries in the 20th century. The romantic movement and modernism promulgated the view that the individual creativity of the artists is impeded by commerce, which navigates their works in view of profits (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 87-97). Tanzanian hip-hop artists joined this assertion and distinguished themselves from Bongo Flava because of the latter’s growing commercialisation. Singeli artists don’t repudiate commercialisation to the same extent, however, manager Kandoro also declared Singeli more authentic in opposition to Bongo Flava, through its emphasis on live-performance instead of the media. DJ Tito and Man Fongo confirmed this. Therefore, Kandoro defended Singeli’s street credibility in opposition to the commercial success of Bongo Flava. Nevertheless, these assertions are not quite realistic since every artist inevitably relies on commercial organisations if he/she wants to reach a large audience and make profits (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 97). Singeli performers also confirm that they primarily perceive Singeli as a source of employment to elevate their living standards (Artist Dula Makabila 2018; Producer Abba 2018; Producer Sisso 2018; Artist Man Fongo 2018). Thus, in order to make profits, they must take the demands of the audience and commercial organisations into account. At the same time, commercial constraints don’t necessarily have to be negative since they still allow creativity within a set of boundaries (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 97).

Hence, manager Kandoro’s statement is quite contradictory because he is responsible for the cooperation between the media and Singeli artists. The live-performances of Singeli also still depend on the media since the festival of muziki mnene was broadcasted on the radio. Therefore, the distinction that Kandoro made is not clear-cut. Singeli artists also urge for more media cooperation to reach an international audience. Consequently, Singeli’s street credibility can soon be replaced for an increasing reliance on the media. Whereas manager Kandoro initially used the media as a criterion to distinguish Singeli from Bongo Flava, the former follows up the same media strategies as the latter in order to achieve (inter)national recognition. The primary media promotion of Singeli is through the radio. The role of the radio in the
manipulation of consumer demand cannot be underestimated. In the US, commercial radio stations depend on their income from advertisers, who buy time slots that represent shares of listeners. Therefore, the stations play music that is rather designed to lead the audience to the commercials, so they actually strive to attract advertisers rather than the audience. Most radio programmers base their decision about which music they play on the radio airplay of other radio stations. Consequently, they often add music to their playlists because it is played by their competitors. As a result, commercial radio stations are often blamed for the decrease of stylistic innovation in popular music (Bennett eds. 2005: 309-315).

However, the radio industry, oriented towards the promotion of Singeli, is still in its infancy in Tanzania. The private radio station Efm, was established four years ago in Dar es Salaam and is currently still the sole radio which is oriented towards the full promotion of Singeli. This means that Efm possesses a lot of autonomy and doesn’t need to adapt his music to the playlist of its competitors. In Tanzania every radio station represents a certain music-genre. Clouds fm primarily plays Bongo Flava and Times fm mainly plays taarab. However, K. Mziwanda (2018), who is also a radio presenter at Times fm, recounts that her station also broadcasts Singeli every day but to a very little extent. The Singeli program only constitutes twenty minutes of the entire day. Efm also depends on its revenues from big advertising companies like coca cola and bull condoms. Their slogan is 

Thus, the radio presenter Fido explains how they develop certain strategies in order to maintain their street credibility. For example, the radio station developed a certain program in which they record several Singeli rappers on the street. This program defends Singeli’s authenticity in which they remain close to the Tanzanian inhabitants and thus represent them ‘better’. According to Fido, the radio is broadcasted in eleven different regions: Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Mtwara, Kigoma, Tabora, Morogoro, Dodoma, Tanga, Mbeya and Mwanza. Hence, Efm is credited for the increasing popularity of Singeli within Tanzania, which was initially restricted to the coast (Producer Medick Chopper 2018). Msaga Sumu (2018) states:

“Mikoa yote, zamani ilikua ni mikoa michache ya a mikoa ya pwani kama vile Dar es Salaam, Lindi na mikoa mingine kusini mwa Tanzania. Ilikua ngumu sana kwa mikoa mingine kuielewa singeli, kama vile Mwanza. Ndo ulikua mkoa mgumu Zaidi. Lakini
Msaga Sumu (2018) even claims that some Singeli artists already went to Europe, South Africa and America to perform their music. Some artists indeed showed me several videos of those performances abroad.

The salaries of radio presenters in Tanzania is low, but at the same time they are very powerful. This combination ushered the search for alternative opportunities to gain profits. They decide which music can be played on the radio and they use this power as an economic advantage. As a result, some radio presenters sign contracts with Bongo Flava artists to help them record an album, search for sponsors, promotion and so on. In exchange for this help, radio presenters share in the profits of the artists. This strategy is also known in America and Europe and is known as the 360 deal. In this sense, radio presenters appear as talent scouts (Perullo 2011: 360). Clouds fm is generally known for this kind of promotion. They developed the organisation of Tanzania House of Talent which is responsible for the transformation of young talent into ‘Bongo Flava stars. Consequently, Tanzanian hip-hop artists blame such talent houses for the decline of creativity since they often choose ‘mediocre’ artists, according to them, who are willing to conform to their corporate incentives. They lament that the talented hip-hop artists disappear from the music-scene, while ‘average’ artists become famous (Clark 2013: 15-16).

The radio station EfM pursues the same strategy. The festival of muziki mnene, which was organised by EfM, served as a talent search for new Singeli artists. Each winner of each region would receive money and a new phone, sponsored by HALOTEL. The ultimate winner in the battle of Dar es Salaam would be rewarded through radio promotion and the radio station would also help him/her to record a song. The festival was sponsored by advertising companies and the participants of the battle also needed to support HALOTEL in their performance (Observation 2018; Manager Kandoro 2018). Fido explains that they also established a house of talent in which they promulgated several criterions for the qualification of ‘good’ Singeli
artists. They use the same criteria as for the Singeli festival, which I’ve already mentioned. The radio presenters help to format Singeli into a brand that can be sold on the (inter)national market. For example, Singeli artists often produced songs of six minutes, which is too long to be broadcasted on the radio. As a result, the Singeli artists adjusted themselves to these terms and reduced the songs in three minutes instead of six.

Singeli artists also rely on music videos for promotion but to a lesser extent. This depends on the popularity of Singeli artists, who already achieved some recognition through radio promotion and established a considerable capital for the production of music videos. Many Singeli artists, however, don’t have enough money to produce music videos, which is more expensive than the recording of songs (Reuster-Jahn 2011: 14). Hence, they can spread their fame through music videos on the web but in order to gain attention on the web, they still need to rely on older communication forms like live-performance and radio promotion (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 299). Music videos only entered global mass culture from the 1980s, whereas the radio developed in the 1920s (Askew 2009: 208; (Hesmondhalgh 2019: 144). Television was only introduced in Tanzania in 1994 (Sturmer 1998: 191). Singeli also entered the commercial world of night-clubs. My informants stated that the life club in Dar es Salaam plays Singeli every Wednesday. I’ve witnessed this transformation myself, when I visited some clubs and saw Kangamoko dancers performing on Singeli. This transformation is clarified by the concept of de/territorialisation which is used to describe the complex flows of globalization. It means that deterritorialization always contains territorialisation within itself since deterritorialization of culture signifies the reinsertion of culture in a new context/space. Whereas ngoma was firstly detached from its ‘traditional’ context through its incorporation into Singeli and Singeli itself is transferred from its original, less public space (vigodoro) to the more public space (stage and clubs), it doesn’t lose place altogether but is solely placed into a new context as a response to novel situations (Inda & Rosaldo 2008: 12-14).

Now that I’ve discussed the universal promotional strategies of the music-industry to reach a large audience, which Singeli also pursues, I will address how Singeli adjusts its music according to the moral standards of the society and the musical formalities of popular music. These adjustments are fostered to reach the largest audience possible. Even though the radio industry is not solely responsible for the style and content of the music, radio exposure largely determines which recordings become popular. Therefore, popular music is often designed to meet the needs of the radio instead of individual consumers (Bennett eds. 2005: 309). However, music-genres are also aligned with audience expectations, because if they would only be
imposed by the music industry, the genre would not be legible for the audience (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 204). So, music-genres are the result of collective creativity instead of an individual author. They aren’t created from the top down because the music-industry can’t impose labels if they are not legible to the public, nor are they created from the bottom up by individual will (Bennett & Waksman eds. 2015: 204).

Hence, the restrictions radio presenters and manager Kandoro impose on Singeli are based on the audience perceptions, which I have analysed in detail in the previous chapter. The agency of individual Singeli artists should also not be neglected in this process, who willingly construct themselves as morally appropriate persons. They urge for a transformation of Singeli in order to be accepted by the whole society and to achieve (inter)national recognition. Consequently, the radio industry, audience and individual Singeli artists all play a considerable role in the shaping of Singeli as a music-genre.

Previously, Singeli artists discussed several different themes within one song as a strategy to reach a large audience. However, this is also linked to the flexibility of the artists who don’t adhere to a formal lyrical structure and often improvise their lyrics at the studio. This didn’t accord with the common assumptions about popular music for some audience members. The previous chapter already analysed this perception of the audience. Hence, their vision was thus informed by their common experiences about popular music, like Bongo Flava, which normally stick to one theme within one song. Consequently, Singeli artists mirrored themselves to the successful Bongo Flava artists who only discuss one theme within one song. Virus Mdudu (2018) addresses this adjustment extensively:

“Kwa sababu sasa hivi muziki umekuwa mkubwa tofauti na zamani ambapo. Watu walikuwa wanaimba tu bila kuzingatia kuwa mziki ni kazi ndo. Maana bongofleva wao wanaimba topic moja kwenyewe wimbo mmoja na wanapata mafanikio, kwahiyo hata sisi tukaamua kuimba topic moja ili kuendana na soko la mziki maana mziki ni biashara lakini pia muziki wetu kwa sasa unasikilizwa na watu wote. Zamani ilikuwa ni vijana tu, wababa na wamama walikuwa hawapendi kwa sababu tulikuwa hatueleweki tunachoimba hivyo ikatubidi tubadilike na kwa sasa mziki huu unapendwa na vijana, wamama na akina baba (‘Because now our music has grown different from where we started. People were doing music for leisure but now we are doing music as a serious job. Even Bongo Flava, they don’t mix many topics and they are doing good in music market that’s why we decided to change and do a serious business and now our music
is listened by all people in the community, which is different from where we started. Our big fans were only youth in the past so in order to take the music market over, we realized that we need to stop mixing many topics’.”

Subsequently, Singeli artists are also changing the themes that Singeli originally discussed. The radio presenter Fido and Man Fongo (2018) notify that people prefer love songs nowadays. This clarifies the popular formula of Bongo Flava artists who mainly perform love songs and dance tunes. Hence, Singeli artists adjusted themselves to this demand and included love songs in their repertoire. According to Man Fongo, Singeli initially didn’t talk about love but mainly focused on live stories in uswahilini. The universal theme of love ensures a large audience since everyone can associate themselves with this theme (Reuster-Jahn 2014: 7). The life stories that the Singeli artists addressed in their lyrics are often too personal and too specific for Dar es Salaam to be appreciated by a large audience. Young Judah also explains that they are slowly adjusting themselves to the formal lyrical structure of popular music. Popular music is normally characterized by the alternation of verse and chorus, which contains the same melody and lyrics every time. The chorus often contains the title and the message of the song (Johnson 2009: 26). Hence, Singeli didn’t follow this structure in the beginning. This transformation is exemplified in the songs of Msaga Sumu in which mama wa kambo (see appendix 8.1.1.) didn’t follow a formal structure, whereas Mwanaume Mashine (see appendix 8.1.2.) already appears to have similarities with the common formal structure of popular music. The song ‘Bora nioe Masai’ (see appendix 8.1.3.) from Virus Mdudu also illustrates this transformation.

The radio presenter Fido (2018) aims to combat the stereotypes and the bad reputation of Singeli. He wants to change the preconceptions of the audience, who imagine Singeli as music for wahuni. Consequently, the radio presenter urges Singeli artists to stop calling themselves wahuni because he is afraid that he will lose elder people as part of the target audience. As a result, the presenter already changed the title of a certain song, which was called wahuni. He transformed the title into wana in order to reject the prevailing stereotypes. When Singeli artists present new songs to Fido, he will also check whether the lyrics don’t contain any offensive language. If they contain offensive language, they are not selected for the playlist and don’t receive radio promotion. Producers also play an important role in the adjustment of the lyrics, whereby they often advise the artists to write songs that won’t offend anyone. During the Singeli festival, muziki mnene, the participants in the battle were informed to exclude offensive language in their repertoire since the battle would be aired live on the radio. Virus Mdudu
(2018) also addresses the decrease of Swahili urban street language in their songs, which is often only comprehensible for the youth. He claims that Singeli artists are including more official language in their songs in order to reach the elders as well. Singeli artists are also increasingly adjusting their appearance to famous Bongo Flava artists in order to appear ‘decent’ for the audience. The Singeli artists that gained popularity, like Dula Makabila, Msaga Sumu and Man Fongo, didn’t appear in shorts anymore but were dressed in clothes from famous brands like Fila. The Singeli artist, Mfalme Ninja, also constructs himself as a morally appropriate person by rejecting the stereotypes of Singeli. In his song lyrics, he urges the people to stop undressing themselves during the performance of Singeli. Hence, he rejects the association of nudity with Singeli, which renders it an ‘immoral’ reputation by some.

6 CONCLUSION

This thesis investigated how and why Singeli simultaneously remains local and global in the construction of a national identity, by evoking tradition and authenticity to defend itself as a better representation of Tanzania, in reaction to globalization and internal forces. Thereby I have investigated the role of all the different actors – singeli performers, audience and music-industry – in the process of differentiation and homogenization. Hence, to tackle this research question I needed to disentangle the theoretical concepts of globalization, nationalism, tradition and authenticity in relation with identity or culture.

The third chapter provided an extensive analysis of these different theoretical concepts. Identity or culture refers to the ongoing process of identification which is always constructed in relation to the other. In relation to the ‘other’ the culture and identity become visible and are defined. It is exactly this process of defining boundaries which constitutes culture and identity, that don’t exist outside the representations of them. Hence, identities exist through oppositions as well as similarities. This idea is essential to understand Singeli in the construction of a national identity, in which similarities as well as differences are exploited. This vision recurs as the central thread in the analysis of Singeli. Whereas cultural imperialists feared for cultural homogenization in the wake of globalization, the theory of identity-making emphasizes that similarities only exist in relation with oppositions. Hence, globalization, which refers to the increasing long-distance interconnectedness, produced cultural homogenization as well as cultural differentiation, whereby cultural identities emphasize the global and the local at the same time. With the global
and local I refer to the interpenetration of universalism (similarities) and particularism (difference) in the construction of a national identity in Singeli.

Nationalism only developed in tandem with internationalism. Turino (2000) also refers to the paradox of universalism and particularism in the construction of a nation. Whereas the nation must assume similarities with other nations in order to be recognised as a nation, the nation only exist in opposition to other nations by emphasizing its particularities. However, within the nation the image of sameness is also necessary to establish the nation. Benedict Anderson describes the nation as an imagined community because the nation is too big to allow absolute face-to face-contact with its members. This definition, in which the imagining of larger communities than the face-to-face communities already contribute to nationalism, is an important perception for the fourth chapter.

The idea of tradition only emerged in relation with modernity, in which the former was thought to stand in the way of progress. Whereas traditions already existed, they were not framed as such. The conscious framing of tradition is what Hobsbawm calls the ‘invented tradition’. With this term, he emphasizes the discontinuity of the ‘invented tradition’ with the past. I rejected the notion of invented tradition, however, and re-evaluated the meaning of tradition itself, which is recognised by discontinuity as well as continuity with the past. Ton Otto and Poul Pedersen reframed the invented tradition as a traditionalist tradition in order to debunk the notion of invention since traditions are always invented and ‘real’ traditions don’t exist. These traditionalist traditions are different from other traditions in its explicit reference to the past as primary source for legitimation. This perception framed Singeli as a traditionalist tradition as well.

Authenticity also emerged in relation with modernity, whereby people broke free from their previous prescribed medieval role and deceit was introduced in the appropriation of higher statuses. Something can be considered as ‘authentic’ if its source can be traced and if the characteristics fit into the recognized category. Authenticity is increasingly evoked in a globalised world, whereby certain cultures emphasize their particularities to prevent assimilation with other cultures. The difference between the invented traditions or traditionalist traditions, as described by Hobsbawm, and authenticity is that the latter doesn’t solely rely on the past for its legitimation. Lindholm discerns two approaches in the evaluation of musical authenticity: expressive and genealogical authenticity. The former evaluates performance based on the content of the music and is thus concerned with the past as well as the present for its legitimation. By the second strategy, the quality of the music is determined whether
performance remained true to original score/past (form/rules). These approaches recurred in the analysis of Singeli.

The fourth chapter provided a general historical background of Tanzania and enlightened the preceding cultural influences which stimulated the emergence of Singeli. Before independence, Swahili culture is credited for its contribution to nationalism since it continuously integrated newcomers in its culture. Hence slaves, who mainly came from the south, played an important role in the development of Swahili culture. This integration resulted in the spawn of chakacha, the female-only sexual hip-movements, which took the coast over by storm. Chakacha indicates an important influence for Singeli. The pan-ethnic makeup of the city of Dar es Salaam, which attracts continuous newcomers from different places, also contributed to an increasing sense of nationalism. Musical performance before independence also contributed to national consciousness through its pan-ethnic composition, the discussion of social matters which unites different ethnic group and use of Swahili. The socialist era witnessed the conscious construction of national culture by Nyerere, who initially favoured the construction/collection of all local traditions. He repudiated foreign influences in the construction of a national culture and allotted a privileged place to ngoma. After the introduction of the Arusha Declaration in 1967, Nyerere proposed the preservation of selected local traditions that contributed to the progress of the nation. Thereby, he rejected erotic hip-movements and framed them as immoral. However, the commercial cultural troupes countered this state rhetoric and popularised the erotic hip-movements on stage. Neoliberalism reduced the control of the state in creative practices and introduced the penetration of foreign influences in the musical repertoire, which was previously rejected. Hence, the global permeated the local. This is exemplified in the emergence of Bongo Flava, which initially imitated American hip-hop but then transformed into a pop-genre, recognised by love songs, dance tunes and R&B as its dominant subgenre. Nonetheless, the importance of the local didn’t disappear but became increasingly popular in reaction to the global. This is exemplified in the rise of new music-genres like mchiriku, baikoko and the transformation of classic taarab into modern taarab. All these music-genres are featured by ngoma rhythms and are framed in the popular trend for lewd lyrics and erotic dance-movements. During this period a general trend towards dance music arises and music is increasingly valued for its beats instead of lyrics. Even though the government control in the creation of artistical work is reduced, the National Arts Council (BASATA) still bans certain works that feature lewd lyrics and erotic dance-movements, which they consider immoral.
The fifth chapter provided an extensive answer to the research question. The cry for a new, distinct national music-genre is stimulated by globalization, which currently favours the localization of sound. Singeli thus serves as a reaction to globalization which increasingly exposed Tanzanians to other music-genres that also tried to create their own, national distinctive sound and aimed to defy cultural homogenization by affirming national/local particularities. Thereby Singeli artists are especially inspired by Naijabeats, which reached international success despite the fact that many people don’t even understand the lyrics. Another merit of globalization is the global spread of authenticity itself, which is increasingly called for to evaluate artistic works. Thereby, Singeli artists were influenced by the authenticity talk of Tanzanian hip-hop artists, who also portrayed themselves as better representatives of Tanzania in opposition to Bongo Flava. The need for a new music-genre is also stimulated by the ongoing banishments of baikoko and mchiriku, who received an immoral reputation by the state. Therefore, Singeli aims to walk in between the boundaries of morality and immorality through the incorporation of leg-movements in its dance-repertoire, which reduces the sexual character of Singeli, that is linked to the hip-movements. The creation of a new music genre, which imagines the nation, is also facilitated by the transition from analog to digital recording, which enables the process of mixing ‘traditional’ elements from various ethnic groups with relative ease.

Singeli performers evoke authenticity by portraying Singeli as a truthful representation of Tanzania, in opposition to Bongo Flava. This means that the source (Tanzania) is traced in the corresponding expression (Singeli). Hence, Singeli performers determine their identity by stressing their differences in relation to Bongo Flava artists, which rely more on foreign sources than Tanzania for its expression. These differences bestow them the emblems to distinguish themselves from other other (inter)national music-genres and are necessary to be regarded as a new, distinct music-genre. Singeli is thus defined as a local music-genre in relation to Bongo Flava, which according to them, emphasizes the global more than the local. Singeli performers frame Singeli as ‘real’ Tanzanian music, based on three different criteria: the origin, the style and content. These criteria are ordered according to the salience of the claims, whereby my informants perceived the origin and style as the most important criterions in the authenticity of Singeli.

They framed Singeli as the first music-genre that emerged as an incentive of the lower class. Singeli is born in vigodoro, parties that were held in the poorest quarters of Kinondoni, namely Manzese or Tandale. They are part of the largest unplanned settlements of Dar es Salaam, which
is referred to as uswahilini/uswazi. The people who started Singeli and are still associated with this music-genre range from the youngsters who have only completed primary education to those who have completed secondary school. The other music-genres of Tanzania, like taarab, dansi, kwaya and Bongo Flava all started by the middle/upper-class and were only later appropriated by the lower class. Bongo Flava is still imagined as music for the middle class. however, the lower class constitute the majority of the country. Hence, that’s why, according to Singeli fans and performers, Singeli serves as a better representation of Tanzania, whereby the majority of the country is represented in the expression of Singeli. Accordingly, Singeli claims authenticity through the people who represent it. Consequently, it is not so much the lyrics that have to represent Tanzanian reality, but it is the practice of Singeli itself which creates a sense of community among the uneducated youth who have been framed as wahuni (hooligans). They combat this stereotype by adopting the term, which immunizes them for its offensive content and grant them the power to change the negative interpretations of the term. They reinterpret the meaning of wahuni as hard-working people. Thereby Singeli epitomizes the possibility for poor people to make ends work. Hence, Singeli performers exploit the term wahuni in their performance, which bestows them the emblems of differentness and makes them popular among the youth.

The second important criterion in the authenticity of Singeli is the style. They translate their differentness with Bongo Flava in the reliance on ngoma rhythm to create a distinct Tanzanian sound since many perceive ngoma as the only ‘real’ Tanzanian music for its lack of ‘foreign’ influences. In this way, they rely on rigid concepts of (traditional) music to define themselves in opposition to Bongo Flava. Hence, they inherit the cultural policy of Nyerere who favored ngoma in the construction of a national culture. The use of ngoma rhythm indicates the main reason why Singeli is framed as traditional music. In this sense, the realness of the current Tanzanian music still depends on the past whereby tradition is conflated with Tanzanian music and the other way around. In Singeli they mainly mix samples of mchiriku, mdundiko and vanga. The last two denote fast Zaramo ngoma and the former, mchiriku, draws both on chakacha and Zaramo ngoma. Thereby the authenticity of Singeli is proven by reliance on ngoma rhythm and melodies but not necessarily through the use of traditional instruments since they can imitate those rhythms on self-made rudimentary instruments. Unlike modern taarab, ngoma rhythm constitutes the most important feature in Singeli. Thereby Singeli can still loop sounds from foreign archives, however, the increased speed and high number of samples makes those foreign sounds unrecognizable. Accordingly, they are still regarded as ‘real’ Tanzanian
music by the audience, who doesn’t recognize those looped foreign beats. Dance, fastness and ngoma are also conflated in the authenticity of Singeli. The popularity of fast ngoma rhythms, like chakacha and Zaramo ngoma caused an increasing conflation of fastness and erotic hip-movements with ngoma which they contrast with the low tempo of Bongo Flava. Thereby fastness is conflated with dance-music in general, whereby hip-hop and Bongo Flava are both perceived too slow to dance on. Hence, through the depiction of Singeli as dance-music, Singeli performers portray it as a lively, active and energetic music in opposition to Bongo Flava, which is then perceived as passive and boring. This is reflected in the active participation of the audience in Singeli performance in which some Singeli artists instruct them to take their clothes off. Hence, the association of nudity with Singeli, instigated by the Kangamoko dancers, indicate another distinct emblem in which they can distinguish themselves from other music-genres. Authenticity is further reflected in the physical proximity of the Singeli performers with Tanzanian inhabitants, which is exemplified in the reliance on live-performance and the living-standards of the artists, who live in uswahilini. Thereby Bongo Flava is perceived as ‘fake’ for its reliance on the media and the physical demarcation between the Bongo Flava artists and fans. The reliance on the media is rejected as inauthentic for its reliance on artificial reproduction, which grants Bongo Flava a ‘static’ character. Thereby, Singeli is depicted as flexible through its free style performance on stage. Singeli simultaneously evokes expressive and genealogical authenticity through respectively its emphasis on the flexibility/originality of the artist and former ngoma rhythms and melodies. However, both were legitimized/stimulated by difference in its search for ‘real’ distinct Tanzanian sound.

Since the beat indicates the second major indicator for Singeli’s claim as ‘real’ Tanzanian music, the content of Singeli is more open to change, which is reflected in its informal structure. The difference in content was evaluated according to the one-sided themes Bongo Flava discusses. Bongo Flava artists mainly talk about love in their content, while Singeli artists discuss social matters more. Thereby Singeli artists depict themselves as better representatives of Tanzanian culture through its reliance on local themes, in which they discuss experiences that ‘really’ happened to them. Hence the local refers to the everyday face-to-face experiences which is considered more authentic. This is contrasted with Bongo Flava artists who often dream about western lifestyles and thus don’t always talk about events that ‘really’ happened to them or took place in Tanzania. Even if the content of Bongo Flava still corresponds with the reality of Bongo Flava artists, who enjoy a luxury life-style and extend national boundaries, this is not considered as a truthful representation of Tanzania, according to Singeli artists, since
the majority doesn’t enjoy this luxury life-style. Singeli also uses more street language in opposition to Bongo Flava, which makes them popular again among the youth. By appropriating the distinct emblems/stereotypes (street language, wahuni, poverty, informality and nudity), they differentiate themselves from Bongo Flava and contest the negative interpretations about them. Hence, they appropriate the stereotypes and bestow them a different meaning by challenging the moral standards.

Whereas the global is inextricably intertwined in the local, reflected in Singeli’s reliance on foreign recording equipment, Singeli performers polarize these two concepts to grant themselves an authentic character in opposition to Bongo Flava. Hence, by defining themselves in opposition to Bongo Flava, these two concepts are inevitably essentialized. However, this polarization is not tenable if they want to reach (inter)national recognition. Therefore, this polarization is quite contradictory since Singeli doesn’t want to remain local but aims to extend national boundaries. Thereby, Singeli artists assume similarities of Bongo Flava artists in order to be included into the category of popular music and reach international success. They rely on the same promotional strategies as Bongo Flava, in which radio presenters of EfM operate as talent scouts and take the interests of advertisers into account. Whereas they repudiated Bongo Flava for its reliance on the media, Singeli artists also call for an increasing cooperation with the media to reach an international audience. Singeli also increasingly adjusts its music according to the moral standards of the society and the musical formalities of popular music. Whereas the appropriation of the distinct emblems (street language, wahuni, informality and nudity) grants them an authentic character in opposition to Bongo Flava artists, it doesn’t gain the approval of the entire Tanzanian audience. Some of them perceive Singeli as immoral through the sexual hip-movements, its association with nudity, the ‘wahuni’ (hooligans) who represent the music and the use of ‘violent’ street language. Others also rejected it as ‘real’ music through its lack of musical formalities – alternation of verse and chorus. Hence, the stereotypes, which bestow them the emblems of differentness, is now replaced by an abstract identity to assume those who can’t associate themselves with those emblems. All the three different actors – audience, performers and radio industry – play a role in this adjustment. The radio industry imposes restrictions on the content of Singeli, which is based on audience perceptions. Individual Singeli artists also willingly construct themselves as ‘moral’ persons by rejecting the stereotypes and adhering to moral standards. The maintenance of moral standards is reflected in the rejection of the term wahuni, the reduction of ‘violent’ street language and the adjustment of the dress-code of the artists, whereby they defy the association of nudity with
Singeli. Hence, the stereotypes are now combatted by rejecting them instead of revitalizing them. Similarly, the adherence to musical formalities appears in the reduction of one theme within a song, whereby they increasingly include love themes in its musical repertoire, and the usage of verse and chorus.

The two strategies of Singeli – appropriating and rejecting stereotypes – mirror the paradox of particularism and universalism in the construction of a national identity. Whereas the first strategy bestows them the emblems of differentness and grants them an ‘authentic’ character in opposition to Bongo Flava, these differences are not appreciated by the entire Tanzanian audience. Therefore, it remains questionable if Singeli will carry the image of the nation for everyone, especially the upper class, as long as they represent a stigmatised group and are conceived as ‘indecent’ by some. However, the second strategy may result in the loss of the distinct emblems on which Singeli’s authenticity is built. Hence, the question remains whether Singeli will still be perceived as ‘real’ Tanzanian music when it will transform into an international music-genre, whereby its artists will adopt life-styles that are not enjoyed by the majority of the country. Therefore, I argue that future research about Singeli is necessary to investigate whether it will eventually achieve (inter)national recognition or not. Nonetheless, because Singeli fans and performers portray the origin, started by the lower class, and the sound of Singeli as the most important indicators in Singeli’s claim on ‘real’ Tanzanian music, it may still be perceived as ‘real’ Tanzanian music.

This thesis was based on the logic of identity, which exists through oppositions and similarities in relation to the other. Hence, similarity (global) and difference (local) indicate complementary elements and not separate entities because they only exist in relation to each other. The call for difference in Singeli only emerged through the increasing similarities of Bongo Flava with foreign music-genres. Thereby, difference is necessary to become a new music-genre. Similarities, referring to shared conventions, between the different parties are also necessary to enable communication. If Singeli aims to distinguish itself from Bongo Flava it must assume the same categories since the differences between them are not legible otherwise. Hence, Singeli must assume similarities with the oppositional party, in order to be perceived as a reaction to Bongo Flava artists and distinguish themselves from them. Therefore, Singeli and Bongo Flava are both recognised by similarities as well as differences, in relation to foreign music, but to a different degree. Singeli repudiates Bongo Flava for its high degree of similarities with foreign music and praises itself for their high degree of differences with foreign music. Therefore, Singeli artists are convinced to better representatives of Tanzania.
This research denotes a very relevant contribution to existing academical work about the Tanzanian music-industry since no academical research has been conducted about Singeli yet. Hence, I have analysed a whole new music-genre, based on my ethnographic research and academical literature. Academical literature provided a historical framework for Singeli and enabled me to frame the latter in the general trend for hip-movements after independence. Considering the short duration of my ethnographic research, I have only touched the surface of the topic. I haven’t been able to investigate Singeli dance as much as I have studied the musical aspects. Hence, future research is necessary to explore this area further. Thereby, future researchers can investigate the link between immorality and these dance-movements more profoundly than I have done. Accordingly, a detailed comparison/observation between all the possible influence spheres of Singeli is necessary since it is framed in the general trend for erotic hip-movements, which is born in *chakacha*. Relatively little is known about the history of *chakacha* and the precursors of Singeli, such as *mchiriku*, *mdundiko* and *vanga*. Graebner (in Hanneken & Oliveira eds. 2016: 76-94) is the only scholar who has conducted research about these music-genres, which is thus quite problematic. Hence, future research is also necessary about the music-genres upon which Singeli is based. It would have improved my understanding of Singeli’s claim on tradition and authenticity if there was more information available about these music-genres. The *Kangamoko* dancers are also a very interesting topic through their capacity to challenge the moral standards in Tanzania. However, Daines Sanga (2016) is the only scholar who discussed this topic on a very limited basis. Therefore, future research is also necessary for this topic.

Another disadvantage in my research is that I have only conducted research in Dar es Salaam. Whereas Dar es Salaam indicates the hometown of Singeli, it would be interesting to investigate whether Singeli differs according to different regions. Even though my informants claimed that Singeli is not determined by place, a broader approach would extract more detailed information than I have collected.

More research is also needed about Bongo Flava itself. Bongo Flava literally means Tanzanian music in Swahili. This confused some scholars (Charry 2012; Englert 2008), who still apply Bongo Flava in the broad sense, encompassing all the music-genres of Tanzania. Those scholars clearly missed the point, because not every single music-genre of Tanzania is framed as Bongo Flava. It just means that Bongo Flava, which still indicates a separate new music-genre, incorporated a broad range of different music-genres – R&B, reggae, Zouk and so on – in its musical repertoire. However, in 2005, Bongo Flava already transformed into a pop-genre, with
R&B as its dominant subgenre. Hence, Bongo Flava is now increasingly used in the strict sense, indicating the transformation of Bongo Flava into a new pop-genre based on dance tunes and love songs. Ironically, while Bongo Flava initially meant ‘Tanzanian music’, Bongo Flava is now excluded by Singeli fans/performers from the definition of ‘real’ Tanzanian music. Hence, the quest for ‘real’ Tanzanian music entails the redefinition of Tanzanian music which, in turn, becomes more fixed, by excluding Bongo Flava from its current definition. The meaning of Bongo Flava is thus continuously receptive to change. Therefore, further research is necessary about Bongo Flava and its current musical characteristics. Since Singeli is defined in relation to Bongo Flava, a more detailed investigation about the current Bongo Flava, would have produced a better understanding about Singeli itself. However, by analysing Singeli, my research also developed new information about Bongo Flava. This information is also partly based on my previous research about Tanzanian hip-hop artists, who also define themselves in opposition to Bongo Flava. Hence the two ethnographic investigations, enabled me to discern Bongo Flava in the broad and strict sense, which hasn’t been done yet by any scholar.

Through my analysis about Singeli, I have also collected new information about taarab, which is transformed into a dance-genre, featured by professional dancers on stage. While academical literature discussed the transformation of taarab into a dance-genre, modern taarab, academical scholars don’t mention the presence of professional dancers during live-performance. Consequently, this topic also remains open for further research. This would enable a comparison between Singeli and taarab dance, since Singeli dancers incorporate some moves from taarab into Singeli.
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**7.2 INTERNET SOURCES**


7.3 Interviews


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Taxi driver (audience member). In the car, Dar es Salaam. 2018, September.

8.1 **SONG LYRICS**

8.1.1 *Mama wa kambo by Msaga Sumu*

8.1.1.1 Swahili version

Rafiki wa kweli, unamjua
Selemo mama rafiki wa kweli
Baba G rafiki wa kweli
Soud kapanda rafiki wa kweli
Kinyama rafiki wa kweli
Rafiki wa kweli unamjua
Kimambo rafiki wa kweli
Maneno maneno sipendelei
Maneno maneno kwanza ya nini
Wanaoniteta wananiogiopa
Wanaonisema mimi wananiogiopa

Mwenzenu nahama mimi jiji la Dar es salama X2
Narudi kijijini mimi namfata mama
Maisha ya mjini kwangu me hayana mana
Kwanza siwezi kuishi mimi bila ya mama
Haya nimekubali mama wa kambo walasi mama
Kuna siku mama akaniita ila siku sikia
Akaja na maji ya moto mama akanimwagia
Walikuja majirani wakanisaidia
Wakanipaka asali pale nilipoungua
Aliporudi baba kazini, watu wakamuambia
Mwanao kamwagiwa maji, tena mtoto kaungua
Nasema maji wa moto yani mtoto kaungua
Walipoondoka majirani baba akaniambia
Hivi kweli mwanangu wewe akili zimetimia?
Yani mambo ya ndani wewe nje unaadithia
Akanivuta mashavu baba nikajuta kuzaliwa
Nasema nimekubali mama wa kambo wala si mama X2

Baada ya hayo yote mama hakulidhika
Kuna siku nimekaa yani mwenyewe imechoka
Mama akaniita nikawa sikusikia
Kwanza nikashangaa mimi mama kuniita
Ananiitia chumbani mama kwani kuna kitu gani
Mara ananituma kalete panga jokoni
Na mimi mbio mbio panga langu mkononi
Nimeingia chumbani kwa mama jamani sikuamini
Mama akavua nguo akenitupa kitandani
Mara akapiga kelel ananibaka jamani
Akaita na majirani
Baba hakwenda kazini naye alipumzika
Baba akaja mbio na taulo mkononi
Akanikutu mwanae mimi nina panga mkononi
Akauliza msaga sumu unataka kitu gani?
Nikafungwa miaka jela miaka 30 ,msamaha wa raisi niliupata jamani
Nawaambia kina mama jamani anagalieni
Jamani mkiachika na watoto chukueni
Wapindia hawa wakina baba hua hawaoni

Maneno maneno mimi sipendelei, unamsema mtu akati akusemi X4

8.1.1.2 English version
A true friend, you know him
Selemo is a true friend
G is a true friend
Soud kapanda is a true friend
Kinyama is a true friend
A true friend you know him
Kimambo is a true friend
I don’t like gossips
Why gossiping
Who talks about me, is scared of me
Who disses me, is afraid of me

I am leaving Dar es salaam X2
I am going back to my mom in the village
City life is not for me
And I cannot live without my mom
I agree, step mother is not your mother
One day my step mom called me but I didn’t hear her
She came with hot water and threw it on me
Neighbours came to help
They treated my wounds with honey
When dad came back from home, the neighbours told him
Your son was burnt with hot water
It was hot water and he is really burnt
When the neighbours left, dad told me
My son are you really insane?
You really telling the neighbours the secrets of our family
He pinched my cheeks and I regretted that I was born
I agree a step-mother is not your mother X2

After all that my step-mom was not satisfied
One day I was resting because I was really tired
My step-mom called me but I didn’t hear her
Then I was surprised she was calling me from her bedroom
She called me to her bedroom I wondered why
I went and she asked me to bring her a knife from the kitchen
I rushed to the kitchen and took the knife
I entered in her room, I couldn’t believe what I was seeing
My step-mom was naked now and she threw herself on the bed
Then she started screaming ‘help me, he is raping me’
She shouted and called the neighbours
Dad was resting at home too
Dad came running while wearing his towel
He found me, his son in step-mom’s bedroom with a knife in his hand
He asked me: what do you really want Msaga Sumu?
I was sentenced 30 years to jail
I received the mercy of the president and I was released
All moms should be very careful
When you break up with yours husbands take your kids with you
These men don’t see, they become blind when they are in love

I don’t like gossip, I say I don’t like gossip X4

8.1.2  Mwanaume Mashine by Msaga Sumu

8.1.2.1  Swahili version

Verse 1
Jua sifa ya mwanaume,
Mwanaume sio sura,
Mwanaume sio kabila,
Mwanaume kujituma
Jua sifa ya mwanaume
Mwanaumee, mwanaume kutafuta
Kichwa cha familia, mwanaume anahusika
Chorus
Sifa ya mwanaume mashine, mwanaume mashine  x4
Mwanaume mashine,mama mashine

Verse 2
Mim masikini, wallah sina kitu
Kama unanipenda nipende,
Mama nijali, ipo siku nitapata,
Usinikimbe kwakua masikini

Chorus
Mwanaume mashine X4
Jua mwanaume mashine

(unaaambiwa kama kawaida, meneja kandoro sikia hii
Hii ni kwa niaba ya wale wasioelewa hiindo habari ya mjini)
Sifa ya mwanaume, mwanaume mashine

Verse 3
We ukitaka pesa nenda kwa Manji
Kama unataka pesa Baraza yupo
Mimi sina kitu, ndio kwanza natafuta
Mungu atanijalia
Wanaume msikate tama, ipo siku mtapata

Chorus
Jua mwanaume mashine
Mwanaume mashine,mama mashine x4

Verse 4
(nataka nione mashabiki wa kweli, samba au yanga
Naanza na simba sasa nione au sio)
Kichuyaaa, maguugo,
Mama kichuya kiboko yao, Maguga kiboko yao x2
(*naiona mashabiki wa samba mmelala, ngoja niende upande wa pili*)
Msuvaaa, hamisi tambwe
Jamani yanga kiboko yao, yanga kiboko yao x2

**Chorus**
Yani Mashine, mwanaume mashine
Mwanaume kichwa cha familia
Sifa ya mwanaume, mashine
Mwanaume mashine X5

8.1.2.2  English version

**Verse 1**
Know what makes a man/ know the character of the man x2
It’s not his face,
Not his ethnic group,
Hard work makes a man,
Know what makes a man,
A man, a man searches
Head of a Family, a man involves himself

**Chorus**
know what makes a man/ know the character of the man
A man is a machine, a machine
A man is a machine, a machine  

**Verse 2**
I am a poor man, wallah (I swear) I don’t have anything
If you love me, just love me the way I am
Darling care for me, I will succeed one day,
Don’t leave me just because I am poor,
Chorus
A man is a machine, a machine
A man is a machine, a machine } x4
Know a man is a machine
(as usual manager kandoro listen to this,
This is for those who don’t understand, this is the story of the town)
What makes a man

Verse 3
If you want money just go to Manji
If you want money Baraza is here
I don’t have anything, I am still searching
God will bless me eventually
Men don’t give up, one day you will be successful

Chorus
Just know a man is a machine,
a machine, a machine, a machine x4

Verse 4
(I want to see true fans, samba or yanga, starting with samba so let’s see)
Kichuyaa, maguugo
Kichuya is the best, maguugo is the best x2
(I see simba fans are asleep let me check the other side)
Msuvaan, hamisi tambwe
yanga is the best, yanga is the best x2

Chorus
A man is a machine, a machine
A man is the head of the family
What makes a man, machine
8.1.3  Bora nioe Masai by Virus Mdudu

Verse 1
Hallo hallo halloo hallooo,
Hii hapa hii hii hapa ni sauti ya mdudu mmoja
Sauti ya Vairas a sauti ya Baba yake na Salhaa.
Moyo upate tulia me nioe mke ganii
Maana kila ninaempata hawatulii nyumbani
Sema moyo upate tulia me nioe mke gani
Maana kila ninaempata hawatulii nyumbani
Naona sasa bora nioe Masai waniite Baba yoyoo
Na kuliko penzi na uzushi na nimechoka naloo
Mimi bora nioe Masai waniite Baba yoyoo
Kuliko penzi la uzushi na nimechoshwa naloo

Chorus
Sema shemeji zangu Wamasai yero subhayee
Nipeni ugoro na nyagi me nipandishe morali x2

Verse 2
We mara fimbo mkononi lubega shingoni
Kibuyu mkononi me napendaga jamani,
We mara fimbo mkononi lubega shingoni
Kibuyu mkononi me napendaga jamani
Zile safari za ngomani mimi zilinishindaa
Kwa Mmasai akaniponya kidonda
Na nipo radhi hata ng’ombe nitachunga
Amezimika hali yangu ya majanga
Japo kipato Kidogo mdogomdogo tunasona
Hajui mkorogo wala hajui kudanga
Naona sasa bora nioe Masai wanite Baba yoyoo
Na kuliko penzi na uzushi na nimechoka naloo
Mimi bora nioe Masai wanite Baba yoyoo
Kuliko penzi la uzushi na nimechoshwa naloo

Chorus
*Sema shemeji zangu Wamasai yero subhayee*
*Nipeni ugoro na nyagi me nipandishe morali x2*

Verse 3
Hasikii haelewi ananipenda mimi
Ameapa tuwe pamoja mpaka kesho kaburini
Alivyonichanganya mwingine sitamani
Kwake sisikii la shekh wala muhadhin
Yale mahaba niue huyu wangu wa ubani
Kilichopenda roho nyama mbichi ipo kooni,
Ipo kooni nyama mbichi ipo kooni

Verse 4
Amenichanganya Mmasai nashindwa kusema
Moja moja twende tukamuone Mamaa
Amenichanganya Masai na yake mahaba
Moja moja Manzese ukamuone Baba
Wanangu pandisha Mori yeroo
Bado morii yeroo Ilala pandisha mori yeroo
Sinza mori yerooo Temeke morii yeroo
Kinondoni morii yerooo aa yero subhaye
### 8.2 List of Interview Questions

#### 8.2.1 Audience member

- What do you want to achieve in your life?
- What is your favourite music style and why is that?
- What is the most popular music style right now according to you? Why is that?
- What is your vision about traditional music? Which music do you consider as traditional music?
- Which music do you consider as Tanzanian music?
- What is Singeli according to you? Do you like Singeli?
- Who is your favourite Singeli artist?
- How would you describe Singeli beats?
- How would you describe Singeli singing and the content?
- How would you describe Singeli dance?
- Do you think Singeli represents Tanzanian reality more than Bongo Flava?
- Do you like Singeli? Do you think a lot of people like Singeli?
- What is Bongo Flava to you?
- How did Singeli start?
- Can you tell me more about the evolution of Singeli? Has it changed a lot? In what way? Negative or positive?
- Which genres did Singeli start to mix at first and how many genres do they mix now?
- Are there different types of Singeli? Does it differ in each region? Which type do you prefer?
- Which regions play Singeli? And which ones the most? Why is that? You think it will expand to other regions and how will they do that?
- What is the background of Singeli artists mostly?
- Why are it mainly the men who are singing Singeli?
- Do you think it’s possible for a woman to become a Singeli artist?
- What skills are needed according to you to become a Singeli artist?
- What is the source of Singeli dance? Are they inspired by other dance styles? With which kind of dance style would you compare it to?
- Do you know how to dance Singeli? Is it difficult to learn?
- Where do you hear Singeli mostly?
- Is there a difference between male Singeli dancers and female Singeli dancers? Do they dance differently? Why is that?
- What is according to you the main purpose of Singeli?
- On which kind of events do they play Singeli the most?
- Where do they play Singeli the most?
- Is Singeli limited to a certain place/ time?
- Do they play Singeli in the club?
- Who is your favourite Singeli artist?
- What is the content of Singeli?
- If you hear Singeli do you automatically want to dance Singeli?
- What is the main difference between Bongo Flava and Singeli according to you?
- Do you think Singeli will become very famous? How will they do that?
- What is according to you the main purpose of music? Does Singeli serves that purpose?
- If you listen to Singeli, what is the main thing you will pay attention to. (Beats, lyrics,..)
- Does music inspire you in your daily life?
- Do you think that music can change the reality?
- Do you like the videoclips of Singeli artists? Why do you like them?
- Do you dance Singeli in the club or where do you dance it?
- How would you describe Singeli videoclips?
- Which kind of people mostly like Singeli?
- Do you know the lyrics of the Singeli songs or do you mostly listen to the beats of Singeli?
- Since when did Singeli become more famous? Do you think it is able to become famous internationally?
- How do you get into contact with the music you like?
- How many times a week do you listen to the radio?
- How many times a week do you watch videoclips?
- Do you think each artist should have a videoclip? Especially for Singeli artists or not?
- What is according to you the main impact of globalisation on the music industry?
8.2.2 Artist

- What is your vision about traditional music? Which music do you consider as traditional music?
- Which music do you consider as Tanzanian music?
- Since when did you start making music?
- How long have you been making music right now?
- How did you come into contact with Singeli? Who taught you Singeli?
- What do you want to achieve with your music?
- What is your music about? About which topics do you write? Do you also mix other genres?
- How much time do you spend on making the lyrics?
- Where do you find the inspiration to make the lyrics?
- What is according to you the main purpose of Singeli?
- Are you only a Singeli artist or did you perform also other music before?
- Does your music get played on the radio? Do you need to pay for that?
- Can you support yourself with your work as a Singeli artist? Or do you also have other jobs?
- As a musician where do you classify yourself in terms of success?
- Do you also make music with other artists?
- Do you always work together with the same music producer?
- What is the best way for you to get known by the audience? By concerts or radio promotion, videoclips or other ways?
- From where do you get inspiration to make your music?
- Who is your favourite artist?
- What is your best song and why do you consider that as your best song?
- What is your most famous song? Is it the same as the one you like the most? Why do you think that song is more famous?
- How many songs do you have? Do you have albums?
- Which audience do you want to attract?
- Has it always been your dream to become an artist?
- Did you face many challenges in your music career? Which ones?
- What do you like to see differently in your career right now?
- Is there a lot of competition between Singeli artists?
- Did you already make videoclips and how many?
- What is the most popular music style right now according to you? Why is that?
- What is Singeli according to you?
- How would you describe Singeli beats?
- How would you describe the content?
- How would you describe Singeli dance?
- Do you think a lot of people like Singeli? Which kind of people?
- What is bongo flava to you?
- Can you tell me something about the origin of Singeli? How did Singeli start? Since when did the transformation into Singel start?
- Can you tell me more about the evolution of Singeli? Has it changed a lot? In what way? Negative or positive?
- Which genres did they start to mix at first and how many genres do they mix now?
- What is the main difference between bongo flava and Singeli according to you?
- Are there different types of Singeli? Does it differ in each Region?
- Are you the only one who is responsible for the lyrics?
- In which regions do they play Singeli? And which ones the most? Why is that? Do you think it will expand to other areas and how will they do that?
- What is the background of Singeli artists mostly?
- What skills are needed to become a Singeli artist?
- Do you know how to dance Singeli? Is it difficult to learn?
- Is there a difference between male Singeli dancers and female Singeli dancers? Do they dance differently? Why is that?
- What is according to you the main purpose of Singeli?
- Where do you perform Singeli?
- On which kind of events do they play Singeli the most?
- Is Singeli limited to a certain place/time?
- Do they play it in the club?
- Do you listen to Singeli every day to become inspired?
- If you hear Singeli do you automatically want to dance Singeli?
- Do you think Singeli will become very famous? How will they do that?
- What do you consider as the most important aspect of Singeli?
- Do you criticize certain political and social issues in Tanzania?
- Do you think each artist should have a videoclip? Especially for Singeli artists or not?
- What is according to you the main impact of globalisation on the music industry?

8.2.3 Dancer

- What is your vision about traditional music? Which music do you consider as traditional music?
- Which music do you consider as Tanzanian music?
- Since when did you start dancing?
- How did you come into contact with Singeli? Who taught you Singeli?
- What do you want to achieve with this dance?
- Do you also mix other dance genres?
- Do you make choreographies or is everything free style? How much time do you spend on making a choreography?
- Do you adjust the dance moves to the lyrics of the artist?
- Where do you perform Singeli? Is it always together with a Singeli artist or do you perform alone as well?
- Are you engaged in dance battles?
- Do you always find new moves on stage or do you stick to the choreography?
- What is according to you the main purpose of the Singeli dance style?
- Are you only a Singeli dancer or did you perform other dance styles before as well? If Yes, do you use those moves in Singeli?
- Can you support yourself with your work as a Singeli dancer? Or do you also have other jobs?
- Where do you classify yourself in terms of success? Are the artists more popular than you?
- Where do you guys perform? For which kind of events? Who organizes it?
- Do you make choreographies as a group or do you you’re your own choreography?
- Do you have a management for your dance group?
- Do you teach Singeli somewhere? For free or not? Which people take that dance class?
- Do you perform in videoclips?
- How many dancers perform with the artists on stage mostly? Is it really important that the dancers are always present at the artist’s performance?
- What is the best way for you to get known by the audience?
- From where do you get inspiration for your dance moves?
- Who is your favourite Singeli dancer?
- Which audience do you want to attract with this dance style?
- Has it always been your dream to become a dancer?
- Did you face many challenges during your career? Which ones?
- What do you like to change in your career right now?
- Is there a lot of competition between Singeli dancers?
- What is the most popular music style right now according to you? Why is that?
- What is Singeli according to you?
- How would you describe Singeli beats?
- How would you describe the content?
- How would you describe Singeli dance?
- Do you think a lot of people like Singeli dance? Why? Which people?
- What is bongo flava to you?
- Can you tell me something about the origin of Singeli? How did Singeli start?
- Can you tell me more about the evolution of Singeli dance? Has it changed a lot? In What way? Negative or positive?
- What is the main difference between how they dance on Bongo Flava and Singeli?
- Are there different types of Singeli dance?
- Can you always choose your dance steps yourself or do you need to listen to some people? When videoclips are made, you can choose how u dance or not?
- What is the background of Singeli dancers?
- What skills are needed to become a Singeli dancer?
- What is the source of Singeli dance? Is it inspired by other dance styles? With which kind of dance style would you compare it?
- Is there a difference between male Singeli dancers and female Singeli dancers? Do they dance differently? Why is that?
- Where do you perform Singeli?
- Is Singeli limited to a certain place/ time?
- Do you think Singeli will become very famous? And how will they do that?
- What is according to you the main impact of globalisation on the music industry?
8.2.4 Radio presenter

- Can you tell me something about the history of the radio station? When did the radio station start and how? How many listeners did you have in the beginning and how many do you have now?
- Since when did you start your job as a radio presenter? How did you become a radio presenter? Who taught you the skills?
- How long have you been doing this right now?
- What is your job as a radio presenter? Can you explain me how it works step by step?
- Why did you choose this radio station? Why did you want to become a radio presenter especially for Singeli?
- What do you want to achieve with your job as radio presenter?
- Can you support yourself with your work as a radio presenter? Or do you also have other jobs?
- In which regions is this radio station broadcasting?
- Which audience do you reach with this radio station?
- Does this radio station cooperate with other radio stations? How do you cooperate?
- Is this radio station controlled by the government or is it independent?
- Are there also other radio stations in Dar Es Salaam playing Singeli and are there Singeli radio stations in other regions? Why are there not many Singeli radio stations?
- Which music do you broadcast?
- Which criteria do you consider important for a Singeli song, so that it can be played on the radio?
- Are you able to choose the music yourself? Do you have a lot of freedom to choose how the programs?
- Is there a lot of competition between the radio stations?
- Do you give advice to the artists about their music? What kind of advice do you give them?
- Which kind of theme or composition of beats does the majority of the Singeli artists use?
- Do you have a lot of influence on the artists and do they listen to your advice?
- Does this radio station organize a lot of events to promote Singeli artists? Which events?
- How do you promote the radio station?
- Who is your favourite Singeli artist? Why?
- What is your vision about traditional music? Which music do you consider as traditional music?
- Which music do you consider as Tanzanian music?
- Which skills are needed to become a radio presenter?
- Did you face many challenges during your career? Which challenges?
- What do you like to change in your career right now?
- What is the most popular music style right now according to you? Why is that?
- What is Singeli according to you?

8.2.5 Producer

- Since when did you start making music? How did you become a music producer?
- How long have you been making music right now?
- What is your job as a Singeli music producer? Can you explain me how it works step by step?
- Where do you find the beats?
- For which music style do you make the most beats?
- Can you also change the lyrics of the artists?
- What do you want to achieve with your music?
- Can you support yourself with your work as a music producer? Or do you also have other jobs?
- As a producer where do you classify yourself in terms of success?
- Do you often cooperate with other producers?
- What is according to you the main purpose of music?
- What kind of advice do you give the artists?
- Which theme or composition of beats do you usually produce?
- Do you have a lot of influence on the artists and do they listen to your advice?
- From where do you receive inspiration to produce the beats?
- How much time do you need to produce a Singeli song?
- How do you promote yourself?
- Who is your favourite Singeli artist?
- On which aspect does the audience pay the most attention to lately: beats or lyrics?
- What is your vision about traditional music? Which music do you consider as traditional music?
- Which music do you consider as Tanzanian music?
- What is your best Singeli song and why do you consider that as your best Singeli song?
- What is your most famous Singeli song? Is it the same as the one you like the most? Why do you think that song is more famous?
- How many songs did you make already?
- Which audience do you want to attract?
- Has it always been your dream to become a music producer?
- Which skills are needed to become a music producer?
- Did you face many challenges? Which challenges?
- Where did you find the equipment?
- What do you want to change in your career right now?
- Is there a lot of competition between Singeli producers?
- What is the most popular music style right now according to you? Why is that?
- What is Singeli according to you?
- How would you describe Singeli beats? Which kind of beats do you mix when making Singeli?
- How would you describe the content of Singeli?
- How would you describe Singeli dance?
- Do you think a lot of people like Singeli? Why? Which people?
- What is Bongo Flava to you?
- Can you tell me something about the origin of Singeli? How did it start? What is the source of Singeli?
- Can you tell me more about the evolution of Singeli? Has it changed a lot? How? Negative or positive?
- Which genres did they start to mix at first and how many genres do they mix now?
- Are there different types of Singeli? Does it differ in each region?
- Which regions play Singeli? And which ones the most? Why is that? Do you think it will it expand to other areas and how will they do that?
- What is the background of Singeli artists?
- Do you know how to dance Singeli? Is it difficult to learn?
- What is according to you the main purpose of Singeli?